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The De-Domestication of Home

The Story of Airbnb

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Abstract

The domestic space has a long and crucial place in the creation and the development of the very properties and characters of social behavior and social identity, in its most fundamental sense. Home, to the urban life, is a place of retreat, of protection and privacy, whose dichotomy to the public realm allows an emotional and sensual introspection, in which intimacy and deep relationships can emerge, while providing the most basic and human needs. Along with the urban history, the dichotomy between home and the public space has always been challenged by technological and social trends, but it has never been broken. The Airbnb service, an accommodation solution that offers a social and cultural experience at homes around the globe, can be another such challenge, with new and outstanding outcomes to the image of home. The Airbnb experience is yet another revolutionary expression of the 'sharing economy', or the 'platform economy', which is a result of such technological progression, combined with different developments of the tourism market in general and the urban tourism in particular. In this research, I wished to follow the influence of the Airbnb service, over the lives of hosts who continue living in the home where they host, by focusing on the practical, conceptual, and emotional reaction of the hosts to possible changes that Airbnb leads inside their home. By designing an international project, that created a narrative-based qualitative work, in the urban contexts of Milan, Italy, Lisbon, Portugal, and Jerusalem, Israel, and by using overt and covert ethnographic work, in-depth interviews, and other complementary methods. Following this mix-methods design, 145 mini-cases were collected in the three cities, which enabled the creation of a four-level resolution induction, starting from the hosts themselves, the city, the platform, and finally, the technological meaning over the social order and the balance between home and the urban sphere. As a result, findings managed to demonstrate a chronological process which hosts experience, starting from their interest in the service, towards an increasing disturbance and domestic influence, towards a grand and compromising decision of change, that finally leads to intentions to leave the service. The Airbnb stay-at-home hosts are in a constant reaction to a six-layer impact. Their integration into the imagined community of Airbnb, in a certain socio-economic situation, the presence of the guests, the interaction with them, the intentional and technological pressure on the host, the expectations and types of the guests, and finally the structural and functional change of home itself, all lead to a massive yet reversible view of the meaning and the sense of home, while creating a (possible positive) impact on gender roles, and conflicts, that this text would aim to interpret and discuss.

"...I didn't lose my mind,
I only lost my way home…"[1]

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[1] Written by Greg Pearle. Performed by Greg Pearle and John Illsley. from the song: *'Crazy Kind of Life'*, album*: 'Beautiful You'* (2010).

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2 Written by Tehila Hackimi, from the poem: *'Home'*, in Yediot Aharonot, 2019.

Introduction

In June 2008, while I was in a middle of my mandatory military service, my bachelor degree, and a full-time night job in a call center, I decided to pursue a childhood dream and to fly by myself to the land of the tomato, cheese, and Michelangelo. Back then, before the days of Airbnb, I used the common and cheap, at the time, services of hostels to create a weeklong journey, starting in Rome and ending in Venice.

While many events in that trip are engraved in my mind since, the first one was possibly the most valuable one. In the days before smartphones, I arrived in Rome at 11pm, only to find out that my specific directions to my first accommodation were irrelevant, as the local subway had already stopped working at that hour. For some unexplained reason, and in spite of my failure to find the correct bus, I felt urgency but in no way concern, as Rome instantly induced upon me a sense of comfort, familiarity, and calmness.

After a few attempts to find the required bus, I had given up, catching a taxi on the main road instead. A bit agitated to know if my host is even awake to offer me a bed, we reached the address that was written down on one of my notes (back then, I had a very unsophisticated phone that was turned off almost all the time, with no internet, while incoming or out-going calls were too expensive to use). At that point, the taxi driver and I saw ahead of us the lovely image of a skinny, 'Geppetto'-figured, old man, who was standing with his very small dog, and his son, waiving at me (in my idealized image, the dog was waiving as well). The three did not mind my late arrival at all, and they welcomed me warmly to my room, without depriving me of any useful information about the city. That image of those three figures and their old, brownish house, was the first image that allowed me to connect the image of Italy, to the one of home. That trip was the foundation of poignant desire to return to Italy, and to make it my home. That desire was fulfilled four years later, as both a romantic and a career crisis have led me to take that leap of faith, and to return to Italy for educational purposes.

In the summer of 2012, just when Airbnb became known and well established in Italy, I decided to leave my growing career as a banker, and to move to Milan. Therefore, and as I was in a 'limbo' situation in which it would take a couple of months until I know if my efforts to join the Italian academy would be fruitful or not, I ordered in advance a small room in a family house in the quiet and welcoming area of 'Pagano' and 'Wagner'. While the area itself was indeed rich and accessible, the Airbnb home (that in time would turn into the important mini-case M34), belonged to a

journalist, who on her second time around has partnered with a charming man around her age, while they, at the time, juggle between their two houses, and the children, a boy and a girl, juggle between three (the Airbnb home, the father's home, and the new step-dad's house). Waiting to know about my future in Italy, I spent most of the days reading either at home or at the green space of 'Parco Sempione', and it was the family's giant dog and two cats that kept me company.

In this unique situation in the house, home traffic was not known at all, noises could appear no matter when, and permission to access to the kitchen or the living room could change any moment. Anna often hosted big dinners at home, leading me to escape the house in search of other eating solutions, while my unusual awakening and hence eating hours have caused her several discomforts as well. At the time, I had my doubts about whether or not it was my behavior that has caused those small, even tiny, conflicts and feeling of a mutual alienation, but I had a feeling that this could not be the sole or even the main reason, thinking that what actually caused it was that the frame and image of home were disrupted.

The conflicts and unclarities in Anna's home were indeed minor, and it was eventually difficult to leave, for all of us, including the home supervisor that helped me with all of my needs. After my near future in the Milanese university was secured. Leaving the big and 'goloso' (as Anna used to call him) dog, and the cats, that I used to protect from Giogio as he was eating their food, was difficult on the emotional level, but my sociological curiosity remained. Even more than I was fascinated to overview my own perception of the situation, I understood that Anna's perception and practice of home in the frame of an 'invasive' services such as Airbnb, might be a case of a new phenomenon, that has the potential to be a significant actor in our future perception and use of home, and its role and place in the urban sphere.

The Airbnb phenomenon can be viewed in number of frames. First, Airbnb is growing bigger and stronger, but it is only one good and successful example of an 'invasive service' (Belk, 2014; Perren & Grauerholz, 2015). Invasive service, in this work, would refer to the penetration of labor and work-related interactions inside the domestic space. A space that was deliberately separated in the urban process, as this separation determined the social order we know still today (De Graaff & Rietveld, 2007; Shepherd-Banigan, Bell, Basu, Booth-LaForce & Harris, 2016).

Secondly, in the image of what is historically and scientifically well established as a crucial space for the development of the new-born, and throughout their life (Hall, 1966), as it is the domain of intimacy, in-depth relationships, security and most of all – privacy. Home, by definition, is one

side of the dichotomized equation, as the public and the urban is on the other (Clapham, 2005; Remotti, 2015; Somerville, 1992). Airbnb and services as Airbnb might compromise the ability to 'feel' freely, and to retreat into what is characterize as 'the' safest space. A possibility that could put in danger the human social ability to define and distinguish between spaces, and thereby, to prioritize their ability to blunt emotional and sensual stimulations (Simmel, 1950).

Thirdly, in the frame of agency, as home is the one space in which agency is not questioned (leaving aside internal and familial conflicts, Hunt, 1989; Lindsey, 2015) the cooperation with Airbnb, as well as the need to offer a standard of hospitality, as part of the local urban tourism, points out the fact that agency might ceased being exclusive, but rather an assembly of compromises, that eventually, so I presume, must have an effect on a social order that is grounded in the dichotomy and separation between the public and the private space of home.

Fourthly, as the norms and rules of consumption are shaken. Home, since the urban process, was (and still is) a fundamental space of consumption. Such an understanding of consumption was already well established by Adorno & Horkheimer (1944), who determined the ritualistic process of home consumption (or leisure consumption) as a crucial mechanism which allows the production of culture. On one hand, it enforces the superiority of cultural symbols over others, and thereby, it enables the legitimacy and power of the hegemony. And on the other hand, it constructs a capitalistic acceptance of the society, which prevents an 'escapism' of the public from the capital and social order of balance between work and leisure, a social order that is crucial for the required growth of the capitalistic system. A home that is distorted for the sake of external consumption, might lead, accordingly, to a destruction of that important mechanism of capital life as we know it.

And finally, and mainly, the possible trends of unnatural and unpredictable changes of cultural exchanges, that occur in multi-cultural interactions. For the first time, these exchanges are produced at home, in a space and a place whose architectural, aesthetic, and ideological features are the most deeply connected to the cultural and historical reality for every host (Brindley, 1999; Duyvendak, 2011; Romano & Trisciuoglio, 2009).

In this research, which was planned and conducted between June 2017 to June 2020, I aim to uncover these different aspects the phenomenon of Airbnb, while focusing on the original frame of Airbnb. Airbnb first bloomed as a service focused on connecting different cultures and desiring to create a unique experience of a domestic encounter between a host and a guest. In their

experience, the host and the guest are to engage in a short-term relationship, in which each one of them has a ritualistic and a social role that determines their relationship. To do so, the research question would try to answer **How does the Airbnb hosting experience influence the emotional state of stay-at-home hosts, and their practical and sentimental approach towards their home?**

The centrality of home to the human condition, along with the centrality of Airbnb as a rising force in urban tourism, and its empirically-proven nature of enhancing natural and new processes in the urban sphere, such as the cultural one, requested a wide as deep observation of the many but small details behind the practice of 'Airbnb hosting'. The domestic space is one, in which intimacy and role-playing have a fundamental place in the physical and sentimental creation of the place called home. As such, a creative methodological approach had to be taken so it would be possible to penetrate the hidden domestic space and reach the patterns and narratives that lie in the heart of the Airbnb service.

Under the restrictions of budget and time, three cities were selected as the research fields, each of them represents a specific and different context of an urban sphere. The one of Milan, Italy, represents a typical yet fascinating case study of a national and European economic force that had been deeply affected by the world crisis of 2008, and then recovered slowly through urban planning as well as the blossom of the creative sector and sharing-economy initiatives, such as Airbnb. The one of Lisbon, Portugal, which, unlike Milan, and even though it was affected more seriously by the world crisis of 2008, represents perhaps a typical example of a city that develops and restores the touristic city. In Lisbon, facilities, services, investments, and other urban processes are mainly for tourists, as the balance between local interest and international potential is shaken. Finally, the third case of Jerusalem, Israel, was chosen to explore Airbnb and Airbnb influence in a city that is like no other. Jerusalem is the spiritual home of the three major monotheistic religions. A fact that makes Jerusalem heavily charged with conflicts among its different communities, who all 'fight' for the right to the city. The collision between Jews and Arabs, seculars and orthodox, as well as between international initiatives and local ones, turns Jerusalem into a cluster of conflicts, in which the concept of home stands in the middle.

To acquire such intimate, probably also infinite, and mainly subjective, mass of data, it required the creation of a mix of methodological work, in which one method seeks to complete the missing angles and the hidden narratives, that must be uncovered in delicate and creative manners. To

answer the research question, two main methods stand in the heart of this research. 59 in-depth interviews were conducted with Airbnb hosts, and 86 nights and days of ethnography, completing the accumulation of 145 mini-cases and narratives which were extracted from the three cities. In order to enrich the knowledge on all of the mini-cases, a digital ethnography was established, text analyses was conducted, basic quantitative data was collected, and finally, visual experiments were initiated. This variety of methods was focused and planned towards the almost unreachable and probably pretentious goal of catching the very personal, diverse, and foremost subjective and abstract notion of home, and the patterns that change it, in the frame of the Airbnb service.

In that sense, *'The De-Domestication of Home – The Story of Airbnb'*, is first and foremost the story of home in our days. Airbnb, as I will prove in this text, can indeed be considered a pioneer actor in its penetrative mechanism into homes, and in the new inclusion of home as part of the public and the urban, rather than what it used to be before, a safe haven from it. Alas, this understanding is only possible after the disassembly and assembly of home to the smallest details. Only by doing so, it is possible to be a real witness to the process of de, and perhaps the re-domestication of home, by today's urban reality.

i.   *'Did We Forget About Home?'*

The Sociological Importance of the Domestic Space

"... Home is "here," or it is "not here." The question is not "How?" nor "Who?" nor "When?" but "Where is your home?" It is always a localizable idea. Home is located in space, but it is not necessarily a fixed space. It does not need bricks and mortar, it can be a wagon, a caravan, a boat, or a tent. It needs not be a large space, but space there must be, for home starts by bringing some space under control...". (Douglas, 1991, page 289).

As we shall soon see, home in the form intended in this research, means, in its ideological sense, a unique space of belonging, safety, and perhaps even roots, if of a family or a community. Home has many meanings, definitions, and aspects. In this mass, it would be advised to mind the attention of the reader when talking about 'home' rather than 'house', which implies the physical and technical term of a space for living (Zukin, 1989; Després, 1991; Marcus, 2006; Moore, 2000). Nevertheless, the physical or spatial dimension of home is far from being trivial also in the context of home per se.

Most fundamentally, home is first of all a space, that as a space, leads to specific settings that reflects the one holds agency of such space. in which are a crucial part of home and the way people perceive it as part of their lives (Fried, 1967). When talking about home in the context of space, it seems that we need to understand, where is home? As shifts in society also put homes in other places (as the workplace, for example, Ley-Cervantes, M., & Duyvendak, 2015, and also Hochschild, 1999). But also, and in contrary to the words of Douglas (1991), when is home? that refers to the notion of home, as any other space, to be affected not only in the context of spatial manipulations, but also of time, as it is time that leads to developments, of society and of the individual itself, as he, or she, are going through a process of growing up (Marcuse, 2009, Moore, 2000).

Home, in a very similar way to space, receives a mental state, which can only be imagined in the context of time and space. People often relate home to location but also to a time in their pathways. A period in their lives. This is the main reason home must be understood first as another layer over space, the layer that turns space into a place (Gibbs, 2007; Douglass, 1991).

Home was never solely a private place (or a space). Historically, it is possible to identify different 'uses' of the home as a public, social space, or a private one. This tension between different definitions of space, can be seen as very similar in houses, in homes, and went through numerous changes over the years (Clapham, 2005). As a point to begin with, houses in the past were actually very public. Not so long ago, people used to leave their house wide open, inviting strangers to come in and enjoy a big living room, which was designed first and foremost in order to allow visitors to visit and appreciate the house as the imagined extension of the hosts themselves (Brindley, 1999). It is important to put into place the fact that there are some who question this approach and claim that in reality, neighbors did not normally visit as much as it is now considered (what we may attach to a nostalgic point of reference, Duyvendak, 2011).

Meaning, some believe that the outside has had less of an influence in the historical sense (Clarke, 2001). Nevertheless, some historians suggest that in the beginning of urban times, the desire to put the house into display was the main reason balconies were built (Romano & Trisciuoglio, 2009). The balcony nowadays is considered a good way for members of the household to watch outside, enjoy some fresh air (and smoke), and do some gardening as well (in recent trends). In the past, it was the other way around, balconies were especially decorated and had a lot of effort and thought

put in them so they could resemble the inside of the house. In these cases, the house is part of a big whole that is outside, or at least part of the house is (Romano & Trisciuoglio, 2009).

Therefore, it was not only the urban process that has led home to become as private as we now know it, but the accumulation of different modern and post-modern processes that have changed home from a mix of social and private goals and functions, to the secluded and sacred space it is today (Clarke, 2001). The growing density in cities, has led the urban space to be a culturally diverse, strangers-oriented realm, in which the unknown is perhaps safe, as Jacobs (1985) described the urban feeling, but also unpredictable. In addition, technology began reaching the domestic and labor spaces, which in turn, produced the possibility of a higher efficacy in a dichotomic urban world (Madanipour, 2003).

In that sense, the urban order has become a solution of a more efficient classification of society, and the merge of the individual as a respectful actor, who holds opinions, choices and an agenda of their own. Merging from individualism, the need for privacy has increased, and houses were made hidden and functional (Tosi & Archer, 1980).

One of the more interesting examples is the telephone, as it first entered the house. The telephone was a devise that created an instant penetration when as soon as the phone rings the room (or even the house) immediately turns from private to social. In the phone's early days, people used to wait a long time for a phone call (as people used to travel distances to be able to get a hold of one), and they could not know the caller's identity (Junestrand, Keijer & Tollmar, 2001).

The phone is a first example of much aggressive technological developments that could not be discussed here. Either way, they became important factors in defining spaces and controlling the spaces around home (Hall, 1966). From a house to a home, in the research of Hecht (2001), she described one unique story of a woman snapped from her loving home to a cold nursery. This movement during WW2 was so extreme in her eyes as a child, that long after the events, and until she was old and about to die, she was doing everything she could to 'restore' the emotional and visual appearance of her lost home. This old lady, Hecht explains, was using items to do so. Her house became as a museum with many items covering the walls, floors, and tables of her home.

Can items create a home? Probably not, but cultural items might be able to do so. Cultural items or nostalgic items are good examples of the many ways one can feel at home (King, 2013). Home has many definitions and it is strongly connected to the way we experience our own life. According to Somerville (1992), it is possible to mention six different categories in order to understand home.

The first one is shelter. A physical house that provides not only a rooftop, protection from the rain and the needed warmth in order to sleep, but it also creates the trust (in home) that it would do so.

The second one is much more interesting. Hearth. It is important to notice that it is fundamentally different from the third category, heart. Hearth, is the comfort and coziness felt at home, deriving from the word's original meaning, the area in front of the fireplace, which in the past was the foundation of a home (Clapham, 2005). Heart, however, logically refers to feelings, emotions. At this point, one can analyze the emotions of the people inside their home. Here, we can relate to the way Remotti (2015) describes the space of the house and the level of intimacy a home can provide, as the family (and lovers) are the providers of such an intimacy. This intimacy can only be achieved in the right context, which is in the close intimacy of home, and this symbolizes, creates, integrates and mixes with the emotions that are implied on home itself (Somerville, 1992). Relationships are a based, to some extent, on home, especially because the body is able to express itself better (of to express itself at all) when it feels safe and secure, which is usually at home (Sommer, 1959, and of course Hall, 1966).

The fourth category has a tight connection to what has already been discussed before: privacy. Meaning, the ability of a person to close the door to their own house, and to decide not to let others in. Apart from what is known and has been discussed before about the private space, there is an interesting debate about the rooms of the house and the privacy in them (Somerville, 1992). In the interesting article of Sussman (2000), he explains why children are so 'eager' to leave home and become adults. Sussman reflects on the strict rules of the small community, the family. Members of the household have to follow rules that concern talking in a certain language and manner, discussing, and informing their whereabouts and schedules, and are even limited in closing the door to their own room. Home, in this case, is an almost suffocating place, in the mind of the child, but it does 'feel' like home. The fifth category is 'adobe', which refers to the actual localization, the placement of a house (Somerville, 1992). 'Adobe' is the ability to know where home is and being able to get there. A physical place.

At last, the sixth category of Somerville is the roots. Home, according to Somerville, is the ability to know who you are. And who you are must relate to the place you come from (Clapham, 2005). In the western culture, people are respected when they act and show that that remembers 'who they are' by remembering their home. Lebron James was considered a persona non-grata in his

'hometown' when he decided to 'take his talent' to Miami and leave Cleveland in order to win a championship. When he returned, America embraced him again (Valenta, 2011).

One of the first things I started noticing shortly after arriving to Italy was that I would see parents walking along the streets of Milan with their son or daughter, who were in their mid-teens, holding hands. I was amazed by that sight as it is not customary at all back home. Such gestors are the exact same rituals that were created at home. They could not have been created without a safe and intimate space that legitimizes such rituals. I will note that I have stopped seeing these sights in the past couple of years here too. On the other hand, a child who feels suffocated might want to escape home. In Hollywood movies (but not only), some of them eventually do escape, however, they almost always end up longing to go back home (Cieraad (2012).

As can be noticed, home can be in a positive or negative context. It can be the source of positive emotions or negative circumstances. Obviously, research over the years has found that there are many other ways to feel at home, and they are not all so positive.

"...The 'right to return' involves an understanding of home as the result of repeated practice, that of setting out and coming back. It becomes a point of reference, 'a place of origin and retreat' (Birdwell-Pheasant and Lawrence-Zúñiga 1999: 6), a starting point to which we eventually return, and which gives us a sense of history and continuity. 'Home is not a destiny of our journey but the place from which we set out and to which we return at least in spirit' (Hobsbawm 1991: 65). The journey, itself symbolic of the adventure that leads to the development of the self, is constitutive of the meaning of home. There cannot be a home without a journey as much as there cannot be a self without an 'other'...". (Miller, 1992, page 88).

The importance of the home in people's daily life, politics and economy cannot be over appreciated. Literature deals with the concept of housing as a sense of home in many different approaches that connect with a variety of disciplines (Perkins et al., 1998). To mention a few, a sense of home is strongly related to housing market issues regarding buying or renting a house (Duyvendak, 2011). People that buy a house tend to feel more at home (as they have more control on the property, Clapham, 2005).

It is logical that people who own a house, holds agency to design it to their will. However, studies show how property also related much to culture. The ownership is culturally embedded, and in a symbolic manner, property is also a social property, in which the household has the ability to create a sense of hominess and to display a self, according to that ownership (Carroll, Morbey, Balogh &

Araoz, 2009; Zukin, 1989, 1995, as Ling, 1998). Such studies contribute to the understanding of the importance of a sense of home. The historical context is (as mentioned before) highly important. One cannot understand familial issues, architectural shifts, or changes in private and social spaces without understanding their historical context (Duyvendak, 2011; Moore, 2000; Dupuis & Thorns, 1996).

Gender issues and everyday life patterns must receive historical attention in order to understand their macro processes in their micro interactions (Perkins & Thorns, 2001). Gender is a key issue of home. Many theories have been suggested on the very different way home is conceived and used by men and by women. For many years, women and men were spatially separated by misusing the concept of inside/outside that is so fundamentally connected to home, any thereby created inequalities and exclusion of women from many positions in the work force (Miller, 2001). Theories connecting gender and home usually put more focus on the woman, showing there is a strong connection between the identity of the woman and that of the house (Hecht, 2001). Advertisement in the past (and some who fail to do so today), presented images of how women should enjoy their new appliances and products at home (such as the washing machine or the dish washer) and rewarded the women who kept their house clean (Eisend, 2010). Home, for woman, can often mean a sense of 'prison', when they feel trapped in a sexually abusive relationship, familial, or violent situation in which they do not have the means or the legitimacy to escape (Hogarth, 2015; Wardhaugh, 1999; Roth, 1991; Tomas, A., & Dittmar, 1995).

The gender aspect is, in my opinion, extremely important, as both the public and the academic debate on both gender differences and equality focuses mainly on the public space. Spaces as the workspace, politics and even academy are in the center of gender studies, while neglecting the domestic space and its centrality to the human condition, and thereby, to the spatial-constructed gender roles. Furthermore, only recently the UN published what has already been known for decades but hardly discussed in the public realm, that home is the most dangerous space for women (Nelson, 2019). Alas, the criminal activity is only a bold and clear warning sign, which expresses both the deprivation and the core disadvantage women suffer from at home, and it reflects on the urban and public sphere.

Another issue that would not receive a proper review here is the home and its relation to the body. The body is a key issue at home. Home is designed mostly and primarily to satisfy the needs of the body. If by providing the accessibility to prepare food and eat it (safely) with the kitchen and

the dining area. By providing a place to sleep and gain strength (mostly in the bedroom). By the ability to dispose of bodily waste and wash the body (in the bathroom), and to reproduce (traditionally in the bedroom). These functions may be discussed here in short, however, they are actually crucial and fundamental. They are the primary purpose of home, and only after they are fulfilled, home is able to serve other kinds of 'luxurious' purposes, or different kinds of consumptions (Madanipour, 2003). In addition, the pathway of humankind receives much attention in literature, and home which is part of daily life, is much more than that, as it is actually part of human life (Clapham, 2005).

González (2005), discusses home as a 'place' which is expressed by different emotions that are space oriented. She uses Tuan's perception of spaces and places in order to explore and identify home as one of the most important and vivid places, emotionally. 'Topophilia', as Tuan (1977; 1979) coined it, views home as a place of positive feelings, whose core is in the relationships between the household members, the family members. Alas, home can also be a place of 'Topophobia', a place that is the emotional source of stress, of a sense of prison, and even of an exhaustive routine3 (Tuan, 1990). Cieraad (2012), as González (2005), sees the emotional importance of home, as a space. For her, home has a *"... strong emotional bonding with a place and a material environment, ranging in scale from a room, a dwelling, or a residential institution to a street, a neighborhood, a village, a town, a region or even a country…"* (p. 68). Or other words, home must be culturally embodied and cannot be understood without a cultural context.

Finally, one of the concepts I have not mentioned yet is the importance of belongingness. Belongingness, in order to be felt, has to be a connected to a place or a community, and it is constructed, but mostly experienced, in childhood (Clarke, 2001). Children (as we learned by the work of Hecht (2001), tend to keep rich memories of their homes, and tend to try to reproduce them all over again. Their childhood memories become a distinguished part of their identity and self.

In that sense, the study of home is not only important for the scientific understanding, but it is also a call for a new shape of activism, one that includes the norms and culture that are yet occurring at home.

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3 More about Tuan and his spatial-cultural theories in the 2nd chapter of theoretical part – *'Breaking the Principles of Space'*.

The Importance of Feelings in the Sociological Research

The mechanism of emotions has a hidden, personal, and unique nature which is directly connected to the 'internal existence', self-awareness, or consciousness, that is known as a fact, but cannot be studied, or proved. Therefore, the complex mechanism of emotions is considered controversial in the field of sociology. It is considered a subject whose importance to the understanding of the social behavior and therefore, to the social phenomena, any social phenomenon, is problematic and multi-disciplinary (Thoits, 1989). The existing tension between psychology and the human nature, and the creation of social norms in the work of sociologists, puts the issue of emotions to be only secondary, and even marginal in the sociological work, especially in the early days of the establishment of the sociological theory (Turner, 2009).

This lack of attention is well noticed while digging deep into the fundamentals of the early sociological thinking. Such for example, is the case of Marx (1852), who drew the social order as forces that lie on financial and economical bases, which eventually define a tension between classes who strive to change the social order or to move higher up in the socio-economic realm. Marx refers to feelings and emotions in two basic manners. The first, as a trigger that is manufactured by negative emotions around the lower classes, which in turn can create the uprising of movements who call to change the system. The second, as a possible product in a world of consumption, which allows to trade emotions for the sake of obtaining other products (for example, the 'selling' of love for an economical arrangement, like marriage). While Marx uses and understands emotions as possible and even important triggers, he lacks the will to theorize and scientifically define such emotions. Simmel (1950) also reflects on the tension that emotions can express and trigger in a group or a class, as he calls it an 'emotional arousal', triggering a process of advancement in a conflict (Gerhards, 1986; Barbalet, 1993).

Weber (1930) himself mentions and takes into consideration the importance of emotions, by creating a typology of the triggers that lead to social actions. He mentions the traditional action driven by social norms, the instrumental action driven by interest and profit, actions driven by values, and finally, the emotional action (Barbalet, 2002). Weber, as well, while acknowledging the emotional action, does not theorize the meaning of emotions. Like Durkheim (1897), who studied the pathological nature of suicide rates of the same community Weber observed religious

actions as performed by protestants. Both were able to acknowledge the cruciality but not the centrality of emotions to the studied sociological phenomena (Turner, 2009).

One expectation can be found (before the establishment of the sociology of emotion) in the work of Cooley (1902) and his study on the looking-glass and the self. In a work that preceded sociological theories of emotions, he found the human imagination to be external and social. According to his theory, there are three steps in the heart of the emotional-social mechanism. The first, creating an imagination of how others see us. The second, imagine their interpretation to what they see, and finally, react in an emotional response, which lies on pride and shame.

The understanding of Cooley was mostly ignored until the seventies, when the sub-field finally emerged into the field of sociology, mainly by three scholars, Arlie Hochschild, Thomas Scheff and Theodore Kemper. Their work has created a distinction between two relevant sociological works. The one that studies emotions as a social phenomenon in itself, and others that understand social phenomena by understanding the emotional mechanism as the trigger and the basis for the creation of the phenomena themselves (Barbalet, 2002).

The work of the three is seen as the prolongation of the work of Goffman (1967), who is considered as the 'father' of the Dramaturgical Theories of Emotions. Those types of theories relate to the very important and basic notion of Goffman, to see the social realm as a stage, in which actors are acting according to the self (and face) they wish to see themselves and to be seen by others. Goffman lays the nature of human condition to act and react by the fundamental emotion of embarrassment in the heart of his thinking of social behavior. Embarrassment is used as a social tool for 'social control', that assures a 'culturally correct' tendency of people to behave according to agreed norms and values.

Hochschild (1979) has followed Goffman's work, focusing on the culture aspect of Goffman's stage he found that emotions are tightly connected to the culture, space, and time socially-constructed understanding of the individual about how to understand a situation, how to feel in such situation, and what feelings they are required to express by certain behavior to be accepted by the parties in a certain space.

Hochschild is also the one who imprinted the concept of 'emotional labor', an important process that identifies the fashion in which people, and mainly women, tend to develop and to habituate 'fake' emotions that would be acceptable during work, especially regarding the emotional work of

service-providers, who learn how to express fake feelings while compromising in the negotiation with the self.

Scheff (1990; 2006), on the contrary, followed Cooley's important identification of the fundamentality of embarrassment and shame, being the first to develop a symbolic and interactionist approach to emotions. Scheff describes the importance of social bonds and the meaning of respect which is gained by ritualistic processes that are operated by the core emotion of shame. The emotion of shame, as described by Scheff, is linked directly to the way people see themselves, their worth, and the way others express or threat to express their views on this self and worth.

As we can see, many scholars have theorized and 'attacked' the connection between emotions and social behavior and phenomena. Such is the important work of Kemper (1978; 1981; 1987), who as Goffman, theorizes the obvious and important connection between biology and emotions. As many emotions are the direct response of the body whose direct goal is to inform and prepare the body and mind for possible dangers or threats. Kemper describes four primary biological emotions, such as anger, fear, depression, and happiness as the core of other emotions. He is, along with Collins (1990) the one who first developed the power and status theories which connect the gaining of power to positive emotions (and actually completes the work of Marx), and negative emotions with the sense of lack of status or power.

Kemper, as others, tackles the actual definition of an emotion, which raises again the complexity of understanding and approaching emotions. Kemper (1987) defines emotions as *"…a complex, organized response disposition to engage in certain classes of biologically adaptive behaviors … characterized by a distinctive state of physiological arousal, a distinctive feeling, or affective state, a distinctive state of receptivity, and a distinctive pattern of expressive reactions…"*, while Denzin (1984), an important scholar of the sociology of the emotion, described emotions as *"…a lived, believed-in, situated, temporally embodied experience that radiates through a person's stream of consciousness, is felt in and runs through his body, and, in the process of being lived, plunges the person and his associates into a wholly new and transformed reality – the reality of a world that is being constituted by the emotional experience…"*. (page 66).

Goodwin, Jasper & Polletta (2001), in comparison, distinguishes between emotions that are body driven (hunger, sexual desire, etc.) to ones that are impulsive and immediate, like anger, fear, and joy. And finally, moral, or reflexive emotions, that refers to social feelings, such as trust, respect,

or approval. There is a debate in the sociology of emotions, that questions the ability to conduct a social research without understanding the full scope of emotions, while as we saw, many have focused on specific kinds of emotions, like shame, fear, or anger, leaving others unexplained.

Another important debate, refers to the fact that the current distinction of emotion as 'negative' or 'positive', and by others, as primary and secondary, leaving no empirical evidences to those definitions, as science does not have an answer, at the moment, as to which emotions are a combination of primary emotions, or if they themselves are in direct contact with our biological system and with the neuro-cognitive processes in our mind. Such an important aspect in the understanding of emotions, is not only left unanswered, but also troubles sociologists as this understanding is the aim of other scientific fields (Stets & Turner, 2008; TenHouten, 1996).

Nevertheless, in recent years the theory of social emotion has only grown, focusing both on the way in which people experience feelings, as an internal process, and on the way in which people express those feelings and act upon them. The connection between the two is almost impossible due the complexity of emotions and their subjectivity (Stets & Turner, 2014; Bericat, 2016). For example, children are known for their ability to express a cry, if as a response to pain or a need, or because of the structural understanding that a cry would bring their parents closer. The inability to relate one expression to one emotion, also relates to the fact that emotions are the result of social context. The combination of the two, the social context, or the social reaction to a specific situation, is what many see as the merge that finally creates a social action, or reaction (Lindsey, Brow & Cunningham, 2017).

Today, the understanding of the importance of emotions to the social and sociological thinking is growing. In the economy, emotions are understood and interpreted in order to foresee market fluctuations that are the result of socio-psychological factors and events (Pixley, McCarthy & Wilson, 2014; Mayall, 2010). In addition, through understanding the meaning of shame and the violent reactions that may occur when facing shame, it is possible to detect some dangerous situations such as gender related issues (Pease, 2012; Berzenski & Yates, 2010). In this regard, the sociology of emotion has had an extensive contribution to the study of gender, under the umbrella of the expectation theory (Stets & Turner, 2008). In this theory, emotions are driven by past events and by expectation one has from a specific situation. According to this theory, women are expected to feel differently than men, and to 'feel' inferior to men *('women can't...')*. In addition, as described by Shields & Shields (2002), *'doing emotions is also doing gender'*. Meaning, the socialization

process is highly attentive for education, social and institutional education in which emotions are learned and practiced according to gender differences. As men are expected not to cry or show emotions at all, and women are educated to express soft and submissive emotions. The research on gender, in 'helped' by the sociology of emotions, adding another theorized layer in which emotions are used and constructed to create power relationship, if between genders, classes or races.

The gender aspect of emotion is important and relevant from another angle. The construction of gender, gender identity and a gender experience, and expression of emotions, are cored and determined in the earliest and most influenced stage of childhood, at home, and later in the fashion in which the next generations discuss, but also reproduce, those domestic spaces (Denzin, 1984; Thoits, 1989). according to social norms and constructed understandings of the meaning of gender and expressions of gender in a certain way. In the last decades, there are clear signals that those frames of masculinity as femininity are going through a slow, yet certain change. This change includes the addition of new types of gender identities, most of which are the result of negotiations occurring in the domestic space, the place that allows such kinds of discussions, but mainly – gaining and receiving similar worth and importance as the public spaces and labor positions, in people's own lives (Rezeanu, 2015).

While the work of the emotional implications of home on gender identity is sufficient, research relating emotions to home is lacking and instead it focuses on the sense of homeliness (Jørgensen, 2016; Walsh, 2012), loss of home (Watson & Austerberry, 1986; Marquardt, 2016; Boccagni, 2018), labor (Halford, 2006; Mann & Holdsworth, 2003), and other violent-related topics (Weininger, Lareau & Lizardo , 2018; Cayli, 2017), and gender-connected work (Björk, 2017; Bericat, 2016).

In this research, I wish to use the home-welcoming of the Airbnb service in order to understand domestic emotions and their importance in the daily lives of the urban condition. This research would put the urban definition of Simmel of the urban and public at its core, contrary to the private and intimate, in the context of the emotional state and the dichotomy that lies in the differences between the emotional arousals and the ability to absorb them at the domestic space. This dichotomy, as I would demonstrate, has been broken by the ritualistic manner of the Airbnb service for stay-at-home hosts, first and foremost in the emotional sense, and it can only be understood by understanding the place of home and emotions in a social phenomenon, which is to host via Airbnb.

iii.   'The Intimate and the Homey'
A Personal Note on Domestic Ethnography

The designing of *'The De-Domestication of Home – The Story of Airbnb'*, as implied in this text of introduction, indeed intends to catch two birds in one jump. One bird, a unique opportunity to get an authentic glimpse on the human condition as it appears in the domestic space, while contributing to the current understanding of the place of emotions in human behavior in general, and in the domestic space, in particular. The second bird, engaging in a relevant and central issue in urban studies, with undeniable and proven implications to urban tourism, the human condition in the frame of space and technology, and last but not least, the implications of new types of social markets to the urban sphere as to individuals.

Alas, a hidden third bird was sitting on that tree, and it was this bird that has inspired me take the jump, and to create these complex and mixed methods work that was conducted during the last three years, over the spectrum of three cities. Due to my own personal biographical path, my own relationship with the concept of home was being questioned over and over again, as the image of home, if created by me or along with my partners, has kept changing and being dazzled.

It has already been a while before beginning my doctoral period that I have been in a state of homelessness, or homeliness, arriving in Milan from my hometown, but not from home. Under some circumstances, in the beginning of this period I lived, for the first time in my life, in the university's dorms. The room itself, which was perfectly designed for one tenant, was amazing but also depressing aesthetically as well as functionally constructed to fill the needs of a single person alone.

During the first few months at the dorms, I came to realize that my sense of homelessness is becoming more vivid and sensible. I felt terribly old among the people occupying the building. I have then decided to try and create my own little, even if temporary and definitely not perfect, home. I began adding some items and furniture that made that room feel homey to me, such as a television for my late NBA nights, an oven, a bread machine, and a sofa.

Eventually, after living in my dorm-home for a while, I left it too. The exploration of my own emotional state towards the concept of home and towards this particular room, got me into realization that I myself need to understand and to question the concept of home deeper. Therefore, the third bird of this research was my own chance to pursue the understanding of my own meaning of home, while not having one at all by choice, by daily and Sisyphean work of dismantling and

assembling back together the biggest as well as the smallest details concerning the meaning of home.

While the first two academic goals would be presented in this very thesis, and would be judged by the scientific standard, this thesis could not and is not the space for this personal exploration. However, I find that my own perception and experience of striving for such goals, could have an academic value.

Designing the research work (as would be described fully in the methodological part), I have created a 26-month plan. 18 months would be dedicated to data collection in the three cities, and the final 8 months would be dedicated to writing. Such a design has created two layers of home, or of a sense of home in my reality. The first layer was of constant movement between the three cities, which prevented the ability to relate or invest in one place and in one home. And the second, which was much more intensive, was a layer in which for periods of weeks to a full month, my homes have changed on a daily basis.

In Milan, my first ethnographic work among the three cities, I had to leave the Airbnb place in which I have lived for three months then, and move, with most of my belongings, between 30 different houses within a 32-day period. The ethnographic work, therefore, was always a dual effort. First, of securing the basic functions I needed in order to continue moving, such as sleeping, stopping, removing waste, cleaning, and other physical and mental needs whose place is at home. Second, of being attentive enough to my research field, my environment, my hosts, and the house itself. Like a turtle, walking with my home on my back, I used the hospitality of friends, or the warm office in the university in order to obtain some order in a reality which was constantly shaken, always in movement.

The second ethnographic effort in Lisbon, could not have been tolerated in a thirty-day period, and therefore was conducted in four sessions, of 7-10 days each. In Lisbon, I had the opportunity to carry less, as I had a fixed home during that time, a house that I used from time to time in order to restore myself or to escape impossible hospitality situations. Situations which were less common in Lisbon (or in Jerusalem), but were solvable in Milan. Just as in Milan, I retreated myself to my office that was set for me in ISCTE-IUL, and it too, has given me a small sense of familiarity and, from time to time, normality.

The third and last ethnographic effort, in Jerusalem, began with a strong sense of exhaustion, as right before arriving in Israel, I went on a conference presenting tour which went through Rome

(Italy), Manchester, London (England), Catania, Milan (Italy), Haifa and Tel-Aviv (Israel). During my doctoral period, my only source in Jerusalem was my brother, who by then has moved northwards. The ethnographic work in Jerusalem, therefore, was indeed easier, also due to my mother tongue, but it has also completed a reality in which I have changed over the past two years, more than 120 beds, showers, and door keys.

A few patterns could be elaborated in order to understand the ethnographic emotional weight I have experienced during this research. First, in each one of the ethnographic mini-cases, as well as with the interviewees, I have encountered people who have left a mark on the image of home after my interaction with them. As an already quite experienced ethnographer, I have accumulated during this research the stories of 145 mini-cases. Stories of struggles, of failures, of small victories and of special experiences with hosts. But mainly, of the nature of the disruptive biographical path which could be, the story of a specific time of the human condition in a liberated, technological, and urban reality. Or, as I wish to demonstrate in this thesis, a particular segment in the population, who drove into a unique, but foreseen, reality of a market combined with invasive technologies, that is due to affect the whole human condition.

All of the 145 people who were part of this research, are, in one way or another, a connection I cherish and embrace. No valuable data could have been collected without their guidance. If of the interviewees, who made me spend, many times, long hours digging deep into their emotional reflection on the Airbnb service and on what their home was, imagined, and turn into. If of the ethnographical participants, who were not aware of the lab built in their home, who offered to an exhausted and out-of-context, out-of-place guest, an entrance into their home, if by creating a small and very short relationship with me, or just by offering a hug and a cold beer after long walk under the beautiful sunny skies of Lisbon. Each night, or certainly most of them, has left me with a sense of deprivation, maybe even a slight and subtle longing, to a connection that ended before it began.

Pets, I am ashamed to admit, have enabled me the most felt expression of a connection, followed by the sudden disruption of it. During my stay, I have related to dozens of dogs and cats, who entered my heart and then squeezed it while I checked-out. More than once, I played with the idea of stealing one of them for myself, as if it would allow me to carry with me a symbol, a sense of home.

Beyond the obvious and also mental difficulties of the designing of the ethnography as a single night stay in each house (which would be discussed in the methodological part as well), it has also

created some other personal difficulties. First, during my ethnographic work, I understood my role as a guest. Meaning, in this two-actor (actors who are present in the physical world) interaction which was needed to be learnt, my own personality and limitations regarding privacy, intimacy, dietary habits and eating times, sleeping hours and many others, had a direct influence on the relationship that was established between the host and myself4.

In most cases, my homey nature had two sides. One, of the researcher, which was an advantage, as I could spend more time at each mini-case's home in order to explore and collect data. The second, of the 'strange' or untypical guest, as I was often seen by hosts, due to my presence in the house in unwanted hours. Due to that reason, I had to make up reasons to go out, or to follow (for the sake of appearance) touristic guidance in cities that I knew well enough as I was actually living in them. This duality of hats, of the researcher and of the fake tourist, and guest, often created struggles, as in one hat I possessed feelings of anger, fear or discomfort in an accommodation that eventually gave me shelter for the night, but in the other hat, of the researcher, those exact emotions have actually helped me conceptualize and interpret the emotional state of the host, and to be able to be in their shoes.

The ability to obtain unpredictable amounts of data in those ethnographic sessions demanded a crucial energy which I managed to attain, as I was diving into a new field, a new mini-case, as it quickly proven to be fruitful. However, that crucial energy also came from my own understanding of how this ethnographic exploration was in fact an anthropological search, outwards, of the very basis of the sense of home, but also inwards, as I myself felt a void in the shape of home, feeling its absence as real as a hole in my very own body. It is with the understanding that, in moments in which I have felt like I was losing my mind, losing myself, or the image I had of myself, I was simply reflecting on the lack of feeling and connection which the identity seeks in the concept of home, its values, emotions and the comfort home represents, and the things that home represented and represents to me.

After 18 months of collecting data as scheduled, I returned to Italy in order to begin my writing period. This time, to my beloved Pavia, a small and peaceful town south of Milan where I already have lived in the past. It was only then that I started to feel the effect of my exotic exploration in

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4 The very fact is that in almost all ethnographic mini-cases the actual ethnographic work lasted two days and one night (due to budget and time limitations), and the ability to obtain empirical convincing data about the way stay-at-home hosts interact with guests was affected as it was taken under these limitations and therefore, it led to the mix-method design.

urban landscapes, in my emotional and mental state. While the search for a new home was relatively short, I found myself often obsessed about finding the feeling of home, home privacy, and home liberation. Since returning to Pavia, along the months of writing, could be described as a strong difficulty in getting out of the house and meeting people, even friends and colleagues. Pavia, in many senses, has become a fortress, in which its landscapes were and are addictive, making its borders unattractive and requiring too much energy in order to pass.

Flights have become an unwanted experience altogether, making the thought of visiting my family in Israel seem almost fictional, or at least, masochistic. In contrast, home has become, obviously, an art in practice, as improving the quiet home-fortress in the city in which I got married, seems only natural. Work, on the contrary, became more difficult, as writing started to go slower. It was, as I eventually understood, not the scope of the work that was not scheduled correctly, but rather the emotional influence of the work which would impact my daily vision of life itself.

Therefore, the writing and completing of this thesis, is for me, not only a completion of, what I hope is, a research well done, but also an important growing process, that I had the opportunity and fortune to follow and persist.

I wish to thank all the people who were a crucial part of my support system. My family, friends, my participants, who have held me and helped me understand that in the end it will all make sense. And to my tutors. Prof. Fabio Quassoli, who in many occasions did not know what the heck I am trying to go with this work, but nonetheless has given me constant guidance even with his eyes blinded. And to Prof. Sandra Pereira-Marquez, who has been a place of warmth and comfort, as well of science. Without her, my efforts in Lisbon would have ended up for nothing.

And to my lovely wife, who has spent nights over nights with me struggling with concepts of hospitality and hosting, home, and intimacy. My language is our language, and I could not be prouder.

iv.   *'A Twist During Lockdown'*
Another Story of Research in the Days of Covid-19

While progressing as schedule, and moving into the second part of my writing effort, in the small town of Codogno, in the province of Lodi, and less than 50 kilometers from my home, 'patient 1' of Covid-19 in Italy, or the Corona Virus, had been sadly discovered. From that point on, Italy has

vastly moved into an emergency situation, as the first country after China that had to deal with the grand pandemic, with a scary and paralyzing increase in the number of deaths. What begun with the accumulating stories of the sick and the deceased, has soon turned into a cold and depressing waiting for the five and six o'clock news updates, with the voices and faces of the president of Lombardy, and the welfare minister of the region, which became the symbol of an era, on which hope and despair lay.

The regime of quarantine was almost ironic, considering my own clinging to home before the days of Corona, which has now turned into a long yearning for the 'old normality'. Before the Corona virus, the nearby river, the many small businesses and restaurants in the city, and the addictive images of the mountains of the Dolomites, which I was lucky to visit for the first time just before the pandemic had burst, were reachable and were in fact, part of my home and my balance in the creation of home. For 15 weeks, home has virtually become a prison, and the Italian community finally became an integral part of how I saw myself, as part of it. These feelings diminished any thought, or familial pressure, to return back 'home', to Israel, where, at least in the days of writing these words, the pandemic has never really burst. instead, a political and economic maelstrom of disorder and disinformation would be the symbol of the Israeli version of the Covid-19.

Continuing the work of the *'The De-domestication of home - The story of Airbnb'*, seemed strange, and out of context, as no light was revealed at the end of the tunnel, and the every-day, or concepts like 'urban tourism', or 'sharing economy', became almost irrelevant. Alas, while the social Italian life has become a risk, or a social vulnerability, home became more and more central in the public and even in the academic debate, as issues of gender-based violence, issues of mental health, the return of the importance of 'working from home', and the rise of new platform-based technologies, such as 'Zoom', have been flooded, and are still raising numerous questions on the future of the social and spatial order, as well as on social behavior, which have all changed the core perceptions in basic fields such as education, labor, and obviously, tourism.

In this frame, the understanding of the Airbnb phenomenon, that first thrived in the pursuit for the understanding of home, and the emotional-based behavior of home, turned not only relevant, but even, perhaps, a work that might be ahead of its time. After all, and while Airbnb is defiantly struggling at the moment, platform-based and knowledge-based services and technologies are spreading faster than ever, and demand the attention of the traditional markets, that must be regulated and adapted to a new order, in order to promise the continuation of consumption, that

would be based on platforms and technology, instead of on the old fashioned and interaction and negotiation-based market.

Airbnb, as would be displayed in this research, can be indeed the ultimate symbol and practice of that movement from interactions to platforms. An experienced and chronological movement, that questions but also foresees a nearer future, of the economic system.

v.   Thesis Structure and Order

The thesis would follow a traditional structure**,** divided to three main parts. **In the first part**, I would present the theoretical background of the thesis. As described in the introduction, the thesis will follow its base, the ideological approach towards the definitions and importance of home and of emotions. However, Airbnb is to be examined and discussed by the three main fields and pillars in the sociological understanding. The first, as is considered today's most aggressive and active actor in urban studies, the connection of Airbnb to theories which are accepted under the umbrella of the sociology of tourism, and more specifically, theories and thoughts of urban tourism. The second pillar, would focus on the spatial preferences in the urban era, while discussing the ability of technology to create changes in the perception of spaces, and thereby, creating change in the settings of different spaces and places, like home. in the third and last pillar, I would engage in one of the most important issues in urban studies today, as I will discuss the image of the new social market, which is known as the 'sharing economy'. As last, Airbnb would be discussed directly, as a mainstream expression of urban tourism, as a technological expression, and as a major actor in the development of the 'sharing economy' and 'platform economy' services and types of social markets.

In the second part, I would present the research design, research questions, the motivation of choosing three cities for this scope of research, and the rationale behind choosing those three specific cities, to prove and demonstrate a convincing description of a social phenomenon, along with evidences of further potential of these findings in macro-issues. In this part I would present the research methods, and the methodological background that has helped put those methods together in the creation of solid and authentic representations of the lives of the 145 mini-cases, their chronological cognitive and emotional state of mind, as well as the physical, functional and sentimental progress their home has experienced. The methodological part would review the limitation of this research, as they are needed to be addressed and would shed light on the nature

of the findings. Finally, the second part would display a presentation of a semi-comparative contextual exploration of the three cities, which would enable an understanding of the research fields and their unique preferences.

The third part would be divided into 11 sub-chapters which would strive to present the entire scope of the holistic understanding of the stay-at-home host in their working progress with Airbnb. In the introductive chapter, an image of the Airbnb Stay-at-home-host Evolution Path (ASEP), would be created, presenting a path whose importance as a methodological tool as well as an index to the stay-at-home hosts' relationship with the guests and with Airbnb is crucial, as their cognitive and emotional state would be understood. The introductive chapter would be followed by nine sub-chapters. In the first six sub-chapters, I would negotiate micro patterns throughout the ASEP stages. As is the last three sub-chapters, I would discuss macro issues of gender, multi-cultural interactions and co-creation of culture, and the practical, conceptual, and sentimental meaning of home. In the last chapter of this part, I would discuss the findings by confronting them with the theoretical background, and by tackling them with potential understandings of the human condition, as suggestions for future research would be presented.

The third part would be followed by the **final conclusions of the research** as a whole, with my own and personal impression of the understandings that were collected.

"There is a house built out of stone, Wooden floors, walls and windowsills

Tables and chairs worn by all of the dust, this is a place where I don't feel alone

This is a place where I feel at home, Cause, I built a home

For you, For me, Until it disappeared, From me, From you…"[5]

Part One: Theoretical Background

Preface

Airbnb stands in the middle of a dramatic conflict that derives from the grand transformation which the global market of urban tourism has been going through. That being said, this research is taken under the assumption that this market is the right spectrum to understand Airbnb and the meaning of the organization to a market that has always had a great influence over the order of great, global and touristic cities. This applies also to Airbnb's urban and cultural impact over spaces of locals which tourists are consuming and changing. Therefore, the first part of this research would focus on the contextual frame of urban tourism and the main current debates in the field, when this current research has the potential to contribute to.

In the second part, another angle of Airbnb's success and competitive advantage will be revealed, as this part would focus on the technological power which Airbnb possess and uses. ICT has been changing cities for decades, but only recently, as technology now fits every table and pocket, ICT has become a force of connection and knowledge, that can cross any geographical distance, boundary, place or culture, in a split of a second. The contextual frame of technology in general and specifically ICT, were the fundamental corners of the original design of this research. It was so due to an initial assumption that technology plays a key factor in the developed relationship between all parties, stay-at-home hosts, their guests, and Airbnb itself. While this assumption was found to be, indeed, quite correct, the place of urban tourism had switched the focus and frame of this research design, while technology remained a crucial and an intriguing concept. The meaning of technology must be fully understood also in the frame the 'sharing economy', or the social economy, whose success and even its applicability could only be connected to technology in general and more specifically, to ICT.

The ability or the perception of sharing and making business, would also be the focus of the third and last part of this theoretical background. Airbnb could not thrive with a soulless technology. Airbnb is considered as part of the well-embraced-by-the-media 'sharing economy' concept. 'Sharing economy' is based on the moto of 'interaction as a currency', in which the actual benefit of a deal is the interaction between the parties. Following the concept of the 'sharing economy', even more relevant to be discussed, is the concept of the 'platform economy', that shares many of the concept of the 'sharing economy', as an economy that is based on social and economic activity of users of producers and consumers, that is based on the digital platform and its ability to create that collaboration. This chapter would focus on the definition of the 'sharing economy', 'platform

economy', its theoretical background, and meaning to the future. The last and fourth part, would frame Airbnb itself in the academic knowledge, by focusing on recent studies and the nature of 'Airbnb's research'.

By creating a wide and multiple structure of theoretical knowledge, it would be, first, possible to grasp the complexity of the Airbnb service as a sociological phenomenon. And secondly, to be able to address and challenge, by using a rich empirical-qualitative detailed work, the relevant and updated debates in the academic, as well as in the urban and public current discussions worldwide.

1. *'The Right for Vacation'*
Tourism and Touristic Theories in the Urban Context
1.1 The history of inner cities' tourism – 'urban tourism'

The rise of a direct connection between cities, in the form of urban tourism, for many, is the result of an urban problem, which began after World War II, leading to the dying of cities (Ashworth & Tunbridge, 2000; Bellini & Pasquinelli, 2017). After the war, cities have changed according to the new needs which were forced upon them as a result of the war, as some of them were damaged, or destroyed all together (Spirou, 2011; Bellini & Pasquinelli, 2017).

This turn of events is important, as it has created a new and defined space in the urban realm, a space which is not private nor public. The touristic spaces within the urban space were identified as spaces that can fit the 'pocket' of the tourist, spaces in which tourists can consume and improve the local economy of the city (Spirou, 2010; Hayllar, Griffin & Edwards, 2010). An example for such initiatives is the perseveration of local historical areas, using them as sites of unique experiences for tourists. In the 1950s, historical districts have begun returning from the dead, creating a new look and atmosphere in a place dominated by concrete (Harrill & Potts, 2003; Heath, Oc & Tiesdell, 2013; Hayllar et al., 2010; Ashworth & Tunbridge, 2000). For the first time, the city was no longer only a place for exchanging business interaction or living in a central area of education and consumption, but a new possibility has developed.

This modification and its relation to today's economy and the rise of urban tourism, should be seen also in light of consumption modifications patterns. The connection with the global market, and specifically with global consumers, created the possibility of new connection and new balance

between producers and consumers. Before the connection of the urban sphere with global markets, the consumption design as seen by Antonio Gramsci (1971), was named 'Fordism', referring to a prototype of the Automobile design of work, that saw the labor force as needed to be skill-less, in order to be able to operate in an abrasive and routine line of mass production.

The Fordist system is crucial to the understanding of social order in the urban sphere, as it discusses two main and important issues. The first, the rising of mass production which oppresses the local manufacturing which is replaced by machines and a duplicated, culturally narrow production. The cultural meaning of such a mass production is well discussed by Horkheimer and Adorno (1944), who demonstrate how popular culture is reproduced in order to ensure not only stable (and rising) rates of consumption, that are vital for a successful capitalistic economy, but also the reproduction of cultural items which serves the values and the systemic values that are necessary to keep the hegemonic class in its social domination. The second, the Fordist approach sees the consumption system as a fundamental factor in the production and capitalistic order. Because of that, according to Fordism, it is actually necessary to reduce working hours, to increase salary rates and to allow workers the time and money to consume.

It is important in that context, to continue with the thoughts of Horkheimer and Adorno, who have established the 'the cultural industry'. As Gramsci, Horkheimer and Adorno see the importance of a vivid consuming atmosphere. The two have followed the work of Gramsci by focusing on the cultural aspects of the social order, creating a different meaning to escapism. The traditional and known frame of escapism regarding popular culture, sees escapism in popular culture as a 'tool', a motivation of the mob to consume television, books, music, cinema etc., in order to escape their troubles and boring routine to the land of fantasy and imagination. However, Horkheimer and Adorno's perceptions are different, drawing a vision in which popular culture **prevents** the escaping of the mob from the current social order (which essentially serves the upper classes), by clouding their attention to 'Bread and Circuses'[6].

While the 20th century was indeed criticized as a Fordist social and economic social order, the Post-Fordist theory is better to understand cities in the global market. The post-Fordist theory

[6] The use of the word 'mob' as well as the phrase 'bread and circuses' is obviously a reference of Juvenal to the Roman Empire, and its political strategy of clouding the attention of the public from the services given by the authority by focusing on immediate pleasures as food or entertainment (Potter & Mattingly, 1999). Needless to mention, that Horkheimer and Adorno were much aware of this analogy between the Roman Empire and the American one, of the 20th century. Both as a strategy of the hegemony and the use of culture as a tool for directing the public in the interest of the dominant classes.

envisioned the new urban reality as a reality that demands high-tempo changes in the production level and in the consumption level (Bell, 1973; Amin, 2011). Such changes are the result of the entrance of the global market, in the cultural sense as well as in the competitive one. In many senses, this is the result of some key features of the urban era. The consumer was no longer perceived as a constant part of the demand-supply equation, but rather a rational and active actor, that has conscious and researchable motivations for choosing a text or a product to consume (Harvey, 1989; Jameson, 1991).

Text, communication, and language are what identifies the 'New Economy', which focuses on the individualized nature of global markets. The pursue of mass production for mass consumption, was replaced by a specified and diverse catalogue of supply (Heller, 2003; Sennett, 2006; Carnoy & Carnoy, 2009). Such a culturally mixed reality of consumption is the result of combinations between the local supply and the global market, enabling the appearance of new services and goods, which have a cultural and a global demand, but also the authentic and unique features of the local market. The urban tourism is such an impression of global trends and are authentic characters of the local market and supply (Casellas & Pallares-Barbera , 2009)7.

In this frame, along the decades, the image of an urban context and the understanding of the importance of a local 'stand-alone' policy and economy, led to developments in local and urban decision making towards investments in urban tourism, and its endless possibilities for their growth and wealth. At this point, for the first time in the touristic global market, different cities act as if they are competitors who seek to attract the tourist and make them see the city as a desired destination (Ashworth & Tunbridge, 2000; Spirou, 2010). A global and free competition between cities has led cities to act strongly in developing new areas of leisure, while increasing the potential of historical areas that attract the audience (Harrill & Potts, 2003; Heath, Oc & Tiesdell, 2013; Hayllar et al., 2010; Ashworth & Tunbridge, 2000; Jansen-Verbeke & Lievois, 1993).

Therefore, it is possible to view the city as a dual processed that urban tourism was a major part of (Pigram & Wahab, 2005; Richards & Hall, 2003). By looking at the 'divided cities' theory (that would further more discuss), Sassen (1984) explains how *"... the transformation of the industrial mix has entailed a decline of older, established manufacturing industries with higher rates of unionization and higher shares of well-paid, skilled jobs. Finally, the transformation of the*

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7 The centrality of different aspects of consumption to four of the five central elements to this research: home, urban tourism, technology, and finally, sharing economy, as each would be discussed in the relevant frame.

organization of the labor process associated with these two developments has facilitated the expansion of forms of production that rely on cheap, powerless labor, notably sweatshops and industrial homework...." (page 160). As such, a combination of higher types of employments, with the influence of urban tourism, that needed low skilled workers to drive, serve, host, and clean for the tourists and their accommodations. As such, a significant and new flood of young workers has arrived into city centers and began looking for jobs. Meaning, the urban tourism market with its foundation creates a dramatic change in the urban and public sphere, bringing young and foreign populations into the cities and changing its functions, goals and production of space all together (Bellini & Pasquinelli, 2017; Maciocco & Serreli, 2009).

While the organization of cities around a market of tourism is fairly new and belongs to the urban era, research and history claims to detect urban tourism culture already in the 14th century, as Karski (1990) identified the pilgrims as 'urban tourists'. Furthermore, a culture of tourism in inner cities was developed, once again by the tourists and not by the cities, as high socio-economic individuals began travelling in the cities in the 18th and 19th centuries. These grand tours of wealthy civilians, might have been the first true cultural exchange between tourists and locals, that has created a cultural change in different districts and areas around the city (Shachar, A., & Shoval, 1999; Raj & Griffin, 2015).

1.2 Urban Tourism in the Context of Urban Studies

Overall, scholars in the field of tourism and urban tourism regard to the importance and significance of urban tourism to urban cities and to the urban daily life with a certain level of oblivion. Only in the '90s of the last century, new voices have emerged claiming it is necessary to understand urban tourism and the urban setting which have been changing cities culturally, socially, economically, and physically (Law, 1992; 1993; Ashworth, 1992; Page, 1995, Hinch, 1996; Roche, 1992; 1994).

From such a frame, in the last few decades research has dealt with the implications of urban tourism onto urban life (Gilbert & Clark, 1997; Murphy, 1992). One such important approach is the changing of the wide definition of urban spaces, into urban precincts. A precinct in the sociological sense is a limited area which is manufactured in such a manner that it would allow the arrangement of a space for a global market, with patterns of a Post-Fordist approach. A global consumption supply with local authenticity (Edwards, 2010; Hayllar, 2010).

The tourist precinct, in that sense, is an area that does not fall into the administrative definitions, but it is able to explore the process in which an urban space is developed from a local service provider to a touristic location. Normally, a tourist precinct is centered around one big attraction. If a historical monument, a shopping area, an iconic sightseeing spot, or a world-famous museum. Other areas, streets, and stores around it, change their character, so they could be part of that precinct, and enjoy its economic opportunity (Spirou, 2010; Davidson & Maitland, 1997).

Although the concept of 'The tourist precinct', is widely accepted today, between the '70s and the '90s, many similar definitions were established, such as the 'Tourism Business District' (Getz, 1993; Smith, 1983; Paradis, 2000), or the 'consumption compound' (Rescorla & Cunningham, 1978; Mullins, 1991; 1992), and others. The difference between the 'precinct' and the other areas, is that the precinct has the ability to capture the fusion between the people (who use the space), functions (what is to be done in the space), architecture (what visually connects the space together, and divides it from others), and the psychological and sociological collective meanings of that fusion to people from within – locals and people from the outside - tourists (Edwards, 2010; Hayllar, 2010).

Since the '70s, a decent body of research was held in order to understand cities by putting the focus on those precincts and their power over sociological, economical, and social spaces around them. In addition, the concepts of leisure and consumption were examined closely (Law, 1992; 1993; Zukin, 1998). In this scope of research, urban tourism and cities were explored in order to understand what it is that attracts tourists into tourist precincts and to decide how to design their paths and plans for better economic results for the city. Meaning, the precinct is seen as a complete experience, an experience that neglects the locals and their needs, while tourism receives more and more attention and investments in cities (Gilbert & Clark, 1997; Murphy, 1992).

Finally, in the context of urban studies, urban tourism embraces the meaning of space, of place, and of the production of space. Following Lefebvre (1991), urban tourism has come to acknowledge that the creation of touristic places by producing meaning into them, is a social act created by the collaboration of cities and visitors. Space, in that sense, is the accumulation of interaction between tourists and others, and tourists and locals, and the different perception given to a place by those people (Gotham, 2005; Edwards, 2010; Hayllar et al., 2010; Ashworth & Page, 2011).

Today, the context of urban tourism and urban studies is ever larger, as tourism, for most global cities (and the cities studied in this current research) is a major actor in the image of a city, the financial situation of the city, and the every-day lives of the locals, as it will be further discussed in the chapter.

1.3 Defining 'urban tourism'

Urban tourism can be perceived as a product, but sociologically, it is also the trigger of many processes that affect and change the city. Meaning, a field that seeks to understand the connection between the urban process and tourism, in the economic and in the social sense (Ashworth & Page, 2011; Page, 1995). The distinction of the urban from the city is highly important and well documented, as the 'urban' refers to a (relatively) recent sociological process, in which cities are no longer a mere advanced or efficient social order, but a sociological phenomenon in which the settings of interaction are well designed to accommodate strangers, and to create (or produce) economic exchange, in a safe and sustainable environment (Roche, 1992; 1994; Jansen-Verbeke & Lievois, 1999).

The creation of this exchange, for the benefit of the locals and the visitors, was long exhausted by literature, and for the better part, by defining public and private (and semi-private) spaces. Spaces that urbanism has redefined and reestablished, while organizing a new and a more than ever supervised social order, in which social classes and gender roles could be more contained (Remotti, 2015; Zukin, 1995).

In this context, the UNWTO (the United Nations World Tourism Organization) has defined urban tourism as a 'key resource' for cities and for the locals living in it. According to UNWTO[8], urban tourism can increase the income of locals, pushing municipalities and governments to improve infrastructures and to give better public services. UNWTO defines urban tourism as "... *a type of tourism activity which takes place in an urban space with its inherent attributes characterized by non-agricultural based economy such as administration, manufacturing, trade and services and by being nodal points of transport. Urban/city destinations offer a broad and heterogeneous range of cultural, architectural, technological, social and natural experiences and products for leisure and business"*.

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[8] UNWTO official site.

UNWTO is setting the focus on the touristic product other than the urbanism behind urban tourism, as Ashworth himself notes (1989) regarding the lack of urban work to understand urban tourism: *"... There has been quite simply a rural bias noticeable in both the quantity of the literary output and the quality of the theorizing about tourism. This is in itself remarkable because most tourists originate from cities, many seek out cities as holiday destinations and the social and economic impacts of tourism are substantial in urban areas. Thus, the failure to consider tourism as a specifically urban activity imposes a serious constraint that cannot fail to impede the development of tourism as a subject of serious study..."*. (page 33).

In the frame of urbanism, urban tourism is a connection between people, spaces (or places) and consumption, that produce a mix of cultures, values and experiences (Ashworth, 1992; Edwards, 2010). In order to have a better understanding of this definition, an examination of what is 'urban' is necessary. The 'urban', is a place or an area with strong economic ties, with interactions that are based on culture or leisure, with the space for big enterprises and professionals to work and develop, and with an indoor public transportation system which makes commuting to work in the central areas of the urban life easy and attractive, allowing the development of plans that correspond with the central areas in the city (Wirth, 1938; McKenzie, Park & Burgess, 1967; Parker, 2015; Simmel, 2012).

Meaning, the definition of urban tourism is to allow these interactions, this level of consumption during a cultural display, which to people from outside, this would be as giving an address to their desires to consume and use the city, as tourists.

1.4   Actors in the Urban Tourism Market

The tourism market, as declared by the UNWTO, is one of the largest markets in the world, and today, in many cities, it takes a large portion of the communal budget (Glaesser, Kester, Paulose, Alizadeh & Valentin, 2017). As such, it contains an enormous number of actors and a decent number of factors that can be measured.

According to the World Tourism & Travel Council (2020), in the past five years (2014-2019), tourism has been responsible for a fifth of the global job market, 10% of all global labor (319 million jobs) were tourism related. According to data from 2018, tourism, directly and indirectly, is responsible for 10.4% of the global gross domestic production (GDP), as tables show a constant

growth of tourism's contribution to the global GDP, in actual finance means and by percentage (WTTC, 2019).

Direct contribution can be considered as accommodation solutions, use of public transportation facilities, consumption of entertainment and local attractions, the development of industries related to such services, and the use of those services both in the leisure and the business segments, as well as by the locals themselves. Indirect contribution can be considered as the investments of private and public actors in the tourism sector, and the use of outsourcing. To be noted, that other than the direct and indirect contributions to GDP, the economic contribution of tourism to the global reality also includes the consumption of locals and employees in the food, clothing, housing, and goods sections. Therefore, the circulation of tourism into the global as well of the local economy is well documented, described as a triangle of locals-tourists-employees, who all use the same facilities, but differently (Brida, Pereyra & Devesa, 2008).

Graph No. 1: Direct, Indirect, and Total Contribution of Travel and Tourism to GDP[9]

(in billions of USD)
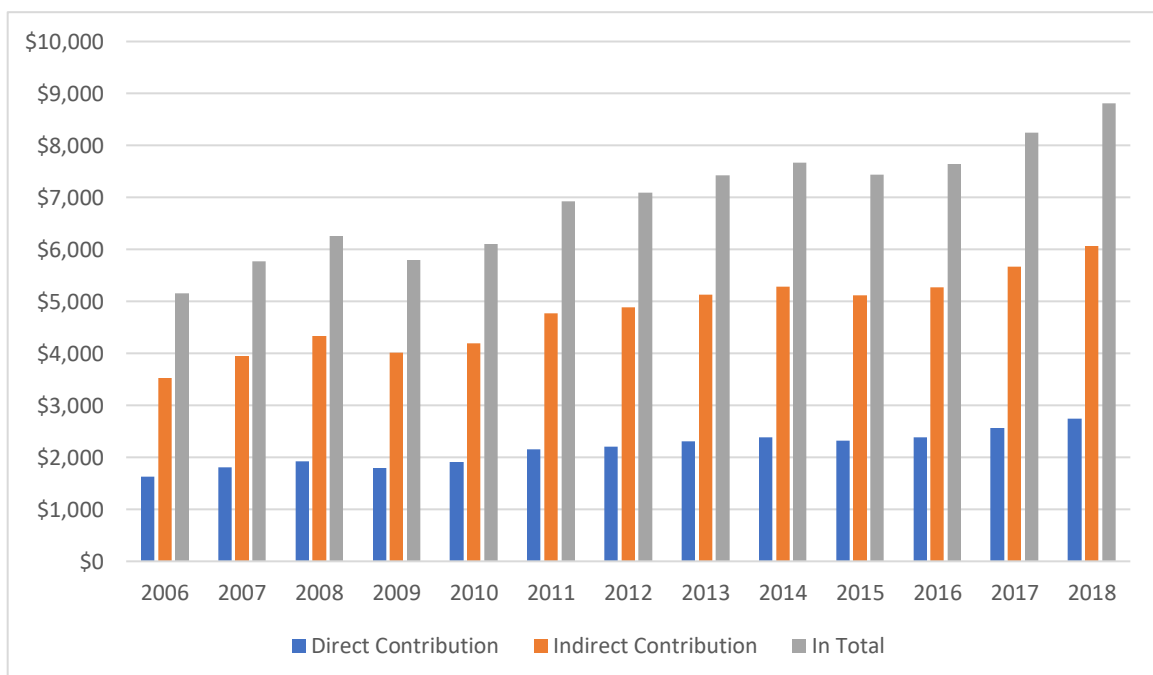
Naturally, the 'strength' of tourism in every country and even in every city, varies, and it demonstrates the level of dependency of different parts of the world on tourism as a development

[9] Data that is not sourced has been taken from Statista.

engine. As seen in graph No. 2 (below), countries like Macau or Seychelles are standing in extreme dependency on the touristic sector alone, while western countries tend to show smaller dependency on tourism. Such is the case of Portugal, the most dependable case study of the three, where 19.1% of the GDP is contributed by tourism, as of 2018, 1.4% higher than the contribution in 2017. The second case study, Italy, stands on a smaller level of dependency, 13.2% of the GDP, which is also in a trend of a steady increase. Compared to Italy, the dependency of Israel on tourism is as low as 5.9%, a number that keeps reducing or staying put in the course of the last few years[10].

Graph No. 2: Contribution of Tourism (GDP) Divided by Selected Countries

(in percentage)
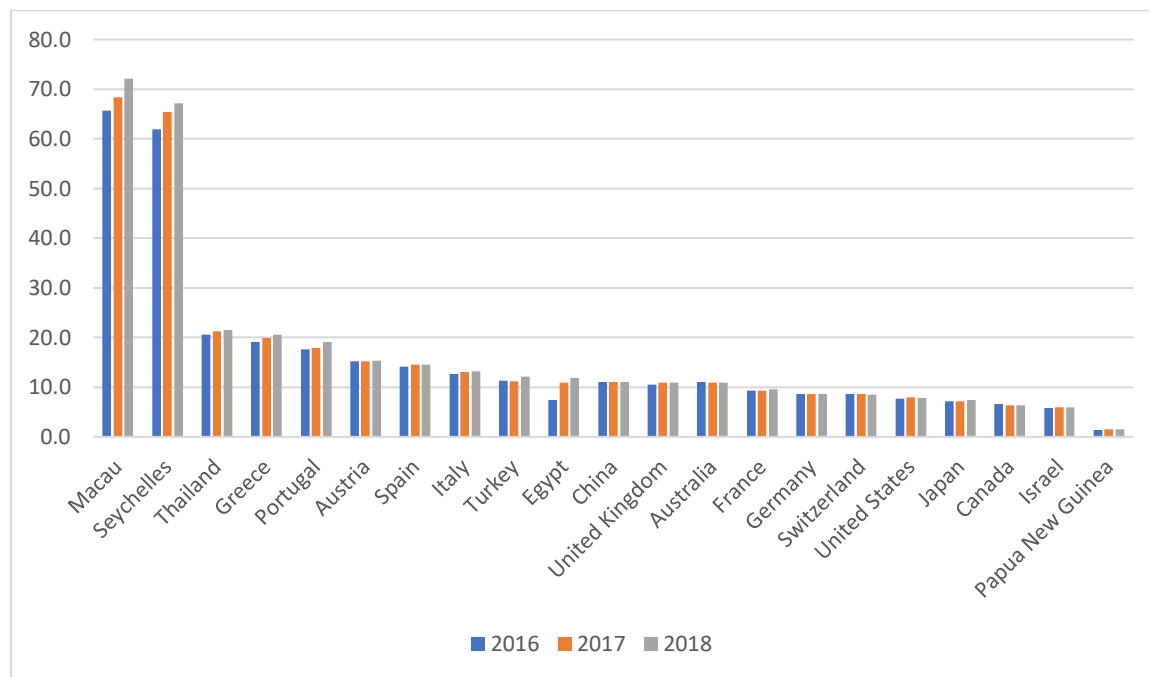
As we can understand from graph No. 2, in most countries, the contribution of urban tourism is rising, leading cities to establish policies that would help ensuring a balance between local growth and local discomfort or deprivation (Girard & Nijkamp, 2009; Chang, 1997; Ashworth, 2009). Normally, cities hold a department or a center that is responsible for managing tourism in the city and welcoming visitors. In the past (and still today in most cities in the United States), such

[10] Digging into the same data regarding the selected local case studies (Lisbon, Jerusalem, and Milan) would be discussed in the fourth chapter of the methodological part.

organizations were private, and their interests were the potential coupons they collected by referring tourists to local hotels and restaurants. Alternatively, those centers (or CTO's– City Tourist Organization, or CMA – City Marketing Agency) themselves own concentrations of hotel rooms and restaurants, which allow them to be profitable. Today most centers such as these in Europe work under the supervision of the municipal authorities, and they are mostly in charge of helping tourists and presenting the interests of the municipality (Wöber, Hwang & Fesenmaier, 2003; Paskaleva-Shapira, 2007).

The other actors are private investors, who could be from within the city or outside of it. The difference between the two is considered quite crucial and has led to a few theories that would be discussed later in this research. The local private investors use the local economy and fertilize it, while keeping the investment in line with the culture, values, and space of the local residents. Foreign investors, however, bring new money into the city, but have the risk of ruining the urban culture and authenticity of the precinct (Denicolai, Cioccarelli & Zucchella, 2010; Milne & Ateljevic, 2001).

In the last decade, what was known to be a gentrification process is now researched extensively in the name of 'tourism gentrification', or better yet, 'urban tourism gentrification'. According to this theory, urban tourism is a never-ending process of change in the toured city. Alas, every city is also undergoing other types of processes, such as demographic processes and economic and architectural processes, among others (Gravari-Barbas & Guinand, 2017; Cocola-Gant, 2018). By the end of the last century, research on the subject was discussed thoroughly, focusing on the need to solve the phenomena of deindustrialization and suburbanization, which cause problems in the stability of local economies, along with the conflict between local residents who profited and the ones who did not profit from the consumption process, turning the city into a place of leisure and entertainment (Skoll & Korstanje, 2014; Gotham, 2005; Paris, 2009).

According to this approach, many cities today are being examined as part of a global phenomenon of tourism gentrification. The process is driven by foreign money entering the authentic but poor areas in toured cities, with the ambition to use that authenticity in order to create new attractions and enlarging the current precincts (Edward, 2010; Barata-Salgueiro, Mendes & Guimarães, 2017; Gravari-Barbas & Guinand, 2017). In such a process, houses are reconstructed and renovated, which raises their value. This benefits both the city and the investors while the current residents, who often do not own their home due to their socio-economic situation, are thrown out for the sake

of hotels, guesthouses, and generic restaurants. Therefore, the influence of foreign investors is often discussed in the academy as well as in public debates of communities in cities[11].

Semi (2015), who focuses in his book on the very spatial case of Milan, Italy, described such trends of gentrification as *"...the reflection of the multiplicity of actors who are diverse in the image of their motivational view, from daytime artists and the creative independent workers, to rich consumers of exclusive spaces and building constructors who respond and forge the needs. Gentrification is the most important investment in real estate and neighborhoods, especially in the center, which are losing their 'true' value. It builds its image as well as capital. However, it favors economic and cultural capital over the social capital of traditional inhabitants: workers, small traders, and migrants who physically work to builds the city. For a long time, their presence has helped build that different and distinctive cultural character so intimately "urban"..."* (From Italian, pages 22-23).

In addition, local investors are considered one of the most important phenomena in today's urban tourism. These days, the paradigm of inner-city tourism has changed, and there are a few reasons for that. First, if until the last few decades, the exotic and wild were the most popular touristic products, today, and in the name of the ever-spreading knowledge that lies in the internet, tourists wish to have a 'living like a local' experience (Paulauskaite, Powell, Coca-Stefaniak & Morrison, 2017; Kuusimäki & García-Rosell, 2018; Richards, 2014).

By tracking down the developed areas in cities, it is possible to plan future developments in favor of the locals, and in accordance with the way the tourists themselves take part in changing areas into touristic precincts. Meaning, for the first time, tourists have become producers of space, changing spaces in the cities. Previously, the impact of tourists over cities was exclusively and only indirect, by affecting the balance between supply and demand, which has created new developments. Secondly, the rise of low-cost travelling possibilities such as EasyJet or Ryanair, among many others, has provided the option of travelling for ever-new crowds and socio-economic deciles, leading again to a new balance and a new order between the supply and the demand.

Such a progress in those areas has created what is now called 'tourism without development', in which locals reshape the already developed spaces in order to fit and welcome touristic attractions and consumption. 'Tourism without development' is identified as coming from within, by the

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[11] Airbnb, in that sense, plays as a major actor, and would be discussed later in the 4th chapter of this theoretical part.

locals, through placing relatively limited investments that have limited impact on the space itself and on its meaning. The meaning, or the transformation of it, is co-created by the locals and the tourists in a cultural collaboration (Russo & Richards, 2016; Barkin, 2013).

The co-creation of urban spaces by tourists and locals has been studied thoroughly. It is considered in the academy to be a process with similar preferences of that of the melting pot. Alas, while the process of the melting pot is designed to create one united cultural community, the co-creation of spaces is intended to change (culturally and consumption-wise) the urban space, that is no longer limited to a precinct or a discreet (Russo & Quaglieri Dominguez, 2013; Binkhorst, E., & Den Dekker, 2009; Aho, 2001; Campos, Mendes, Valle & Scott, 2018).

1.5 Expressions of post tourism

The view of tourism nowadays has changed dramatically, due to the reasons mentioned in earlier paragraphs. The expression of this change starts from low-cost flights, affordable accommodation (Airbnb included and in front) and the reshaping of urban spaces are all part of a new reality of Mobility. From the framework of Mobility, Urry (1994; 2012; 2016; Urry & Larsen, 2011) was the first to notice that tourism is no longer an activity of leisure, that seeks to completely contradict the life built at home and of the everyday life. Instead, in today's global world, tourism can no longer be divided into different kinds of travelling, if for business reasons or obligations, attractions and closeness to the creative industry, or for leisure, exploration and uniqueness.

The ability to 'move' fast and cheap has led to a new approach, *"... where the everyday is both routine and full of disruption. Accordingly, tourist performance also includes unreflexive assumptions and habits but contains moments where norms may be transcended..."* (Edensor, 2001, page 79). Meaning, post-tourism, is the understanding that the distinction between spaces 'for tourists' and for locals, are no longer possible. First, because of the attraction tourist spaces have over different populations, if the locals themselves, the employees, and the business travelers. And second, because of the demand and the search for spaces that are outside the arranged, designed and generic view of the tourist space, which turn the entire urban space into a potential place for a diverse consumption, conflicting culture as social behavior (Jansson, 2018).

The fact that space and time could no longer divide local and touristic consumption has created a new reality in which everyone are tourists, and their motivation for mobility, as the context of the

travelling, could be so obscure and flexible that it has created a crisis in the way tourism is being thought of, as a market but especially as a place of sociological concept (Farias & Bender, 2012; Ashworth & Page, 2011; Spirou, 2011) . Tourism, and urban tourism above all, should be regarded as a basic part of living in the urban sphere. This tourism is hierarchical and divides spaces, forming a new socio-economic order that includes and segregates, while evolving constantly, and defying any geographical reasoning (Roche, 1992; 1994; Füller & Michel, 2014).

From that frame, it is important to take notes of Marcuse's (1993) view of the new city, or the 'divided city', as it is organized by class in order to provide 'solutions' for the upper-classes locals, the workers, the middle-class, the gentrified, and finally, the poor. Such a city, according to Marcuse, fails to provide a 'just' reality to all citizens, as it depresses their ambition and ability to fulfil their potential. The Post-Fordist economic system, he claims, creates ghettos, inequality, and the sense of displacement and homelessness, that cities are responsible for and have the force to improve and reduce negative trends in the local development and process.

By drawing that important image, Russo and Quaglieri Dominguez (2013) discover three main consequences that tell the story of the unprofessional world of tourism, and its impact on the urban life. First, the need to create beds for incomers (tourists or not) in spaces that were not and are still not touristic, in the name of demand, the 'feel like a local' product, and the vanishing of dual spaces (residential and touristic) in one city. Second, the old touristic concept, the district, the precinct, are all becoming irrelevant, unwanted, and mostly neglected. Instead, both locals (as part of their daily lives) and tourists (as a new experience) seek to enjoy a daily life atmosphere. Third and last, those new post-tourism spaces must be authentic. Meaning, be the outcome of an effort that comes from the people, the locals and the tourists all together, while service is given by an unprofessional workforce, outside the tourism industry, mostly, residents, or peers.

The demand for different types of accommodations has changed, and tourists are searching even more for authentic options rather than enormous hotels which are disconnected from the vibe and the sense of the city. In a long and steady process, the use of peers and the semi-direct connection with locals is increasing, leading to a new cultural production. The combination of new technologies, with new social economies, is the center of current debate in the fashion in which tourism, for the first time, not only stands as an economical contribution, but in a post-tourism era, it has become an undivided part of the city life and the city's cultural and social transition (Lim & Bouchon, 2017; Paulauskaite, Powell, Coca-Stefaniak & Morrison, 2017). The two, the social

economy, or the 'sharing economy', and the role of technology and technology-based space modification of the urban space, would be the subjects in front on the next two parts of this theoretical background.

2. *'Breaking the Principles of Space'*
Theories of Space and Technology

2.1 Theories of space and culture

"...Personal space provides a person with a location in the world and is a barrier that distinguishes and protects individuals from the outside world. It is part of a repertoire of a person's protective and communicative measures, such as body gestures, clothing, and speech. In our analysis of public-private spatial relations, therefore, personal space is another layer of privacy, beyond which the less private, or public domain lies. Beyond the private personal space, the space of others lies, including the public space. Personal space is less private than mental space, but more private than the intimate space of the home. When the home is the living place of a single person, the boundaries of personal space may be extended so that the two overlap..." (Madanipour, 2003, page .21).

A city can be seen as accumulations of spaces, of different settings, different norms, and different balance between members with more, or less, agency. Like home, the city is a fundamental part of the human socialization, that helps the urban visitor, if a local or a tourist, to be oriented in places that are seen and visited, for the first time. The discussion on the meaning of space began with the observation of space as either objective or subjective. One approach is that space is detached from the human thinking, it stands behind physical rules that are disconnected from human manipulation, as Newton had envisioned space (Thrift, 1977; Merriman, 2012). Alas, the sociological approach to space, claims that the human experience is possible by putting meaning into space and behaving according to the setting of such space. Therefore, space is considered as a subjective experience, but human perception is what makes space objective, unchangeable and mainly, a tool for self and social observation. Furthermore, space is in a constant progress, in a debate between itself and the observing eye, or group, who rewrite and revalue its meaning and settings (Foucault, 1980; 1984).

Space is and has geographical, political, and psychological meanings. As such, like Simmel (1997) determined, a space is not the territory of the sociological phenomena, but rather it is the

sociological phenomena that are performed in the image of space. People give meaning to space and act upon that meaning, if of gender, religion, age or class expressions of space and the possibility of gaining power in space (Edney, 1974; Sack, 1983). The social order has shaped space and human interaction so space can be discussed and modified by the ones who hold the agency over one such space. Such discussions are the result of rituals and routines that are part of people's daily lives. Space, therefore, is a key tool in the organization but also in the categorization of society, by allowing each member or each community the 'just' (and unjust) ability to gain social capital and to mobilize in the socio-economic sphere (Thrift, 1977; Said, 2000) . Lefebvre in his important piece of work of 1974, talked about the importance of space in the way individuals, and eventually societies, act, but more importantly, think, in the presence of space and time. Understanding space needs to be taken firstly as a mental state, and only then as a social one, which is due to be taken by different powers who would try to control it and to use it for their own interests.

The culture of consumption is extremely connected to the fashion in which the every-day is organized, Lefebvre notes, as overwhelming and daily, built on the routine and on the small interactions which occur in the urban space. The modernity casted a new daily experience in the urban post World War II life, as the connection of advertising to consumption which had perpetuated values of consumption was deeply connected to space, as to the every-day. Leisure, as Lefebvre determined in relation to Adorno and as discussed in the previous part, cannot be detached from the rest of the every-day, and it cannot be fully understood without understanding the complete economic system and its use of space. The urban way of life, in Lefebvre's eyes, is the 'the new bad things'. The commuting to work, the city of traffic lights, the superficiality that urban space allows and forbids to be organized, all run according the interests of the people with agency. For Lefebvre, the familiar is actually strange, and the every-day is a mix of spheres, of motivations. Therefore, the every-day is not an object or a place, but a totality of relationships, whose settings, norms, and rules are determined by the manipulation of space itself.

The manipulations of space, for Lefebvre, are the production of space, which in his view, are the core and basis of any social inequality, if in the cultural, class or gender sense. Lefebvre sees three types of such productions, 'absolute space', which is the physical yet symbolic structure of space that creates a duplication of norms and values, as well as space settings that favor the hegemony and the upper classes. The second type of practice of social production of space, is the

representation of knowledge. Lefebvre refers to the instrumental use of knowledge for social control and to *'terror'* done by using knowledge in order to condemn undesired social behaviors and to support others who serve the hegemony. Third, the representation of mental invention. The human condition is unique as a species, as it is able to create signs, codes, symbols, and most of all – stories, that are each, separately, a key source of space production (Molotch, 1993; Smith, 2010; Highmore, 2010).

Compared to Lefebvre, De Certeau's (1985) view is much more elusive, for De Certeau, the spatial expression of the every-day is of an adventure, as a metaphor to his own travelling around north and Central America, and to Europe in particular. According to De Certeau, the space is in a constant relationship with the actions done by the people who are in it, and their stepping into or out of the lines of social norms. According to De Certeau, the daily life as a practice that could be the expression of resistance. The very interpretation of the every-day, as it is naturally manipulated by society, is the only possible and social ability to change and challenge the ruling social order. For De Certeau, such actions, are tactical and symbolic ones, which create visual as well as actual modifications in space, towards equality (De Certeau & Mayol, 1998; Highmore, 2006).

Carey (2008), who has continued the work of De Certeau, imagined space as a product of 'generators', whose action through daily rituals, creates a rich culture that gives meaning to different values and specific norms. They have the power to preserve the social order and to verify it daily in certain spaces (institutions). Space, therefore, according to Carey, is produced by the communication of the every-day, which serves a particular symbolic view and perception of what is right and what is wrong as a social behavior. Hay (1996; 2018) corresponds with that view as well, by using the discussion of objects towards subjects. For Hay, space can be a metaphor for a landscape (following, again, the work of De Certeau and his view of the every-day), a landscape in which people in power can change, and mainly, decide what is focused and what blurred. What is in the foreground and what is in the background. The ability of the hegemony to determine the legitimate social practices and norms, and the kind of knowledge that should be valued, gives them the control over the audience.

2.2   Biological and cultural understanding of space

The deep connection people have with space, has a social and cultural context, but it also has a biological, animal-like connection. Those connections are constructed in the human condition and

they determine the way in which people approach space, and search for different kinds of spaces, since birth.

Going a little backwards, in his book, "The Hidden Dimension", Hall begins debating the concept of space by understanding its importance among animals. Humans are not, at all, any different, or as Hall puts it, *"...studying the models that men create to explain nature tells about man than about the part of nature being studied...".* (Hall, 1989, page 14). Indeed, Animals negotiate space, and use it in order to sustain a mutual understanding between the group members or the population. Humans do it, obviously, with culture. Culture is always considered the hidden dimension which separates us from other species and leads us to create a language and a mutual way of thinking (Hall, 1966). Although we use culture and we are defined by different cultures in different societies, in many aspects, we use concepts as space, and its implications on distance and density, in very similar ways.

Hall (1976) describes the spatial progress newborns experience in the beginning of their life, as one of the first processes they go through is to create their own identity. One cannot reach such an understanding without separating themselves from what is outside their own body. They need space but also to use space with 'extension transference', which is the ability to perceive space as having different actors and different interests that are other than oneself. Space in the form of distance. As for example, the basic nature of a baby is likely to understand at some point that their mother is not them, the baby. They understand it when they become hungry, but their mother and the food which comes along with her (physically and emotionally) is out of reach, in a distance, maybe out of sight. This is when the small baby starts taking into consideration space, by dividing what is extended outside themselves (Hall, 1966). In the city, people need distance all the time as they encounter many strangers and need to establish a set of norms to engage with them.

While Hall notes our biological connection to space, which is expressed uniquely among humankind through culture and language, Lacan (1977; Babich, 1996) contributes to the view of space in the field of Psychoanalysis. For Lacan, indeed, the newborn child creates an imagined order, which comes first with the understanding that there is something outside themselves (as of the mirror stage). By comparing to others that are not them, the baby creates both a psychological and social understanding about themselves. Along with the imaginary order, a symbolic one is created, an order that is manufactured through language, talking and writing, which gives meaning to space. Finally, in the 'order of the real', people are constantly conflicted by what is understood

and perceived by the imaginary (of themselves towards others) and the symbolic (others' understanding of what there is in the space), to what actually is in the space. According to Lacan, culture is the actor that guides people from the narcistic self and the imaginary, to the symbolic and social. Alas, human nature, by its psychological mechanism, calls for a resistance, by moving to the 'real' which is unreachable and chaotic.

Following the work of Hall and Lacan, Tuan (1977; 1979) is also a key scholar in the biological and the cultural understanding of the relationship between people and their spaces. In his work, he too, focuses on the developing mind of the newborn child, focusing on the way the child, with their acquired senses, learns how to create a distinction between themselves and their surroundings, their food, their environment. According to Tuan, *"...The human being, by his mere presence, imposes a schema on space. Most of the time he is not aware of it. He notes its absence when he is lost. He marks its presence on those ritual occasions that lift life above the ordinary and so force him to an awareness of life's values, including those that manifest in space. Cultures differ greatly in the elaboration of spatial schemata. In some cultures, they are rudimentary; in others they can be- come a many-splendored frame that integrates nearly all departments of life. Yet, despite the large outward differences, the vocabularies of spatial organization and value have certain common terms. These common terms are ultimately derived from the structure and values of the human body..."* (Tuan, 1977, pages 36-37).

Tuan refers to culture as the unique ability of the human species to create stories, symbols and explanation that are implanted on the environment, and to determine the society's relationship with it. In his book "Topophilia" (1990), Tuan describes how the human body shapes the perception of space by using 'thinking' to use space efficiently (food, shelter), to focus on valuable items in space while blurring others, and by creating a reality in space which is abstract and unseen (as gods, or spirits, to explain natural but catastrophic events). The human nature, he marks, is to seek identification (if social or individual) by using space, creating constructed ideas about the other, and putting themselves in the center. Topophilia, therefore, is the combination between a positive cognitive and emotional perception of the environment (unlike Topophobia, which marks the opposite). Landscapes create physical, cognitive, and emotional responses from human beings, which is deeply related to our history and our biological, and then cultural perception of space.

The cultural and biological understanding of space can be seen as a major issue in the urban and busy setting of the city. We have to consider that the differences between cultures, express

themselves in other issues, such as the use of loud voice, talking to each other from close distance and so forth (Hall, 1966). These differences affect cities as well. Theories on the subject discuss three key aspects that put pressure on the city. Those keys can help it blossom or fall under its own weight. One of those is surely density, along with the multiple experience of space as place, which would be discussed later, and the city as a social platform (Allen, Massey & Pryke, 2005). We can easily see and recognize the different ways in which space is conceived by people. Over a lifetime, space is visualized and analyzed by the human eye, which is adapted to understanding spaces, distances and to interpret them as cultural gestors. Research on the topic shows how people tend to get hotter and colder, feel anxiety or even aroused, depending on the way people around them use space. That means that space is being constructed, taught, and used in order to deliver and accept massages (Hall, 1989). Secondly, people tend to use codes while they get help and signals from their own senses. Without the fundamental understanding of space that is wrapped around each of us, it could not be possible (Brown & Altman, 1983).

According to Giddens (1984), space (along with time) is the place in which social activities occur. However, the abstraction of space as well time, leads to a necessity for something more solid, in which people could create an interaction with each other. This is the place (Allen, Massey & Pryke, 2005). It is the place, and not the space, which expresses a point of reference for two different dimensions that work in the daily lives of the urban residents. In the micro dimension, the place is where people interact, show their face, and make choices, with or without awareness. The macro dimension is barely noticed, nonetheless, it is what we experience when the space and the process intertwined in such places (Pred, 1983).

Pred points out and explains how an event is when something happens (to me, to you) in a certain space. At this point, this space receives a meaning, even a small one, and so it becomes a 'place'. A first-time kiss in a parking lot, a space for parking cars, becomes a place in which the couple's love first blossoms. For this process to (truly) succeed, the transition should be unnoticed, as it is based on time (when they kiss) and space (where they kiss) while it 'must' be connected to whoever initiates the process, and puts meaning into that space and that point of time.

Our understanding of processes of 'displacement' could be understood much more in this context. Indeed, previous research on the topic reveals that people leaving their 'home' of many years suffer from very similar experiences to people who lose a close person in their lives. Home is constructed in people's self-identity, as it consists so many events and moments in that space. As a result, when

they lose 'home' they feel as if they have lost a part of themselves and the narrative they have shaped as 'their lives' (Fried, 1967).

2.3   Technology as an actor in social and spatial change

In the previous section, I have tried to demonstrate the biological, cultural, and eventually the social centrality of space in the establishment of the social order and of the 'representation' of social reality, that seeks to perpetuate certain values and images that would serve selected groups and would disfavor others. Alas, Airbnb is a 'hospitality network', a service which is a technology-based initiative, with unique preferences that have an impact over space and virtual space (Oskam, J., & Boswijk, 2016; Chung, 2017). Therefore, it is crucial to understand the potential in which technology can influence space as to the organizing of the social order.

Technology, Zilberman (1998) noted, is the result of the combination of the productive human and the thinking human. Or, the ability to create practical applications through science. Such applications have an enormous, or even total, impact on social and economic theories, that portray the ability of a society to grow and to strive, by creating new technologies and by valuing and efficiently using knowledge as well as information. Such an approach is considered the theory of the 'Technological Determinism' or 'Media Determinism'. It is important to divide to the two main scholars in the field. The first, Marshall McLuhan (2008), sees technology as a key factor in the shaping and reshaping of society, if by its very basic moral assumptions, political as well as daily norms, etc. According to McLuhan, technology, or the new platform (or medium) and not the message itself, is what creates those changes in the way in which society communicates, discusses norms and creates representations of reality. For McLuhan, it is the language and use of language that create a conscious and individual perception of the social sphere.

Innis (1949), on the contrary, sees the Technological Determinism as what shapes society, as a result of technology's ability to be mobile more than ever, efficient, and the most important – accessible. As much as a platform has the ability to reach more people and thereby to spread its messages, so can it create a more effective reproduction of messages, and therefore, such a platform would be more crucial to the change in social order. According to Innis, platforms can have an influence on the spacetime, as it has the tendency to create changes in our perception of space and in the settings of space. Other platforms, create continuities (with previous platforms)

and so they allow the moving of society and the ability of a society to understand its past generations, thereby, they create change and influence our perception of the spacetime.

The theory of 'New Economy'[12], is a concept that comes with a message, in which old and traditional theories are no longer relevant in a reality in which sources are not limited. Because of that, in today's reality[13], it is knowledge and technologies that can handle information, which are the core engine for economic growth (Heller, 2003; Sennet, 2006). The 'New Economy' is identified as a representation of the strong relationship between capital and information. However, more than a theory, it has become the symbol of a perception (and also a potential) of high-speed success, Hi-Tech working norms, and most of all, a new power of corporations and enterprises who use complex information systems in order to gain power through knowledge, which is then used by the upper-classes (Bell, 1973; Castells, 1993; Regalia, I., & Sartor, 1992). In the Post-Fordist theory, such a theory virtually expresses how such technologies can create the ability of an extensive growth, with the values and trends of globalization. Alas, it also represents the negative nature of the new global world, that suppresses and prevents the growth of authentic local cultures, the colonial exploitation of poor populations or the resources of such third world countries, and the chaotic imprint of humankind on the global environment.

As it has become clear, the preferences, and the change in understanding the technological paradigm with a new set of eyes, are the result of the internet revolution. A revolution that has started technologically in the '80s, but only became public in the beginning of the '90s, as the World Wide Web, the internet. The internet was the first to enable the communication and the transfer of data from two unconnected computers, without having to share a mutual system, or server. After starting in the US, Switzerland and the rest of the western world, the internet became public and known throughout the entire world (Ruthfield, 1995).

The power of the internet itself lies on the fact that the internet is not an information source of one place, but of every place, and thereby, searching online, or surfing the web, is supposedly infinite. Web 2.0 had created what used to be some of the most popular platforms of communications, whose settings are still visible today in the new platforms. Platforms like blogs, chats, forums, and

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[12] As reviewed in the first part of the theoretical part, as part of the concept of tourism and urban tourism.
[13] The concept was coined in the '90s, during the big bubble-burst of the internet, which started with an historical high growth and demand for employees, and ended with the crash of most of the companies leading that phenomenon.

communities, have been using different technologies to provide different kinds of sharing of information and creating interaction between people (O'reilly, 2005; Aghaei et al., 2012).

It is possible to identify a few visible implications of the Web on the social order and the perception of representations. Virilio (1995) claims, the internet era is identified by creating a society that is habituated with immediate satisfaction, and by the tendency to accelerate social processes, if in the moral sense, the political or even the legal one. Even before the final invention of the internet, he predicted that such technologies would irreversibly distort the relationship humankind had with space, time, and body. In his experience, the progress of technology is faster than the progress of both the human mind and the academic research. The internet, so it is perceived, leads to an addiction to the experience of the 'on-line', that can cause the loss of perception and proportion between online life and the offline one.

Economically, Web 2.0 is also related to a new theory, The Long Tail theory (Anderson, 2007). This theory describes the new business model of the companies that struggle in the realm of the Web 2.0, like Netflix or Amazon, whose success derives from the ability to offer seemingly unlimited products (or services), most of which could fit only a relatively small number of people. Virtually, the opposite image of the economy by Adorno, who describes a world in which a few items can presumably fit the 'whole' public. Such a perception, for the first time, views the audience who cannot be educated to a specific culture, but choose by their platforms and texts by themselves.

In that sense, the internet had already changed the way in which information and knowledge transfer, and by doing so, it contradicts other interests of control and supervision. It allows the possibility to create gatherings that could and had numerous implications in the 'real world', and it has the potential and the technology to create a more efficient production. However, the internet is also related to new and negative phenomena, like pornography (different kinds of addictions, and also the freedom of discussing and arranging movements that have a destructive potential to society. Nonetheless, it is social media that has indeed brought to life the positive and negative prediction in the new challenges of technology.

2.4 Social media and the virtual community

It is possible to say, that the community is one of the most important anthropological concepts. Concepts that apply both on animals and on humankind. A community, in many senses and

throughout many periods of time, was (and in many spaces and cultures, still is) the most important and most active actor in the lives of its people (Hillery, 1955). Before the formation of the state, it was the community that was responsible for taking care of weak its members, like women, disabled, single-parents and elderly (Smyth, 2003; Thomson, 2003). The rise of the welfare state caused, over time, a replacement of communal solidarity with nationalistic ones. The welfare state has created a 'social contract' between the state and its population, that in time turns into identification with the state as the self (Baker, 2012; Riley, 2013).

With the fall of the welfare state, communities, until very recently, became less important or active in the social sphere and the urban reality[14]. Putnam (2000) discusses the fall of communities in his book, *'Bowling alone'*. In his view, there were several factors causing the weakening of communities in the United States of the '80s, most of which were related to the urban process. First, the capitalistic vision of lifestyle has led people to be more stressful, and with less time to engage in local communities. In addition, women started to be more and more active in the work force, which has led to the increasing sense of autonomy and search for individual success (for all genders), that has eventually led to less dependency or less social capital which can be gained in the local community. The suburbs have led to a stricter distinction between the place of labor and the place of residence or home, which has reduced the interaction with the neighborhood, and increased the time in the private car. Finally, and most importantly, the digital life and the attraction to the screen, has reduced human contact between people. Even though Putnam's work was presented only in the beginning of the millennium, his work cannot be more relevant today.

While the definition of the community can vary, there is a consensus that what identifies the traditional community is the existence of a group that creates interactions among themselves, they live in a shared geographical space, and they have common ties (Jonassen, 1961). Later on, it was discussed and agreed, that the necessity of a shared geographic space is not really needed for the establishment of a community. Therefore, it was concluded, that a community does not have to have shared geographical space, but it must have a space to interact. Such a realization and change are the core of what we now call the online social community, which lies in the heart of social media (Anderson, 2006; Kavoura, 2014).

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[14] While the author acknowledges the rise of new offline communities in the forms of urban initiatives (or others), which are mostly technologically-based, their presence would not be discussed, as this research would focus on consumption-based communities.

The rise of the social media happened in a fascinating time in human history. In the process of the formation of the urban, society has undergone several processes, often contradictory of each other. For example, the fall of family role in western society, contradicts the higher dependency of the family on the middle-agers, who suffer from an emotional as well as an economical burden (Miller, 1981; Künemund, 2006; Burke, 2017). Both their children, whose average age to leave the house and to reduce dependency keeps growing, and their parents, who have reached an old age and become less independent, require economical, emotional, as well as bureaucratical support. In addition, the current urban era is considered as the era of losing religion, and nationalistic drives. A perception which is indeed being tested after the result of the civil war in Syria, the Brexit in the UK, and the Trump presidency (among others). Such Events, have led to the continuing inconsistency and inability to form a united global European actor, and the shift of balance in the global foreign affair hierarchy (Ilik & Adamczyk, 2017; Gusterson, 2017).

Social media, in the frame of such a reality has created a new space that was again legitimated and exciting. Social media is a technology that created a much more dramatic social revolution, in the frame of the advancement from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0. As a mass communication tool, social media is considered the new media platform, that operates without the need of the user for software, and with the ability to arrange communication between people with common and opposite interests (Smith, 2009; Leonardi, 2017). The technology of social media is revolutionary for several reasons. First and most significantly, social media allows the creation of 'profiles'. Instead of the transiency that was identified with the former platforms on Web 1.0, the new platform supports the creation of 'virtual identities'. The virtual identity is the virtual 'face' of the individual, whose significance keeps increasing. As in the sense of the ability to collect social capital, and to use this capital both in the virtual and in the offline spaces. And as in the sense of the ability to redesign and reinvent the self to a fuller and sometimes even other representation of oneself (Boyd & Ellison, 2007; Chewar, McCrickard & Carroll, 2003).

In the beginning of the virtual communities, those groups were seen as a 'colorful' ground for role playing and changing of identities. Such communities, so it was perceived, were creating a new form of textual sharing, simultaneous burst of creativity, opinions, and values, that could create an integrative identity, that can contain more than one identity in one user. The power of the user lies in the difference between what was once seen as a consumer and today is a so-called equal member in communities (Anderson, 2006; Parsell, 2008). A user has the ability to gain social power and

use it to create a difference, if in the commercial sector, the social one, and even more, in the world of politics. The virtual world, and the virtual community, are considered as the very meaning of Geertz's 'deep play', a visible and efficient lab that is able to explore a variety of social situations and to measure the current (and past) discussion on main issues of society with great efficacy.

Second, the virtual community, in its free form, allows the creating of different situations in which there are multiple subjects. Meaning, multiple actors who have a voice and can fight for their values and influence society. This is the reason two main issues were the ones that were until recently silenced. First, the one of gender, which creates numerous groups of people that seek to debate different streams of feminism (Mendes, Ringrose & Keller, 2019; Miño-Puigcercós, R., Rivera-Vargas & Romaní, 2019), or anti-feminism, and the second, of the body and of sex. The social media is a flourishing space for discussing such issues that are still considered a taboo in many cultures, or unappropriated for women, in others (Dominguez-Whitehead, Whitehead & Bowman, 2017; Klein, 2020).

Third, the ability to create a discussion about the body, without having the actual body as a factor, is one of the important examples of the success of social media to create a transfer between traditional communities to virtual ones. One example of such transfer is the creation and the huge success of various kinds of online support groups. Such groups are always open to give support to its members while they are closed or even secret in order to keep their privacy. They have the ability to provide emotional support, professional information, and to dim the sense of loneliness. While such groups usually lack the emotional meaning of human contact, so far, they were found quite effective in reception research (Kisekka, V., & Sharman, 2014; Holtz, Smock & Reyes-Gastelum, 2015).

Last but not least, the rise of the social media arrived along with the increasing use (and types of uses) of the smartphone. The smartphone can be introduced as a revolution on itself, as it completely changes our daily uses of computers, but mainly, that is what has made social communities and direct communication into a consumption which is possible anywhere anytime (O'Regan, 2018; Marshall, Moncrief, Rudd & Lee, 2012).

The connection between the social media and the mobile phone has allowed the growth of numerous social networks, standing in front is the social network of Facebook, which is also the leader and pioneer of the new world of online communities. Facebook is such an important example because of its past in leading historical changes in the Arab world, in the shape of the

Arab spring (Papaioannou & Olivos, 2013; Gummerus, Liljander & Sihlman, 2017). And, because of the foreseen future, as Facebook, as a declaration, seeks to continue its expanding to the daily lives of its consumers, in the quest of replacing current activities such as buying and selling, travelling, and even dating in the big and infinite virtual space of users.

As such, the virtual community in social media is a social system, that has the power to provide cognitive stimulations, social needs, entertainment, as well as emotional satisfaction. Alas, the constantly changing nature of social media and social networks, already hints on a few of social media's dangers to society. The first, while communities have and still are being formed, research found that social media's main attraction for the user comes from a narcistic nature, which continues the tendency to individualize, but expresses it in a new radical way. Secondly, our continuous use and consumption of social media, turns the system itself into a powerful tool for collecting information, increasing the risk for users' privacy. Facebook and the like, have already been using such data to create a more efficient marketing system for their clients, and have already been accused of losing or giving personal data to third parties. Finally, and recently, social media has become a habitat for 'Fake-news'. For many, the flood of misleading information, is the result of the entrance of forces who try to ensure the online space would not be affective as a tool for hearing the 'other', as in the offline world, by copying similar offline methods of reproducing messages. As a result, many say that this already reflects on the current reality, or others who say it is due to happen in the very near future.

2.5 The sociological role of ICT

Information (and) Communication Technologies (ICT) is the title of a set of methods and techniques that specialize in sending, receiving, and transmitting electronic data. Or in other words, in the ability to communicate, transfer, but also to create information, by using either an application, or a device (Melody & Mansell, 1986; Leaning, 2006). The known and most discussed applications or devices are the traditional platforms, such as the television or the radio, but also the internet, smartphones, and digital technologies. ICTs are often described by three main dimensions. The first, knowledge based, which seeks to explore the level of awareness of users to the actual technology and to the fashion in which ICT is influencing people's daily lives (Edquist & Riddell, 2000; Allen, Potter, Sharp & Turvey, 2012) . In another dimension, research on ICT discusses the ability to access ICT services, the ability to master them efficiently by users and

integrate them into their daily lives. Such work focuses on the changes in communication routine and the connection of earlier forms of communication practices to ICT evolution (Mallard, 2005; Haddon, Mante, Sapio, Kommonen, Fortunati & Kant, 2006). The third and last dimension of understanding ICT, is the emphasis on the broader implications of these technologies on the human condition and the social order (McQuail, 1987; Preston, 2001).

There are some key concepts and theories regarding the importance and the place of ICT in the western life. First, it is well connected with Post-Materialism. The concept of this theory suggests that due to modern educational processes, later generations would put more focus on material ambitions and less on the more basic needs, corresponding with Maslow's widely distributed and accepted theory. Inglehart (1971; 1981; 2007), considering Post-Materialism, sees the future of society in the absence of 'scarcity', in which people are no longer in need of chasing what they do not own. Such a society sees the economic growth, individually, nationally, and globally, as its main goal and purpose. Such a reality reflects on the idea of the age of information, and the centrality of information in which upon the possession of knowledge, new classes would emerge, and old ones would be modified.

The age of information, and the way in which it corresponds with the Post-materialistic view, sees a global world, in which political spaces as well as economic spaces that are both online and offline, would be replaced with an interaction that is based on taste and value, in which no limitations of economic growth and class mobilization exist, and access is open to all (Golding, 2000; Floridi, 2014). According to such a view, which seems quite far today, ICT would play a key role. Alas, ICT could be the technological tool for freedom of consumption and production of goods, ideas, and values. ICT has also the ability to limit such freedom, leaving communities bound to their local market.

While such a view still seems irrelevant today, it is possible to notice to some important trends in the global labor market. Even before ICT, the social order of the Post-Fordist economy has been highly dependent on the service industry. Alas, studies show that while the steady increase in the growth of 'light production', that lies on the value of information, creates significant changes inside the service sector, it leads to the evolution of new norms in work relations, the actual practicing of daily work and the increasing dependency on technology (Roach, 1988; Tomlinson, 2000). While such trends are already visible, social and economic institutes are struggling to keep in pace with ICT's existing abilities, as more and more employees leave the service market's industrial sector

and become 'knowledge workers' (Lewis, Agarwal & Sambamurthy, 2003; Brodeur & Dupont, 2006; Mosco & McKercher, 2009).

The rise of the importance of information and its social connection to ICT, was finally properly defined by Castells (1996; 1997; 2004), that in his view, all societies have developed through the power of knowledge, but the current one is the first whose mastering of knowledge (processing, transferring, generating) is the core source to agency and production. According to Castells, ICT is the ability to extend the human activity, in shape, in space, and in size. As can be understood, Castells views the ICT as a tool that would allow a massive growth in productivity and will free people to focus more on their lifestyle and culture. In his important trilogy, he pictures society as one that is already structurally centered in the virtual network, combined with individual virtual self. While the work of Castells is quite compelling, critics argue that culturally, human society has always been built on text and information, which defines and shapes the social order. As such, ICT is nothing more than this tendency, reaching new global scales, which hints more on the features of post-modernism, than on technologies.

ICT is considered a platform for progress and change in four specific domains. In the emerging of new economics and new economic developments, in business and in education. The accumulation of ICT usage and integration into most domains of consumption and interaction (Haddon, 1992). First, such developments are being discussed as revolutionary in the way in which identity is being perceived and manipulated. Identity in the frame of ICT, is no longer imposed, but rather chosen, daily, recreated and reproduced. By being so integrated and common, ICT blurs the lines between the virtual and the real, and creates conflicts between a local and national identity and a global identity, which is produced and learned in the ICT application (Rannenberg, Royer & Deuker, 2009; Taipale, Wilska & Gilleard, 2017). Secondly, the fast and somewhat flat presentation of identity in the web, creates a reality in which 'politics of identity' receives more importance and reduces the circulation of symbolic appearance of more opinions and ideas (Golding, 2000; Bendle, 2002).

In addition, ICT is a key concept in understanding shifts in patterns of inequality. The future of ICT in the information age, presumes to lead to a reduction in inequality, in which knowledge is cheaper and easier to access (Gurumurthy, 2006; Rahim, Pawanteh & Salman, 2011). Alas, a view of immediate future implications, suggests that access itself cannot be taken for granted, as the knowledge and ability to sort, value and critic poor information, is not spread equally in society,

and therefore nor the ability to use such information for capital and social capital (Van Dijk , 2005; Lewandowsky, Ecker & Cook, 2017). Such concerns, are also the ones that foresee information in the frame of ICT as the key factor in the ability to gain power while using virtual spaces in different classes and geographic locations (Fuchs, 2007; Pleyers, 2010).

Finally, looking From a philosophical and even practical point of view, such applications create outstanding changes concerning our perception of space, just because of their ability to ignore and overcome fundamental spatial issues such as time, distance and density (DuPont & Takhteyev, 2016; Preston & Kerr, 2001). That debate, which would be the focus of that research from the glance of home and its spaces, presses the issue of how far, how strongly ICT applications could maneuver people's perception regarding using space and the ability to define it. The ability to consider and control spaces regardless of their location, their accessibility to us is still a hot topic in the academic sphere (Dijst, 2004; Schwanen, Dijst & Kwan, 2006; 2008; Carrasco, Hogan, Wellman & Miller, 2008).

Some philosophers have actually demonstrated how ICT technologies create a new balance, that for some, is a 'game-changer' in our understanding of space and time. This change is all around us, influencing our most immediate spaces, our daily activities and mostly, uncover the unstable notion of space (Kitchin & Dodge, 2011). As Rose puts it, software reveals how the production of space is actually *"...radically unstable notion of spatiality...extraordinarily convoluted, multiply overlaid, paradoxical, pleated, folded, broken and, perhaps, sometimes absent..."* (Rose, 1999, pp247). In other words, the life with ICT is threatening to terminate the human experience of space, in the image of flow of goods, services and information faster than ever. Because of this, Castells notes, states would become less important, and life would be organized around the ability to interact with the global, and conflict with the local. Such a conflict, Castells notes, prevents the ability to interact and use the features of the new technologies freely, as they create a burden and conflict, of a cultural and daily nature.

Such is also the case of time. Time, as Bauman (1995; 1999) marks, has become now, in the age of knowledge and ICT, more than ever before, the representation of money, which for some is the ability to acquire social as well as economical capital in a world in which distance no longer exists. For others, alas, it is the penetration into their daily and leisure parts of life, as instead the 'death of labor', as predicted (because of phenomena like working from home, reducing meetings and so forth), space and time have adapted to allow labor at all times and in every space. In other words,

ICT, has created the possibility to save time, create efficient working methods, which overcome spatial separation as well as working habits and limitations. ICT is considered a key facilitator of such trends.

Latour (2005; 2012) continued this debate as he, corresponding with the work of Castells, claims that ICT technologies must get our "social" attention as do any other interactions of processes we witness. Meaning, our tendency to account only what is human to what there is in space is wrong, we should also include animals, objects and technology, to fully understand what is happening to space and in space. Castells notes on the importance of the network in the ability to gain power, while he sees ICT as a tool for reconstructing the way networks are facilitated. Latour continues this line of thinking by viewing mobility as an act which enables the gaining of agency, and technology as a force that as any other actor and entity, can be 'translated' by the understanding of one such network, or as part of others. It can also be used to affect interactions and the mechanisms of gaining capital. For Latour, some actors are in the power of locating other items in the network in the frame of space and time, and some other actors are located, in the presence and in the relationship of power and agency with the hegemony. The hegemony, as described by Garud, Jain, and Kumaraswamy (2002), creates standards of communications, which favor the powerful, and the ability of others to use the same technology.

Alas, the effort of setting limitations often creates failures in creating such standards, as ICT is unable to set and fulfill its potential. The process of 'Standardization', Latour has determined, is the process of negotiation, in which every actor displays their intention of being part of a network, while trying to position themselves in a location that would benefit them the most. ICT's 'Standardization', is the result of sense-making (what that network or system benefits such actor), of negotiation, and at last, the design of the network, that determines the freedom and 'potency' each actor has in the system, if to be located or to locate others.

3. *'The Crown Sharing'*
Collaborative Production and Consumption Models

3.1 The evolution of social economies

The 'sharing economy' and its known preferences today, is quite a new concept in the business and academic realm. Although it has been known in its new form only since 2008, 'sharing economy'

as a philosophy, is as ancient as time (Lessig, 2008; Belk, 2014; Jenkins, Ford & Green, 2018). It is possible to connect today's 'sharing economy' to traditional sharing society or community. According to this concept, a functional economy can be established by creating a community in which each is sharing what they can produce, while making sure that everyone contributes and also receives somewhat equal rights and goods for their wealth (Hamari, Sjöklint & Ukkonen, 2016; Faraj, Jarvenpaa & Majchrzak, 2011; Hartley, 2012).

In many ways, the Israeli Kibbutz, which was found on the basis of communist principles, is an example of a local scale 'sharing economy'. The kibbutz, a form of a small village, has abolished, in its original form, the concept of individual income, personal fortune, or socio-economic status which became irrelevant. Although formally, kibbutz villages still exist in Israel today, they have lost most of their original ideology, and are supported mainly by successful factories with a historical steady local success. Whether the Kibbutz or other primitive forms of sharing goods as a substitute for the current concept of money, the essence of the 'sharing economy' has always been around (Abramitzky, 2008; Russell, Hanneman & Getz, 2011; Leiser & Zaltzman, 1990). The difference between the old and the new sharing economies, is the fact that those former economies were based on a local rich economy that was located in a single place. Today's sharing economies rely on technologies that are able to break spatial rules and boundaries and overcome them.

Over the course of the last years, many, from different schools, have explored the concept of the 'sharing economy'. From Harvard Law School the concept of Commons-based peer production can be found, which refers to the ability of groups to co-produce services and products to the whole potential community (if a global one or a local one, depending on the scope and relevancy of the service provided and the setting of the community), by working all together (Benkler & Nissenbaum, 2006; Arvidsson, Caliandro, Cossu, Deka, Gandini, Luise & Anselmi, 2016; Meng & Wu, 2014). This system also refers to the new abilities of technology, such as working together, which could be expressed by working in entirely different places around the globe through the computer. such an example is the 'Peer to Peer' (P2P).

This concept describes the technological ability of two end-clients to communicate and consume (data, services, knowledge) in a system that requires no navigation between the two parties (Frenken & Schor, 2017; Schor & Fitzmaurice, 2015). For example, P2P is highly popular for pirate consuming of entertainment, provided by programs that allow that connection to occur, on the base of file sharing, or video on demand (live streaming). All such concepts and developments

are essentially different aspects of sharing services and goods on the basis of technological opportunities.

P2P services are also the result of a new approach of mutual or collaborative consumption, or a third way of production, one that is not public nor for-profit, in which both the seller (host, in Airbnb's case) and the buyer (guest) are in the transaction for different or similar motives of consumption, motives which are often not financial, especially for the seller (Zervas, Proserpio & Byers, 2017; Gravari-Barbas & Guinand, 2017). P2P is generated, as Bauwens (2005) notes, by a group of producers who have the freedom to share their valued-data without an active navigator, and through a universal free and accessible platform.

Benkler & Nissenbaum (2006), correspond to Bauwens' view of P2P, by putting the philosophical concepts as autonomy and independency in the heart of the platform. Such expressions of such values are platforms like Linux or Wikipedia, that survive and prosper by the contribution of volunteers that initiate the sharing among the members from an ideological motives, communal, and even universal perspectives, and drives. Such drives and motivations often create conflicts, or rather alternatives that are in the quest of replacing national or private services, with political and even moral implications.

Arvidsson and his associates (2016), add to this, that it is not only the service itself, or the replacement which a third-way production can offer, but also the value of the sharing to the sharer, as they can, and usually do, benefit from gaining social capital. *"... Value in CBPP (Common Based Peer Production, A.N) is related to contribution to such entrepreneurial projects. Such contributions need not only be economic or technical but are often also ethical. Reputation mirrors peer estimations of an individual's ability to live virtuously according to the ethos of a particular project. Within CBPP reputation is forming as a new 'ficitious commodity' that is able to translate 'social cues and motivations' into exchange value…"*. (pages 61-62).

As can be noticed, P2P accommodation is a concept that carries different names, however, the concept remains similar in all. It has already been considered a social phenomenon for a few decades, especially for expert travelers and technologically advanced people. The difference between then and now, however, and the reason P2P accommodations are so well noticed, for the first time, is its large impact on urban tourism and the damage that this social phenomenon creates to the professional tourism industry, as to the urban life as a whole (Gutiérrez, García-Palomares, Romanillos & Salas-Olmedo, 2017; Prayag & Ozanne, 2018; Huber, 2017).

P2P is considered a 'new' hospitality network. In the past, this concept did exist, however, only in specific blogs or websites. Today, P2P is manufactured by fast and easy-to-use technology that welcomes, for the first time, the mainstream to enjoy. A hospitality network is defined as a community based network, or web-based (or both), which allows the communication between a host and a guest, and allows them to create a solution for tourism, such as a collaboration between the local and the tourist, as Airbnb cleverly presents (Oskam, J., & Boswijk, 2016; Batle, Garau-Vadell & Orfila-Sintes, 2020; Sotiriadis & Van Zyl, 2017).

One concept that managed to rise among others, prior to the massive popularity of the 'sharing economy', is the one of Collaborative Consumption. Collaborative Consumption refers to and contains many symbols of the 'sharing economy'. Its focus is on the concept of using of the same products by different people, which is cost reducing, environment friendly, and economically efficient (Belk, 2014; Perren & Grauerholz, 2015; Leismann, Schmitt, Rohn, H & Baedeker, 2013). This concept, which was introduced by Felson and Spaeth already in 1978, has received massive attention from the academic research. The research focuses on exploring consuming patterns for market purposes, on understanding motives for collaboratively consuming and providing services and products, and on understanding how sharing goods and services could be a base for sustainable communities, and sustainable systems.

While the media refers to collaborative consumption and 'sharing economy' as the same concept, there are a few significant differences between the two, which must be clarified. First, Collaborative Consumption is hardly new, and could be seen as the basic principles of the traditional markets that still exist around the world (Felson & Spaeth, 1978; Belk, 2014). Second, Collaborative Consumption is focused on the actual form of consumption, rather of the form of community and the use of technology to install such a community to thrive and spread. Third, Collaborative Consumption, as a consuming based system, does not value human interaction or social experience in the process of transaction, nor does it values putting the people behind the service in the front (Leismann, Schmitt, Rohn & Baedeker, 2013; Perren & Grauerholz, 2015). For example, the Chinese operations of bike sharing around the world, like Mo-Bike or Ofo, could both be good examples of collaborative consumption, rather than 'sharing economy'. They both create a system with resources of service and goods (bikes parked on the street which can be unlocked with a smartphone), which allows the bike-sharing to happen without any human interaction (Rong, Hu, Ma, Lim, Liu & Lu, 2018).

On the contrary, the 'sharing economy' has been developed, as claimed, or at least inspired by the philosophical thought of William Forster Lloyd. In his 1833 essay, he establishes a theory called the 'tragedy of the commons'. Lloyd describes the social individual as a selfish creature who exploits society's resources for his own interest and his alone (Hardin, 1968). Originally, the theory was built to explain problems relevant then, in the arrangement of public herder in which farmers could raise their cows for their business and family. Eventually, Lloyd describes how that social idea was actually hurting the efficacy of resources to exhaustion. The human nature, he claims, has the tendency to exploit resources, as much as possible, without thinking about the long-term consequences. Foster's theory has led to many developments, from the concept of sustainability to anthropology, sociology, and economics (Moore & White, 2010).

That theory has led to a new exploration of new economic structures, in which individuals can possess the agency to use, rent or sell services or products. These structures defy the traditional one of organization, employees, and clients (McCay & Jentoft, 1998; Dixon, 1991).

Research tells that the 'sharing economy' had started its world spread with the great economic crisis of 2007-2008. According to this theory, the loss of jobs, and increase in prices has forced individuals to strive for new solutions to improve their financial situation, leading them to find in the 'sharing economy', whose legitimacy kept growing, a green yet financial opportunity, with social ambition.

3.2 Definition and debate

As emphasized, the 'sharing economy' is one successful concept in many, and while the differences are small, they can create a confusion and even miscommunications among scholars. For this research paper, 'sharing economy' should be divided into two main types of organizations. One for-profit, in which a technological solution is provided by a private company (as UBER, Airbnb, etc.) that allows the connection of people who wish to create a financial interaction of goods or services, while collecting a fee for navigating between the parties (Nnajiofor, 2017; Zervas et al., 2017). Alternatively, 'sharing economy' could be non-profit, that allows the exchange of goods or services without any financial interaction, like an independent community that allows free exchange of bikes or a book club (Schor & Cansoy, 2019; Richardson, 2015).

Although normally, enterprises do not tend to invest in non-profit 'sharing economy' operations, many of them do exist. In this sense, Airbnb is being perceived and examined as a for-profit organization, and CouchSurfing as a non-profit organization. Nevertheless, both are considered by this definition, an expression of the official concept of 'sharing economy' (Slee, 2017; Wang & Nicolau, 2017; Oskam, der Rest & Telkamp, 2018; Molz, 2013; Geiger & Germelmann, 2015).   .

Alas, scholars around the globe tend to question that definition, and find different aspects which should be noted as 'sharing economy'. One important debate is of the actual principle of sharing. According to Eckhardt & Bardhi (2015), the concept of sharing cannot be determined as such when the one who shares, and the one who enjoys the shared goods or services do not know each other, and the sharing is structured by a monetized exchange, eliminating the whole concept of sharing. Instead, Eckhardt & Bardh suggest a different name for the phenomenon, the Access Economy. Meaning, putting the focus on the privilege that derives from the combination of an enterprise and its used technology. They continue to claim, that there should be two kinds of Access Economies, one that highlights the financial benefits of the transaction, and another that highlights the social ones. They claim that a company focusing on the financial aspect of the service (and market it accordingly), would be more likely to succeed than others that focus on the social aspect[15]. In their view, not a community is the basis for a successful 'sharing economy' initiative, but rather an ability to attain the benefits of an economy without ownership and misuses of resources, as Foster initially stated.

As Eckhardt & Bardhi, so is Arnould and Rose (2016) critical with the concept of 'sharing'. Alas, where Eckhardt & Bardh see access, Arnould and Rose see mutualism, in the sense that a 'sharing economy' can 'release' society from the chain of formal or traditional economy to an economy in which all parties are free to trade, sell, and negotiate with other parties, if for-profit or for non-profit, as rules of financial interaction have been structurally built to limit the individual and put authorities as an unnecessary actor in the process. Such direct financial interaction is already well established in different industries, in which there are free transactions between businesses or even between businesses and costumers. Alas, the concept is quite new, especially regarding large scale and market shapers and the big enterprises affecting and designing traditional industries. Here, once again, technology is a key factor in the change, as social media, smartphones and as discussed,

[15] That claim would be addressed in paragraph 4.3 about Airbnb as a 'sharing economy' business.

ICT expressions, lead to new possibilities of new structured transactions that become an on-growing part of more and more markets.

In addition to the work of Eckhardt & Bardhi, and Arnould & Rose, it is also extremely useful to use Belk's (2014) identification of a 'sharing economy', as a pseudo-sharing economy. Belk is offering a discussion of four types of such pseudo systems. The first, in the shape of long-term or short-term renting and leasing. In such cases, interaction is limited to the parties, and the internet, or the ICT expression, provides only the ability to present useful data and select one solution over the other. When 'sharing economy' aims to make profit, all parties can gain from the service, but no one actually 'senses' an act of 'sharing'. Belk takes CouchSurfing and Zipcar as important examples. Zipcar is an example of a local renting application (that works only in parts of the US), and CouchSurfing was established as a cultural experience, in which no payment is required. While Zipcar started as a business and for-profit organization, CouchSurfing did not, and it became one over time.

But there are other pseudo sharing services, whose sharing is less explicit. Such is the case of the online social networks, like Facebook or Instagram. In such cases, the actual service is the community and the exchange of content is the shared service. For such online communities, the sharing components means different values to each party. The members consume data that has an entertainment value, informative, emotional, or social ones. Alas, for the service provider, the shared is what keeps people on the website (for a longer exposure to advertisements), and what helps personalize advertisement by using the collected data. While the online communities as Facebook or others alike create equal members, such sites thrive through profit. Therefore, pseudo-sharing for Belk (2014), is examples of services whose members are not equal (not all members 'share'), are for-profit (the collaborative perspective is not the dominant or the main purpose of the service), or that a sense of community is absent.

3.3 Between 'sharing economy' to 'platform economy'

Finally, and as an introduction to the very and most relevant theory today regarding the 'platform economy'. The 'sharing economy', in this sense, is only one type of a platform economy, that regards the foundation and centralization of 'platforms', that are not based of creating a 'market', per se, but instead, of making a 'connection', in the sense of connecting, eventually, two parties

into a joint activity, that could, or shouldn't, endure an economic component in them, in the frame of 'matchmaking' (Kenney & Zysman, 2016; Damiano & Hao, 2008).

'Matchmaking' is focused on the ability of a platform create a good match between two parties, in which the two select each other, in order to create a value. For example, UBER, in that sense, is a monetized platform whose original purpose was matching between drivers and passengers who look for a social value aside to their self-interest. The passenger, of getting of getting from one place to another quickly, and cheaply, and the driver, of reducing the cost of their travel (Pujadas & Curto-Millet, 2019). Or 'Tinder', as many similar platforms, that match two people who seek a friendly, romantic, or sexual encounters with no monetized agenda, but the one of the platform itself, that enjoys financial success by advertising in the platform, and by 'premium' services that accelerate or improve the ability of better matchmaking by giving an advantage in the competition to make a successful match (McKenzie, 2020).

Among the many types of the 'platform economy', it is possible to mention two and popular models of economies, which have the ability and tendency of penetrating more and more traditional sectors. Such as for examples, restaurants that seek to offer delivery services. In such cases, 'transactions economies', or 'two-sides markets', are platforms that offers very diverse benefits to two different segments. In the food sector, such platforms, offers one market of delivery to consumers, and another market for unprofessional delivery workers, that are able to deliver the food, with minimum adaptation of the restaurant itself (Alvarez-Palau, Viu-Roig & Molet, 2020).

Other important aspect of the platform economy is of the 'innovation economy', that creates services that allows a connection and new techniques and methods to connect between creative or new services to the 'crowed'. Such example is of platforms that helps innovators to reach their audience by allowing them the possibility of investing in such a new service by crowdfunding, that is normally successful, when the user reach a certain goal that enable the production of the service (Nigam, Mbarek & Benetti, 2018).

The 'platform economy', therefore, is a more specific look and understanding of operation such as Airbnb, in which the traditional division between buyers and sellers is no longer relevant, or sufficient, to describe and understand the complicated and motivational process of a connection between two parties, by adding finally, another party, which is the platform itself, and its setting, as Airbnb, could, and should be seen, as a changer of their market, the tourism market.

4. *'A First Check-In'*

Understanding the Airbnb Phenomenon

4.1 Airbnb as part of the urban tourism debate

Airbnb is an American corporation founded in 2007 after its founders have moved to San Francisco and realized how high the renting prices were. They have decided to spread an air mattress in their apartment, allowing people to come and sleep over for low costs. By connecting this idea to the new technological possibilities (as ICT), they managed to open, in 2008, a website called 'Airbed & breakfast', which in 2009 had eventually changed to Airbnb[16]. In the course of that year, the website has started to expand, offering a variety of spaces for rent in different conditions, allowing the website to grow and become popular also outside San Francisco. Until the beginning of 2011, the owners, Brian Chesky and Joe Gebbia, have announced the booking of the 1,000,000th night[17]. During that year, Airbnb has started to open international offices, first in Europe, and then in other places around the world, such as Australia, Singapore, and other Asian countries. The year of 2012 is considered in literature as the year Airbnb had become a significant player in the urban tourism market (Stabrowski, 2017; Mobley, 2020).

Airbnb is an online 'marketplace' that started as a website but today it also offers an application in different platforms. A marketplace is a space in which different actors sell and buy products. Airbnb, as an organization, navigates the transaction between the different parties and receives payment for doing so (Fradkin, 2017; Edelman & Luca, 2014). In recent years, research has been extremely fruitful in the understanding of Airbnb's success, which can be summed up in the following issues. (1) Airbnb is a hospitality network, which is presented as a community. An online community. A community would help both sides gain trust in other peers in the community, trust that is necessary due to the delicacy of this transaction. In the terminology of Airbnb, on one hand there is a host, who needs confidence and assurance in order to allow strangers to enter their own home, knowing it is a safe decision. On the other hand, the guest, who needs the same trust in order to feel safe and comfortable in a foreign home, usually while living with strangers (Celata, Hendrickson & Sanna, 2017; Oskam, J., & Boswijk, 2016; Mittendorf, 2016). (2) Airbnb offers an easy and safe monetization of the transaction process. Unlike other hospitality networks, that usually do not ask for money in exchange for hospitality (for example – CouchSurfing), or others

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[16] Airbnb site.
[17] Brand-Education.

that contain a small and selected group of people who are part of their community, Airbnb wishes to create transactions in large numbers. The technological solution allows that safe exchange, which also encourages peers to keep the transaction in the platform (Ikkala & Lampinen, 2015; O'Regan & Choe, 2017). (3) Airbnb has set foot in the urban market, being at the front of the most important products in the urban tourism market – the 'feel like a local' experience (Russo & Quaglieri Dominguez, 2013; Richards & Hall, 2003).

Airbnb, as a declared collaborative consumption organization, offers a unique and seemingly perfect experience (on paper). For once, hosts can enjoy the ability to use their unused space in order to make profit. In addition to that profit, they are also able to create new experiences with tourists from around the world, learn about new cultures, and create a new kind of intimacy in their own home. Guests can find accommodation in authentic homes of locals while paying less, and learning the culture of the place they visit, in an unprecedented way, by the locals themselves, and while seeing and being part of the locals' daily lives. Although this clean image of the Airbnb experience is often far from being the reality of its members, if hosts or guests, as found in many researches, such images are indeed found often (Paulauskaite et al., 2017; Lampinen & Cheshire, 2016; Lalicic & Weismayer, 2017).

In the beginning, Airbnb's goal was to multiply the initial goal of the project, by creating interactions between guests and stay-at-home hosts. Meaning, initially, guests could choose from beds in a private room at a local home, or a bed in a shared and non-private space (like a living room), with a stay-at-home host. Over the years, and due to their success, the accommodation options have changed so that today, in most countries and cities, more than 70% of the listings are of entire homes[18] Sometimes, those homes are of private people, who choose to leave home when guests arrive, if for a vacation or other arrangement (like parents, partners, friends). However, most of those listings are actually of private investors who possess more than one house, and the listing is not their actual home. In the terminology of Airbnb, they are called 'Airbnb lords'. Airbnb lords are described as owners of multiple households, with a pure business perspective. Additionally, companies offer Airbnb listings and often, their entire business is designed to create Airbnb rooms and market them on the website as such (Stone, 2017; Guttentag, Smith, Potwarka & Havitz, 2018). In addition to the mentioned above, many listings of private rooms on Airbnb are of non-staying

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[18] It is important to note a recent change Airbnb made after years of dividing between 'shared room', 'private room' and an 'entire house', that now is named as 'entire place', signaling their movement and expansion to new solutions and to new segments of hosts and guests all together.

Airbnb hosts, as people create Airbnb houses in which 2-8 rooms are offered separately, in a home without a stay-at-home host19.

Today, Airbnb works in 191 countries, thousands of toured cities and has over 150 million listed members, which sums up to approximately 5 million beds world-wide (Stabrowski, 2017; Mobley, 2020). Research shows, that in the last four years, Airbnb has become a growing alternative to leisure and business trips. The ability to be such an alternative, with the increasing numbers of populations who can afford a vacation nowadays, has created a massive and perhaps an unnatural growth in many cities, a growth that distorts the order in the urban tourism market, but especially distorts the urban processes, which are prominent in very toured and popular cities, as New-York (Kaplan & Nadler, 2015; Stabrowski, 2017; Törnberg & Chiappini, 2019), Barcelona (Gutiérrez et al., 2017; Sans & Quaglieri, 2016; Lambea Llop, 2017), Amsterdam (Guttentag, 2015; Oskam, van der Rest & Telkamp, 2018) , and also Lisbon (Palos-Sanchez & Correia, 2018; Barata-Salgueiro et al., 2017; Santos, 2015).

In the urban tourism market, the professional industry is protesting against this trend, especially because as opposed to them, in most countries, Airbnb has not been regulated yet, and hosts often do not pay or pay very little taxes (Jefferson-jones, 2014; Kaplan & Nadler, 2015; Guttentag, 2015). The professional industry's gap in the tax obligation denies them of the ability to compete with the unprofessional new market. That is also the reason that in many countries, it is the hotel industry that pushes the local tax authorities to pursue Airbnb hosts or demand to impose new taxes that would express the new use of houses as businesses (Zervas et al., 2017). In addition, while the professional industry are required to follow clear rules on the way they can accept guests, in the informal or unprofessional industry such rules normally do not apply, and so it raises local and national concerns about security and safety (Phua, 2019; Peeters, Dijkmans, Mitas, Strous-de Boer & Vinkesteijn, 2015).

Finally, and as already noted, Airbnb distorts the natural processes of the city, distorts, and mainly enhances them. Research in the matter has found that normally, the existence of Airbnb raises house renting and buying prices. In addition, house owners tend to transform houses that were made initially for rent, into short-term renting, in order to increase the profit potential. However, such trends lead to the eviction of the local population and to the reduction of house renting

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19 As it will be extensively discussed in the methodologic part, there are serious difficulties in obtaining real numbers on the percentage of stay-at-home hosts compared to business-oriented hosts.

possibilities. Such phenomena, as well as others that derive from the new flood of tourists, create severe changes to the urban landscape and the diminishing of the local population, as has already been noted as the tourism-gentrification (Roeiofsen, 2018; Barron, Kung & Proserpio, 2018; Farronato & Fradkin, 2018).

In this situation, cities need to make tough decisions about their tourism policies. They must take into consideration the growth which the city enjoys from as a result of the touristic flood, but they also the need to improve basic infrastructures in the city in order to handle a city of locals, commuting workers, and tourists altogether. They need to control the flood for security reasons, to ensure tax payments which would fund the required infrastructure, and finally, to protect the rights and the homes of electing locals.

These crucial conflicts and questions on how to manage a toured city in the age of Airbnb are the basis of the urban tourism debate today. Questions on transportations, infrastructures, and urban regeneration, sustainability and cultural agendas, continue being in the heart of urban studies, as urban tourism, so it seems, is one, if not the key catalysator of today's urban life.

4.2 Airbnb as a technological platform

Airbnb, as an ICT expression that probably has the most influence on spaces of homes, would be the focus of this study (with a possibility to penetrate other similar applications, as CouchSurfing). It is necessary to understand the different aspects of this phenomenon in which the application connects people from all over the world, providing a sort of a solution for the nuclear family, when to many people and to many cities this becomes their rescue at times of financial crisis. Literature on Airbnb is divided mostly into two or three fields in which Airbnb has already been found to be playing an important role.

The first one is Airbnb as one of the greatest success stories of the 'sharing economy'. As discussed, while the 'sharing economy' has been criticized a lot in the last years for being no more than a fancy cover for a marketing model that creates a sense of community, while sharing experiences with strangers (Andreotti, Anselmi, Eichhorn, Hoffmann & Micheli, 2017). Airbnb (along with UBER) have been found recently in many senses as services whose business model is of a pseudo-'sharing economy', rather than a true sharing one. As Arcidiacono et al (2018) notes, *"sharing economy as a concept, its semantic ambiguity and entrepreneurial diversity, does not simply*

express the aim to 'hack' the dominant economic systems or advance (if not surpass) the neoliberal capitalist model, but rather constitute an attempt to hybridize and contaminate it with a mix of innovation and tradition…" (p284). In their review of the book 'Unboxing the Sharing Economy', they discuss the sociological importance of unpacking innovation in the image of Airbnb, which is still lacking a sociological theory.

'Sharing economy' in this sense, could and should refer to, or theorize, new and advance visions of contemporary capitalism, in the image of 'Extractivism', that in the industrial capitalism, refers to the 'extraction' of common goods, such as natural resources, and in the neo-extractivism, refers to the potential of re-valorization of capital, by infrastructure enterprises, such as Google or Facebook. It is possible to understand that connection, in the word of Gago & Mezzadra (2017), that claim that *"…the concept of extraction supposes a certain exteriority of capital to living labor, to social cooperation. The extractive relation presents itself rather differently from the relationship of exploitation formed in a factory based on the stipulation of a contract of wage labor. While the contract introduces the worker into a space that is directly organized by capital, in cases ranging from popular finance (through credit for consumption) to Facebook (through a company that extracts value from the interaction of data), we are faced with capitalist actors who do not directly organize the social cooperation that they exploit…"* (page 579). Therefore, Gago and Mezzadra complete a full circle, in the shape of knowledge and social usage, which are derived from counter interest of the new factors of production, and the public.

The second issue that has been causing much concern and attention is Airbnb's influence on tourism. Usually, research and the opinions are divided into two, as some see the ICT applications as a significant potential (and existing) growth in the tourism economy both in the local and national level, as more tourist can afford travelling to new locations while spending a lot of money in the different restaurants, attractions and stores (Guttentag, 2015). Airbnb also promotes a new vision of tourism, one that 'feels like home' (Ikkala & Lampinen, 2015). Some studies have already been done to understand how much Airbnb really changes the city (and lets the city change the comers). Nevertheless, the research on the issue is fairly new and requires much more attention.

On the other hand, many fear the outcome of Airbnb tourism which has still not been regularized in many countries and so neither the city nor the government can enjoy the potential taxes (Jefferson-jones, 2014). Cities such as Barcelona, Amsterdam or New York have already taken a step forward by preventing the creation of "Airbnb lords" as much as possible. Those "lords"

manipulate the concept of the website as they, as private owners, create a sort of a network of many apartments that run much more like a hotel than like "home sharing" (Nnajiofor, 2017). While New York has been working on the subject because of the concern and the actual result of dropping numbers of rent listings (and growing price ranges), in Barcelona Airbnb is a much more complex and influencing factor. In the local debate, Airbnb is perceived as a current threat to the locals' urban life by having a flood of tourists, which creates processes of gentrification, massive and negative patterns of price increase, and the over-use of urban spaces and local resources, which is shifted from the hands of the locals to the hands of investors and tourists (Sans & Quaglieri, 2016).

Airbnb, indeed, is often noted as a possible factor in the process of gentrifications (Gant, 2016; Gutiérrez, García-Palomares, Romanillos & Salas-Olmedo, 2017). Some studies have been done on the matter, in Los Angeles for instance. Such studies show how areas go through a big change after understanding that transforming those areas into a potential Airbnb residence could raise their value. In such cases, the renters in those areas get thrown out of their home, with no ability to protest or to fight the price change. Needless to say, the same is happening to stores and restaurants, as they are being replaced for the sake of potential tourism. and so, the authenticity of a place gets lost, in order to market it as an authentic space (Zukin, 2001).

Airbnb is still new and in an on-going change, and is only an example of a successful application, while there are more like it. While the influences of such ICT applications are still in the process of empirical understanding, a research such as this one could shed a light on the micro and macro effects of those applications.

4.3 Revolution of sharing and Airbnb

The concept of social transaction, which stands in the front of 'sharing economy', is widely criticized, and claimed to be false or misleading. Social transaction refers to a situation in which live actors focus on their relationship and put that relationship in the center of the interaction. The 'sharing economy' organizations are considered at their best in cases in which there is no clear line between the value of the social transaction and the economic or financial motivation. Such an example is given by Cui and others (2019), as they manage to demonstrate an increase in prices that are caused due to the notion of the social value and the desire of guests to experience such kind of hosting.

The business model of Airbnb does not end with creating such a combination of profit and social experience, but it lies on the very definition of the service providers (the hosts). Airbnb (in its original structure), does not own any property (of the services themselves, excluding administrated and management offices around the globe), and their service providers are not technically employees. Srnicek (2017) identifies the way Airbnb saves significant sums on insurances, compensations, sick days and so forth. An amount that reaches 30% savings compared to regular employees. Such a business model, of outsourcing the very basics and heart of the service, is far from being new or original, but it is the technological mechanism that allows Airbnb to use human resources in a new fashion of production, and AWS. AWS, stand for Amazon web services, that allow start-up companies like Airbnb (but also UBER, Slack, and many similar others) to create a digital platform which is based, at least in part, on other digital platforms. So, for example, UBER, which is a service that connects drivers to people who need a quick ride, is virtually an unprofessional and social taxi service, but eventually and often provides professional taxi services. Such services rely on such services like Google for maps, and other relevant applications to allow texting, safe payments, and others. Srnicek notes, the ability of Airbnb and similar business models like UBER, to create new services that lean on other services, and to shift costs towards the 'virtual' employees, who are responsible for cleaning fees, investments, or costs of wear and tear, are the base for their economic success.

Dijck and others (2018), describe such basic services, as the infrastructural platforms, in which only a few control the entire market, and consist together an ecosystem. Five main enterprises, like Apple, Facebook, Google, Amazon, and Microsoft, are the basis of most sectorial platforms, especially in the west, in which Airbnb is placed under the tourism and hospitality network. The fact that services, like Airbnb, rely on their information and use services that are initially based on information (in Airbnb's case – information on listings, available dates and hosts, as well as guests' info), empower the infrastructural platforms even more, and damage users' ability of agency and control over their actions on those services and platforms (Constantinides, Henfridsson & Parker, 2018).

For example, to locate listings and help guests (and hosts) find listings on a geographical basis, or even get to the house itself, Airbnb uses Google Maps, and Facebook as well as Google to verify new members and create simple identification tracks. While Airbnb, as a private company, is able to negotiate with its users on information shared and provided, in reality, the power of those five

enterprises keeps growing, as not only the private sector leans on such platforms, but also public and governmental ones do. Therefore, their political, financial, as their possession of infinite and unlimited data in the whole globe, puts the infrastructural platforms as immediate shapers of the future of society and social order (Romero & Vernadat, 2016).

One good example of such a system is Airbnb's decisions on different aspects of the service. In the beginning, Airbnb has promoted professional photography of homes, to attract and also reinsure potential guests. Such a service was given for free, and they used local photographers for that matter. Over time, Airbnb has continued to support such an option, but it was not free anymore. Airbnb has realized that the market is rich enough with well-imaged listings, forcing new hosts to follow such standards, and so they now have to sustain the costs themselves (Zhang, Lee, Singh & Srinivasan, 2017).

One of the most debated and researched themes today on sharing economy's influence on society, is that in many senses, 'sharing economy' has reproduced the original type of interaction in the urban space, which is based on trade, interaction and a market, and managed to reproduced it in a new and unexplored, or unexploited spaces (Davidson & Infranca, 2016; Hamari et al., 2016; Paulauskaite et al., 2016). As that being said, according to the Post-Fordist view, the global is capable to penetrate and influence, not only the virtual space, but also the urban reality and the lives of urban residents, more than ever before. One sense that still dazzles scholars is the success of the 'sharing economy' enterprises in one specific field, which is to produce a safe space between strangers (Phua, 2019; Mittendorf, 2016; Celata et al., 2017). Such an example is UBER. In its original form, UBER was about turning the average drivers into pick-up drivers, as replacements to other costly or less convenient public transportation solutions. But UBER has done something else that is normally overlooked, and that is the creation of confidence and a sense of security when being taken on a ride by a stranger in their own personal and intimate space – their car. Accordingly, , the service require a level of trust in a dangerous environment like the personal car, without knowing what their driving record, criminal record or mental disorders are (Stone, 2017; Lee, Chan, Balaji & Chong, 2018; Kamal & Chen, 2016).

Airbnb, in that sense, has managed to establish the impossible, by turning strangers' homes into a safe space. Research on the subject has found that people, guests and hosts, trust Airbnb and believe in their background checks and safety protocols, even though those protocols are hardly effective (Ert, Fleischer & Magen, 2016; Liang, Choi & Joppe, 2018; Abrahao, Parigi, Gupta. &

Cook, 2017). In addition, guests and hosts tend to reduce their sense of 'strangeness', because of the sense of an imaginary community, which would indeed make its members feel closer and comfortable with each other (Roelonfsen & Minca, 2018; Celata et al., 2017).

Another successful force driven by the 'sharing economy' and boosted by technology, is the safety and reduction of the monetization process that is part of every successful 'sharing economy' service. Today's technology offers a simple and friendly, for most, connection between credit cards, banks and online payment services (Dakhlia, Davila & Cumbie, 2016; Gössling & Michael Hall, 2019; Saleh & Ibrahim, 2018). As a w whole, the 'sharing economy' is embraced by the academy and the public eye. This hug can be explained with a few conceptions that are largely attributed to different expression of the 'sharing economy'.

The first, 'sharing economy' as a green or environmental supporter. This definition is with importance, because of the opposite public opinion on companies that are not part of the 'sharing economy'. Such companies are considered harmful for the environment, a cause for a future climate catastrophe. Research on the subject concludes, that the concept or the declaration of a 'sharing economy' enterprise does not guarantee a green and waste free service (Frenken & Schor, 2017; Frenken, 2017; Böcker & Meelen, 2017). Alternatively, 'sharing economy' increases capitalistic environmental results, as allowing more access means an increase in the consumption rates. In many places around the world, local economies express struggles with a fast pace growth in consumption in their city, as tourism services and tourists flood the city and its infrastructures (Chambel, 2015; Ma, Lan, Thornton, Mangalagiu & Zhu, 2018; Almirall, Wareham, Ratti, Conesa, Bria, Gaviria & Edmondson, 2016).

Indeed, a successful 'sharing economy' service could reduce waste by reusing the same services for more people and reducing costs for all parties. Also, a successful 'sharing economy' service attracts investors and opportunity seekers who use the new platform as a traditional business, which offers a service in the 'sharing economy' enterprise's platform. For example, taxi drivers who would use carpool platforms as another source of income, or companies that design, renovate and market rooms, apartments, and penthouses in non-professional accommodation platforms.

At Airbnb, such private people or organizations that hold numerous listings in a city are considered 'Airbnb lords'. Although those 'lords' are not accepted well in the host community, in practice, only local or state laws limit the action of such lords, who defy the so-called sharing spirit and use the platform to reduce their tax payments or to conceal others. Research so far has been considerably

silent about studying or identifying 'authentic users', or their impact compared to Airbnb lords (or any user in any 'sharing economy' platform). Airbnb, through their actions, do not pursue Airbnb lords who contradict their own marketing agenda, and they have also recently bought other platforms that focus on hostels and hotels, for different market segments. Overall, as found, Airbnb's actions and policies towards hosts, show they want to increase the number of listings coming from private and authentic home staying hosts. But, at the same time, they understand and pursue the potential of the traditional tourism market, in the cover of the 'sharing economy' (Oskam & Boswijk, 2016; Anwar, 2018; Balampanidis, Maloutas, Papatzani & Pettas, 2019).

The notion of Airbnb as an urban space and as a significant local and global market actor, has pushed many local authorities to face Airbnb and find the balance between the economic benefits and the negative influence, or the 'unfair' competition Airbnb has facing hotels. One example, is the case of Amsterdam, that like many other cities in the world, has managed (in this case, in 2016) to create an agreement which would allow the city to control the tourists arriving in the city, by imposing a system of tax payments, and reducing the quantity of guests (Guttentag, 2015; Boon, Spruit & Frenken, 2019).

Such arrangements are held in many cities, but they tell only half of the story, as Airbnb does not only deal with restrictions and regulations, but also with their immediate, as well as their indirect competitors that have only grown over the years. While CouchSurfing changed its perception and business model, similar services, like 9flats, Wimdu, Bewelcome, HomeExchange, and even TripAdvisor have been threatening Airbnb's dominancy. Around the world, Airbnb has different competitors outside its chosen and unique segments, competitors like hotels, hostels, and other accommodation solutions (Volgger, Taplin & Pforr, 2019).

In the local markets, different applications, that promise better prices for the same specific solutions of accommodations, challenge Airbnb, as they are not fighting only for potential clients, but also for their 'catalogue' of listings, and price range. In the US, for example, Airbnb holds 19% of the accommodation market, while HomeAway, the strongest local competitor, holds 11% (the rest is held by hotels). In the US, Airbnb is in average, 28% cheaper than the average price of a hotel, while in Europe, or Australia, the price gaps cannot be higher than 50% between hotels and Airbnb (Lane & Woodworth, 2016).

'Withdraw into the Research Question'

Brief Conclusions

In this theoretical framework, I wished to create a wide and thorough base of knowledge, that would help understand the larger and macro understanding of the Airbnb phenomenon, as part of greater processes in which Airbnb is in the very middle of them, as a late, mainstream, and present service in all the selected studies, and in the western society in general.

Ultimately, Airbnb is a massive and significant actor in the merge of urban tourism, processes of touristification, that as it would be shown, are vital and diverse in different local contexts, that have an impact in the macro level, of a city, and as it would be proven, have also an impact on the very experience of the stay-at-home host, that practices and reproduce values of tourism according to emerging markets of urban tourism in the city, that are now facilitated in the domestic space.

In addition, the 'sharing economy', or the 'platform economy', is the enabler, and what makes social and monetized activities to be accepted and joint together, in the process that made Airbnb a legitimated and even normal financial or social activity. Therefore, the 'sharing economy' is the facilitator of a tension, in which new and old actors are for the first time combined in such an intimate and personal experience, that in no sense, started in Airbnb, but progressed and reach new levels of intensity and space breaking economy and social behavior.

That space breaking is finally possible by those 'platforms', that are technological and knowledge-based. Understanding the history and theory behind those platforms, is important to create a sense of how such platforms supports those types of 'two-sides' markets, in which the hosts are producers and consumers all together. Understanding the place of technology, inside the sharing and platform economy, and under the tourism and urban tourism market, lead into a coherent and relevant phenomenon, that reflects about its historical context, but also of its futuristic potential, as this research would try to demonstrate, and conduct.

In the next part of this research, I would display how this theoretical background is shaped into a research question, and research design.

"...I've walked this road so many years

I've worn down all my boots, I've cried all tears

So many crossroads left behind

So many choices burned into my mind

Maybe it's not enough

Maybe this time it's just too much

Maybe I'm not that tough

Maybe this time the road is just too rough

To take me home…"[20]

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[20] Written by Daniel Gildenloew. Performed by *'Pain of Salvation'*. from the song: '*Road Salt'*, album*: 'Road Salt One'* (2010).

Part Two: Research Design and Methodology

1. *'The Hidden and Homey'*
The Design of a Three-City Project

1.1 Introduction

The theoretical part of this research enables the understanding of the studied phenomenon and the great influences in three major issues in the public eye and in academic writing. Tourism, as studied thoroughly, does not receive its adequate attention in the history of sociology, even though, in its basis, it triggers many crucial sociological phenomena such as the study of consumption, mobility, the mobility of cultures (cultural changes), housing, or cities' development and transformation, among others. This has somewhat changed, only recently, with the development of tourism and its on-going greater influence on cities and the understanding of urban studies. Technology should be, and for some it already is, considered one of the greatest sociological actors in understanding the every-day life, interaction, space, consumption, and urban studies, among others. As it has been displayed in the theoretical part, technology is a key factor in the spreading of today's sociological phenomena, and especially, in the fashion in which the phenomena are developed, as the 'agency' or power balance between all actors. Last, the 'sharing economy', or the 'platform economy' as it has been learned, signals or predicts the ability to use technology to change markets and severely influences the competitive advantage each actor has in those markets.

The discussion of home also raises an epistemological problem. Home can be defined as the most private and sacred space and place in the biographical life path of the average person today, and in the development of the urban living. In a social world, home is the place where the social is left out. Although home is strongly influenced, designed, and managed by society, home or the domestic space is hidden from the public. It is so because of its homey definitions, as it delivers a crucial need for privacy, time for reflection and self-care. Once this definition of home is broken, home ceased to be home.

From that principal assumption, the actual purpose of the original research question is given, is to create an a priori argument and a priori knowledge, which would contribute to the relevance and contribution of this in-depth research. Airbnb, in its very core service, offers to change homes, and to reduce its homey sense. The core service of the enterprise is the offering of a place to stay among strangers to one another, with a financial transaction. Even though hosting in such a way is well established in the field of anthropology and the phenomenon of informal hospitality of friends and family has been researched under the concepts of HFR and VFR (AlSaleh & Moufakkir, 2019;

Shani & Uriely, 2012; Arslan Ayazlar, 2019; Griffin, 2013; Ramachandran, 2006). Airbnb offers something different. Its uniqueness, so I thought, lies on the cognitive dissonance of a corporation that offers a sense of home (a home of a different culture, but still a home), while asking the opposite from its actual service providers.

Home contains and includes different phases, habits, norms, and connections between its residents. A home in Holland in which the parents are going through a divorce process, would probably be much different from a home in Thailand in which all household members participate in the work force of the household's crops. Identifying the differences between those two homes would contribute very little to the knowledge of homes and their tendency to change or to stay the same. Instead, first, examining the patterns that derive from a new technology, which already has a steady empirical base of its ability to change social processes and structures of interaction.

Then, examining the depth and complexity of an imaginative community that absorbs its rules and norms under the economic structure of the 'sharing economy'. And finally, examining the patterns of conflicts of a society and a global reality in which locals and tourists do not consume from the same spaces, but also engage deeply and intimately. All the above noted could add much to the understanding of the urban reality, as it is still in development and can absorb changes in the near future, and to the understanding of the way society and cities could and should prepare for such a future.

Finally, such a research, done at home, raises also difficult methodological problems. This research is far from being the first empirical research that looks at the domestic space. Alas, the ethnographical work on the domestic realm is rather slim, and problematic. As home changes when strangers enter it, the presence of a researcher in it must be no different. Due to that reason, I have decided to use a variety of research methods for the ultimate purpose of obtaining as many pieces of data, for as many mini-cases as possible, as it would displayed in the following pages.

1.2 Research Model

THE AIRBNB STAY-AT-HOME HOST PHENOMENON

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Sociology of Emotions

Sociology of Home

Airbnb Phenomena

Urban Tourism

Technology (ICT)

Sharing Eoconomy

Research question

RESEARCH

Research fields

Research methods

Lisbon, Portugal

Milan, Italy

Jerusalem, Israel

Ethnography

Visual exploration

Text examination

In-depth interviews

Digital Ethnography

IMPLICATIONS

Micro

Micro and domestic patterns of change among Stay-At-Home hosts

Macro

Urban issues

Multi-cultural interactions

Gender issues

1.3 Research Question

As demonstrated in the theoretical framework of this research, the urban tourism market has become a partially sharing, or a pseudo-sharing economy, that uses ICT to enforce such markets and make it accessible around the world, and by establishing its power as an enterprise in relying on bigger, more fundamental platforms, and by using knowledge as the expression of agency.

The outcome of such an agency, so I wish to hypothesize, is best expressed and most influential regarding stay-at-home hosts, in which their emotional state is being challenged, their home is being altered, and they are experiencing a social reality that changes, by definition, the image and use of home. From this contextual framework, this hypothesis could be followed by a main research question:

How does the Airbnb hosting experience influence the emotional state of stay-at-home hosts, and their practical and sentimental approach towards their home?

This research question was designed in light of the assumption, an assumption that would be empirically tested, that indeed, the host's life is going through change, a change which is expressed in their (1) daily practices and balance between home and public actions and consumption of space, and by their (2) mental and emotional daily long-term state. Respectively, home is going through changes as well, expressed in (1) an imagined and sentimental change of home, and in (2) the actual physical change of home itself, mainly in appearance and in its functions.

As can be seen in the above research model, the aim of this research is to discover patterns of change in hosts' lives and their actual and physical home, as a methodological concept of search and evident searching, which would allow a deep exploration of both the host's emotional state, the behavior of the host, coping with the service, and other aspects of home dwelling, that would be described further in this chapter. And their home, by understanding physical, sentimental, and emotional, among others, with a detailed description of the phenomenon. The description of the phenomenon, framing it in the three theoretical bases, of urban tourism, technology, and the 'sharing economy', would enable the induction of four different levels. First, the particular situation of the stay-at-home hosts. Second, The accumulation of hosts' narratives in the frame of the local and urban contexts (of the three case studies). Thirdly, the accumulation of patterns in those case studies, for the rich understanding of the specific platform of Airbnb. and finally, of reaching into conclusions regarding the direction and frame of the sharing/platform economy, in relation to social and of the societal order.

Gender roles in the domestic space, were and still are fundamental in the fashion in which society, and especially the urban mechanism, is structured to favor specific genders and to deprive others. Airbnb could be seen as a unique and one-time case of a combination between home and work, but in reality, in the last two decades, other phenomena, with similar features have already led to different kinds of trends in the domestic space. 'Working from home', is one example, and the new work norms in the age of technology, is another, of the topics that has both an urban and a gender importance. This research, because of its design, allows an effective but also an intimate look on such issues. Finally, urban tourism, the global market driven by technology, as well as the 'sharing economy', are all expressions of new cultural trends, as their implications are focused, naturally, on the virtual as well as on the public space, in the image of the concepts of co-creation and co-consumption.

The Airbnb phenomenon, as other such similar services, reaches the intimate and most private space and place of its hosts. The place which is most connected with their identity and cultural roots. This conflict, in the image of the many hats, in the sense of roles, that both the host and their guests are playing at once. The roles of producer-consumer, the roles of host-guest in the Airbnb community, the roles of local-tourist in a specific urban situation, among many others, while each, creates an impact on the personal and domestic cultural foundation which is home.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

Sociology of emotions – as presented in the introduction, the main theoretical assumption of this research, is the idea or the hypothesis, that the main drive of the human behavior in the social context, is the emotional state and emotional expression, leading an individual (and collectives) to choose one behavior over another (Scheff, 1990; 2015) . The importance of emotions is perceived as especially significant, because of spatial theories that divide the public from the private. The fashion in which individuals allow themselves to be stimulated in the sensual, cognitive, and emotional sense, is completely different in domestic spaces than in others (Simmel, 1950). That very fact, is that what makes the question of the Airbnb phenomenon so relevant sociologically, is that the domestic change is most likely to be causing a severe social change, which creates new emotional expressions and reactions. In addition, the Airbnb phenomenon creates an opportunity for a possible contribution to the sociology of emotions, as the research field itself, allows a micro and authentic view of domestic interactions, and emotional responses in the private space, that

change with time and experience. Such observations, due to the nature of the Airbnb experience, in the image of interactions between strangers in the domestic realm, are taken in almost lab conditions, while home itself turns into an archeological site in the sense that it is possible to focus on it, to understand emotional reactions and thereby – to create new insights on the relationship between emotions and social behavior.

Sociology of home – home as a concept, is a very unique space in the establishment of identity and human interaction, as also presented in the introduction chapter. In that chapter, it was perceived that home has a key role in the life of every individual, as a space that more than any other space, turns from birth into a place in which many positive (or negative) feelings emerge (Clarke, 2001; Madanipour, 2003). Home, for most people, is the safe and the protected, but also the vulnerable, which can sometimes lead to a feeling of home as a prison (Tuan, 1990; Cieraad, 2012). Statistically, home is the most dangerous space for women (Nelson, 2019). In addition, home in the urban age has played an important part in the dichotomy, which has focused over time on two different directions.

The first, in which home has become closed and hidden from the 'public', from the unknown. More private and separated from the workforce. Such a reality has led to the most significant exclusion process of women from the public sphere, and the establishment of gender roles, in the urban sphere as well as in the domestic reality (Remotti, 2015; Zukin, 1995). Secondly, via technology, home has become closed to the 'public' but with extending abilities to contact the 'public', as home keeps developing and changing in consumption and relation with the global culture and discourse. In this sense, the Airbnb phenomenon, by definition, must have a visible first transformation that derives from technological evolution and market adaptation to new ideas and new abilities of crafting with more efficient or greener economical systems. That is the reason that understanding what is happening to home, and what the changes of home are doing to its residents, can contribute to the sociology of home, but also interpret the implications home has on the condition of individuals and collectives. The contribution to the sociology of home, is, once again, the result of a unique glimpse that the Airbnb phenomenon allows the curious researcher, who is able to carve data which is usually hidden.

The extraction of theories from the field of the sociology of emotions, and others from the field of the sociology of home, is what has led to the initial hypothesis, that it would be possible to find emotional implications deriving from the spatial change of home. Such an emotional shift occurs

in the most essential space of home, one that has direct influence on the nature of personal growth and of growing up. And one with direct and immediate implications on the host's daily life, which has a significant value to the important understanding of the current urban times and is assumed to lead to a new sociological phenomenon.

Studied sociological phenomenon - Airbnb in itself is an important phenomenon, in which an enterprise experiences a historical global success, in most parts of the globe, and especially in western, urban, and capitalistic societies. Today, Airbnb is working in the professional hotels sector, offering services or experiences such as joint cooking, tour guiding, biking and many more. Alas, research has learned that Airbnb still considers the stay-at-home hosts as fulfilling the company basic purpose and social idea (Fradkin, 2017; Edelman & Luca, 2014). In addition, stay-at-home hosts remain the main actors, and a significant and still growing part of Airbnb's so-called community. Finally, Airbnb stay-at-home hosts, unlike the other types of hosts, engage with a new phenomenon, whose implications are hardly understood in academy.

1.5 Criteria and collected data

Stay-at-home hosts would be defined operatively and would be counted as mini-cases when individuals have used Airbnb as a platform to offer accommodation at the time of the research (July 2017-October 2019) or have offered such a service in the preceding year. Cases that have met that criteria perceive and use the Airbnb accommodations as their primary home. Meaning, the main place in which they sleep, eat, and so forth. Cases in which hosts are in a clear process of moving from one home to another would be counted as well. Three main issues would be understood in the frame of the stay-at-home hosts:

Emotions - patterns of change in hosts' lives would be examined by hosts' emotions and approach, to their life and to hosting itself, while taking into consideration the work of Erving Goffman and Thomas Scheff, and their sociology of emotions[21]. In addition, chronological changes of emotions would be studied, highlighting the possible role of cultural differences in the three case studies.

Behavior and **interactions** – patterns of change would be examined by change of behavior, acting differently around strangers, making choices about home and about people living at home (family

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[21] Throughout the result chapters, and in addition to the presented theoretical background, each chapter would include a short and specific literature review about the relevant subject.

and guests), mobility choices (where to go, where to be, where to sleep, etc.) and choices and performance of interactions (and multi-cultural interactions). In addition, chronological changes of emotions would be studied, highlighting the possible role of cultural differences in the three case studies.

Decision-making patterns – patterns of motives for hosting strangers (and for quitting to do so) would be identified, while considering rationality as a system, or a process that in its heart rely upon cost–benefit analysis, but it also contains cultural factors, emotional factors, imagined communities, etc. In addition, chronological changes of emotions would be studied, highlighting the possible role of cultural differences in the three case studies.

All types of hosting would be accepted as legitimate research mini-cases: hosting in a shared room – people who offer a shared space in which other people live and sleep (the host does not have to be the one sharing the space, but should be living at least in another space of the same apartment or house). People who offer a room – the room could be a free room while the host's bedroom is another one, or their own room, while they move elsewhere (could be another room or another house). People who offer their entire house – hosts must be living in the house in the days there are no reservations. The focus on houses would be on several issues:

Structures – patterns of physical structural changes at home would be examined, such as breaking walls, adding rooms, splitting rooms, adding doors, and in general, turning the 'physically' of home to be Airbnb suitable. In addition, chronological changes of structures would be studied, highlighting the possible role of cultural differences in the three case studies.

Functions – patterns of change in the designation of different spaces around the house, the people who are allowed to use different functions, the movement of functions from space to space, and the way in which the change in the function itself is experienced. For example, the practice of preparing food or organizing dinners with friends, is changing, reducing. In addition, chronological changes of structures would be studied, highlighting the possible role of cultural differences in the three case studies.

Definitions – changes in structures and functions around the house could lead a temporary or even permanent pattern of change in the 'perceived' definitions of different spaces around the house. In addition, chronological changes in patterns of definitions would be studied, highlighting the possible role of cultural differences in the three case studies.

Experiences – typical experiences (for example – hosting a couple vis a vis hosting a single male) and irregular experiences (for example – dispute about using the kitchen) would be examined to dictate the influences of such experiences on the items of the host and on their home. In addition, the responses and approaches to such experiences would be studied in different chronological periods of the hosts, highlighting the possible role of cultural differences in the three case studies.

Objects – from the theoretical point of view of Bruno Latour, objects' changes of patterns would be examined, such as changes in the use of objects, the movement of objects to different spaces in and outside the house, as their meaning and use perceived by the host. In addition, chronological changes in patterns of objects would be studied, highlighting the possible role of cultural differences in the three case studies.

1.6 Theory and implications

Airbnb is not seen in this research as a sole and anecdotal type of service, but as part of an enormous trend that Airbnb, and others, are the result of. As we can understand from the theoretical part, Airbnb is considered in this research as the result of three evolutions in the urban condition:

Urban Tourism – first, in the image of the implication of the inner-city tourism that took a big and prominent place in the work of the sociology of tourism. Today, urban tourism is considered a main actor in the shaping and advancing of different processes in the urban space and in the balance between the preferences of the city, in favor of the locals or the tourist. A balance which under the Post-Fordist economy, has become more available, and dependent on the global economy. In a dichotomic reality between public and private. Such modifications of the urban space are bound to influence the domestic one. Alas, here in this research such perception is focused on exploring to opposite possibility, in which changes by urban tourism processes, led by the spear of urban non-professional market, Airbnb, can create changes in the domestic space, which lead to changes in the urban. Secondly, understanding Airbnb as a system, in a specific and central market in the urban life, is crucial in understanding any Airbnb-related phenomenon.

Technology (ICT) – The second chapter of the theoretical part is focused on the theories that tell the story of technology with society, text, and culture. Technology, since the rise of the human species, has been a central key in the development of society, economy, and the written text. In this research, I would put my attention on the unique and advanced ICT, which led to the rise of

the online communities, making them new types of markets, and changing the tension between producers and consumers, in a reality in which everyone (in the western culture mostly), can produce meanings and become a force in the service market. Airbnb, as learned, uses ICT to create a system which is based on the infrastructural platforms, by possessing knowledge and power which its hosts lack.

'Sharing Economy' – such a lack of power in the online and virtual community, is the exact tension that a 'real sharing economy' market does not endure, but it does exist in pseudo-sharing economies. Alas, Airbnb is first and foremost a declared community and only then a social economy. Airbnb uses this perception of the public, as an enterprise, in order to exploit the domestic spaces of hosts for their economic advantage, but also, for the experience of an additional value, as a 'sharing economy' that blossoms because of its social and cultural benefits.

Therefore, understanding the Airbnb phenomenon must be with the understanding of the use of Airbnb in technology (ICT), as well as under the popular umbrella of the 'sharing economy'. These two theoretical fields together, are the key to understanding the role of Airbnb in the service. One that was concealed well from the consumers, the guests. The hosts, on the hand, tackle the forces of the tourism market, the enterprise that exploits their domestic space, and the guests, as part of the community. Only by understanding the political and social view of all actors, it would be possible to make sense of the holistic experience of the stay-at-home host.

As explained in the research design, few but central issues concern the unique experience of Airbnb, as an intersection of some of the most basic fundamentals of the urban space and the shape of today's society, would be the center of induction in this work. Therefore, the second aim of this research is to follow macro issues that have relevance and are debated in the academic sphere, which conceal possible dramatic changes in Airbnb's development. The issues are as followed:

Gender roles in a changing home – after displaying and empirically proving the phenomenon of stay-at-home hosts using Airbnb, and studying the implications of the hosts' lives and home, there is a relevant and unique opportunity to engage in the meaning of using Airbnb's services to the different genders, and to examine patterns of change in gender roles and in using and perceiving home by the different genders. Home as a concept, has different meanings and different risks to different genders, and especially for women. In an academic environment in which gender studies focuses on urban and public inequalities, the in-depth exploration of the movement 'back' home for work, making home a working space, must be a crucial shift in the future direction and practice

of gender roles. By understanding how homes is changing because of Airbnb, I would focus on two specific issues:

Hosting – studying the possible differences between female hosts and male hosts, while considering the value of hospitality, home care, home as a presentation of womanhood and manhood, and the understanding of the differences between the genders when exploring patterns of emotions, behaviors etc.

Agency of home – studying the possible patterns of change in the 'meaning of home', or home sensation, for different genders, the possible 'home dwelling' and the expectation of society from home in the age of Airbnb.

Airbnb as a multi-cultural stimulator – the collision between tourists and locals has been well studied in literature, as can be seen in the theoretical background. Alas, while the public space and the touristic precincts have been studied thoroughly, Airbnb is yet to be understood as a facilitator of similar processes which are experienced by the city as part of the development of urban tourism, also in the domestic realm. This part would focus on two principal processes:

Co-creation of space – as already learned in the theoretical background, co-creation is a process in which a space changes due to the meaning, interaction and cooperation between locals and tourists in the public space, so that the space, during the process, becomes attractive and suitable for both. Co-creation of space is always a combination of different actors, interests, and power. In this part of the research, the same analysis would be done in the domestic space of the host.

'Living like a local' experience – the most attractive and popular product of today's tourism market, and the rise of the urban tourism market in particular, is the 'living like a local' experience. This experience is defined as an experience in which tourists experience the urban lives of different and foreign countries. As part of this product, tourists do not seek touristic districts with homogenous and generic consumption anymore. Instead, they search for local and authentic restaurants, shops, and spaces in which they can see how locals live their lives and experience that life. Alas, the penetration of tourists into such spaces, interrupts the lives of the locals, who now need to fight for services and resources with another population, that can pay more and is thereby more attractive to investors and entrepreneurs, who change the city slowly (or quickly). Airbnb, by definition, creates the most intimate 'living like a local' experience. This part would focus of the implications on the hosts and on their lives in the frame of the product.

Technology and space – one of this research's assumptions, is that technology has always had and still has the ability to create significant changes in the most basic manner in which people use space, perceive space, and follow the rules of interaction and social codes, norms and behaviors. In the urban system, home is crucial in setting those rules and norms, as it contradicts and completes the public space, and allows the relief, providing space for intimacy and privacy. In addition, technology is also a key tool in the ability of new enterprises to control massive amounts of knowledge, which is equal to possessing power in the knowledge age. Therefore, understanding and observing the particular use of such a large and global organization by their actual users, and their use of their users as well, can teach a lot about the combination between technology and agency in our days. In this part, I would try to initiate a philosophical debate based on the findings and evidence, while confronting those findings with the theoretical background. Airbnb, in this research design, changes the definition of home, and thereby breaks the dichotomy between the privacy of home and the 'public' which is outside of it. The philosophical debate intends to reflect on those changes and on their meaning towards the future.

1.7 Research fields

Airbnb is considered a historical success and expression of (1) the direction in which urban tourism is going (2) the possibilities of a massive urban change in the continuously rising of the 'sharing economy' and (3), the depth and significance of technology on the urban life, and what they can be like. These three elements are valid, relevant and describe the urban realties of thousands of cities around the world, and especially in western and post-modern societies. Therefore, the object of this research is to identify a global phenomenon, in which same patterns are revealed in different western situations.

According to this research object, the research strives to test those patterns in as many locations as possible, and in different situations, that create different responses of the city and its residents to the processes triggered and driven by Airbnb (and others like Airbnb). Given the length of the study and according to the instructions provided by the Doctoral school of the university, decisions on the number of cities and as well as the identity of those cities have been made. In addition, budget and schedule limitations have been taken into consideration, as accessibility to the research field, language, and cultural barriers.

After processing all the elements, limitations, and instructions, in July 2017, a research proposal with three cities has been determined. The choice of three cities has allowed a significant qualitative and ethnographic research in all cities, with adequate field time in each of them, while allowing the study of three very different cases.

The selection of three main case studies (Milan, Jerusalem, Lisbon), was taken under a few critical methodological points. First, the research design was planned to fit the research question, and its frame of urban issues: technology and social order, urban tourism, and the 'sharing economy'. In the frame of urban studies, therefore, it was fruitful to imagine and understand the Airbnb phenomenon and its implications on stay-at-home hosts, by putting in context different urban situation, as a key factor for the development of different trends inside the phenomenon, and in different scales, that are able to create understanding of implications in micro and macro issues, that reflect the host, the city, and the service (Rowley, 2002).

Secondly, The ability of collecting out of three different case studies, was specifically relevant, as this research is based first and foremost on its 145 'mini-cases'[22], that are analyzed separately, by using qualitative approaches, could not be understood fully without an in-depth examination of the relevance of the biographical path (Atkinson, 1998; Bertaux, 1982; 2001) of each of the mini-cases, and its context to the urban situation and the participant own relationship with the city, that is semantically and emotionally, are taken as part of home, and home perception. By creating such separation of each case, it is possible to put in context and therefore, get a sense of control of social behavior and patterns, and thereby building different scales of understanding of the Airbnb phenomenon (Easton, 1982; Guttling, 1997).

Third, As a qualitative project, creating a methodological 'pyramid' that is built upon the mini-cases, opened an opportunity of a narrative research in which each of the mini-cases were understood separately, to create a 'story' in which the important details of this research question could be revealed (Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach & Zilber, 1998; Squire et al., 2014). The host' mental state, housing situation, housing history, character, motivation to initiate interaction with the Airbnb service, are part of a connect chronological net, that eventually a larger scale, an urban one, in which patterns can be understand, and induction is possible and valid.

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[22] The term 'min-cases', as it was coined by Stake (2010), would be the term to distinguish, from this point on, between the case studies – Milan, Lisbon, and Jerusalem, to the 145 cases that were collected in the case studies.

However, the focus on three different case studies, with a different culture, different history, and mainly, different trends and rhythm of urban processes, could and should shed lights on different aspect of the research question. Therefore, the research question of this work, would emphasize on the implications of the findings in the different scales, by looking forward, to the future (Rowley, 2002). If of the future of technological penetration to the physical and the growing dominancy of the virtual into the daily lives. If of the future of tourism and urban tourism, as a market and as a significant urban and social actor. And finally, if of the future of the social economies, the settings, and norms, that signify a future of social services, that could imply on a social movement in the very design of social order, under the economic system.

Fourth, the decision on focusing on those very fundamental concepts and ideas, along with time and budget limitation, therefore, allowed only a seemingly superficial view of each of the case studied, by understand the current public and academic debate of the economic and social situation of each city. Thereby, the work on collecting data, targeted first and foremost on the important qualitative and subjective question of 'how', and after that, 'why', instead of question of 'what' and 'how much' (Stake, 2005; Rowley, 2002). However, the accumulation of cases, and the accumulation of research methods, created an assurance for high validity rate, and reliability.

Construct validity (Dellinger & Leech, 2007; Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007), was achieved by collecting data from different sources (informants, myself, the digital space), and by creating a significant base of informants that could and indeed return to similar narratives and patterns. Internal validity, on the other hand, was created by doing data examinations of each narrative of a mini-case by itself, and by building patterns and explanation of social behavior by merging different types of data, in a spatial, urban and chronological context. Finally, a reliability was created by turning the mini-case study into a data base, which could track and observe different patterns that were not sharp or clear enough.

All case studies are western and post-modern cities, in which Airbnb had erupted in similar periods, and is fully implemented in the cities, with similar increasing rates of use, as of hosts listings. Alas, Lisbon, Jerusalem, and Milan display three very different situations that are in the middle of very different processes[23].

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[23] A broader look on the case studies would be made in the 3rd chapter of this part – *'A tale of three cities'*.

Lisbon, of Portugal, is, unlike the other two case studies, by definition, a tourist city. Meaning, a city that is economically based on tourism, and on the consumption and traffic of tourists in and out of the city (Rodrigues, Machado & Freire, 2011; Lestegás, Lois-González & Seixas, 2018). Unlike the others, Lisbon is also the only selected city that has been going through massive processes of gentrification that are being widely debated and discussed in the academic work as well as in the public discourse (Gravari-Barbas & Guinand, 2017; Cocola-Gant, 2018). Access wise, Lisbon as a tourist city, offers a language friendly environment (in English), and is also an affordable case study. The connection with ISCTE-IUL, the University Institute of Lisbon, has helped me enjoy a relatively fast adaptation and ability to reach research goals according to the schedule.

Milan, the economic force of Italy, has been enjoying a renewed blossom in recent years, which had been triggered by the international exhibition EXPO in 2015, but even prior to that, with the awakening of the creative industry (d'Ovidio & Ponzini, 2014; d'Ovidio, 2016). The creative industry is an important phenomenon, also relevant to this study, as the creative sector embraces and supports social initiatives, and sees the 'sharing economy' as a social expression of their sector (Bakhshi, McVittie & Simmie, 2008; Potts & Cunningham, 2010). Thus, Airbnb is seen as part of the creative sector, and a part of the new rise of Milan as a European economic actor, and as a cultural center in the world (Rabbiosi, 2016; Andreotti et al., 2017). Access wise, Milan was an easy choice, as I have the adequate Italian skills to do the qualitative research in the city's language, and a full knowledge of the city and its areas, as I had been living in the city for four years prior to this research.

Jerusalem, instead, is not based on its tourism potential, nor is it considered in any sense an economic engine in Israel. Even though, the history of tourism in Jerusalem, goes very far back, and until today, it is mainly built on pilgrims, and other groups who wish to experience the place that is the center of the three largest monotheistic religions (Bajc, 2006; Cohen-Hattab & Shoval, 2014). Alas, Jerusalem is also a place of conflict, in which many groups are fighting to shape the public space to their needs and ideological, or religious beliefs. Palestinians and Jews, orthodox people and seculars, as liberal students, and even left and right-wing ideologies, are all represented inside the municipal borders of the historical city, creating a heavy, and possibly conflicting sense of a city (Hasson, 2001; Chiodelli, 2012). The conflicted city of Jerusalem is important and also relevant, because of the unique relationship the locals, as well the tourists, have with the city, as a

home and as a religious-spiritual home, which is largely expressed in the domestic space as well. The particular connection between the personal and political in Jerusalem, turns the city into an interesting and important case study. Access wise, Jerusalem, as an Israeli citizen, had been chosen also because of the ability to approach and penetrate the field easily, a city that talks my mother tongue. Although my knowledge about the city itself had been limited, I knew relatively many connections who could help me enter the research field easier.

The issue of research penetration has been given special importance, as the research at its very beginning, has demanded a tight and accurate schedule, with a long list of goals as part of the methodology, to be described in the next part of this chapter.

1.8 Research aims

 The purpose of the research design was to create an image of the Airbnb phenomenon, which would be able to identify its micro settings and its implications on the domestic space and the lives of the stay-at-home hosts. In addition, the close look on the micro aspects of the phenomenon, allowed to address relevant and debated issues in urban studies, gender studies, and cultural studies.

In the micro level, the ambition to obtain a detailed image was drawn from two main focuses of attention. The image and life of the (stay-at-home) hosts, and their home. Looking at these two focal points, and by framing the research question, the main goal of the mixed methods work, was to identify 'change', and mostly patterns of change. 'Change' can be seen as a problematic concept in such a work, as change is always relative and a result of position, as well as interpretive and thereby biased. In this research, and in order to avoid such possible critics, 'change' refers to one of the possible findings. (1) the participants own perspective of change, as they recall scenarios of 'before' and 'after'. Such events were numerous and surprisingly, they were not only found among interviewees, but also among the ethnographic mini-cases. And (2), an objective 'change' of the house itself, perceived by the combinations of methods. At this point, it is also crucial to note, that patterns of 'change' are not always 'positive' or 'negative', and would be perceived in such manner only if (1) the participants themselves identify the change as 'positive' or 'negative'. Or (2), if the patterns found could objectively and directly point at a negative pattern. For example, if a pattern found creates objectively negative emotions (anger, fear, discomfort), then it is conceived as 'negative'. In other cases, patterns of change have not been interpreted in one way or another, but

it is seen as a structural change that should be measured according to its implications on daily life or on society itself.

1.9 Research methods

In order to create a complex image of the Airbnb phenomena, among stay-at-home hosts, with the aim and scope that were just described, a qualitative research approach has been chosen, because of the understanding that the only in-depth qualitative work could allow the observation and the creation of a background for interpreting small details, nuances, and subjective issues such as emotions, behaviors, interactions that occur in intimate and private situations. All of those issues should to be placed in an urban and personal context and narrative, so it would be plausible to create a valid and convincing picture of each mini-case. Those intimate situations that are a crucial part of understanding the given sociological phenomenon, require intimate penetration into the research field, and a method system, which could expose the happening in private spaces.

Because of that intimacy, I have initially questioned the fullness of the details and information given directly by the informants. Especially because Airbnb is first and foremost, a business, and I, the researcher, have met the informants for a single meeting. And this is the reason that, along with others concerning the delicate and problematic mechanism of research of emotions and interaction in the domestic space, the research was proposed as a mix of qualitative and experimental methods, as it would described.

- **Selected methods**

As a qualitative research that aims to focus on hosts, stay-at-home private individual hosts who have chosen Airbnb as their platform to earn money and gain unique experiences with guests from different cultures, the main decision had been to create a mix of methods which would allow me to achieve three main goals:

(1) To speak directly with my research subjects, the mini-cases, in the three case studies.
(2) To be able to personally 'see' how hosts 'do Airbnb' as stay-at-home hosts, and to understand their changing motivations.
(3) To create an unusual amount of qualitative cases, or mini-cases in each city, allowing me to reach empirical results which would let me generalize the entire phenomenon of Airbnb

(and others like Airbnb) and its influence on the urban context in western and liberal countries and cities (Stake, 2005; Rowley, 2002).

Therefore, to reach all three goals, the research is based primarily on collecting mini-cases, as 2/5 of them, would be based primarily on in-depth, semi-structured interviews with the informants. And the other 3/5 of the mini-cases would be primarily based on ethnographic scope in each of the cities. The ethnographic work has allowed me to participate in many interactions with informants, in authentic and real-field conditions. As the core methods of the research, as an approach, all mini-cases that would be collected must contain a semi-structured interview, **or** an ethnographic work on the case, so that every collected mini-case in each city would display a rich and detailed narrative about the case, its story etc. (as described in the research design and research model).

In addition, the combination between interviews and ethnography, led into self-standing experiences, that were, by themselves, fruitful and helpful in the understanding of the sociological phenomenon, as reaching the participants themselves, required interactions in both the physical space and the virtual one. Therefore, an extensive digital ethnography has been selected, which includes an actual digital participation, and the collection of different kinds of texts. Furthermore, basic quantitative data has been targeted to complete a bigger image of the contextual relationship of every city with Airbnb. Because of the radical subjective data this research is leaning on, a final addition to the methods has been experimental visual technics, which could create a visualization of the informants' view, perception and imagination towards their emotions regarding hosting, as well as on the meaning of home, and their practical and conceptual view of the dichotomy of home and the urban sphere. At this point I wish to elaborate on the theoretical framework each method is leaning on, and the specific initial design of each of the methods.

- **Semi-structured interviews**

Semi-structured interviews were considered crucial to answer the research question and sub questions, as they allow direct contact with the research subjects, while receiving first-hand information on their approach, story, biographical background, motives to do Airbnb, etc. Most importantly, semi-structured interviews have the ability to create a sense of conversation, which gives the informants a sense of freedom and comfort, giving the opportunity to 'stray' from the standard questions and tell stories and issues that may seem irrelevant at first but could eventually lead to new themes and conclusion in the qualitative analysis (Blee & Taylor, 2002).

Such an approach is especially important and productive when using such a technique, whose main contribution is the experiences and stories of the informants, who sometimes deliver the informants stands and emotions better than with direct questions (Schmidt, 2004). As a goal, 20 interviews were planned to be conducted in each city (60 interviews in total), while the initial demands were somewhat challenging: (1) every interview was to be set at the host's home and Airbnb place, (2) interviews would take between 2-4 hours, (3) interviews would be recorded by a video camera, and an audio recorder, (4) home would be photographed including every 'public space' in the house and every other space the informant chooses to share, and finally (5) informants would participate in visual experiment technics which would include drawing, sketching, and marking. Participants were promised a total anonymity, by promising that none of the data used in the research could extradite the informant or their home.

- **Ethnography**

designing the ethnographic part was extremely challenging because of the particular field of study. Research and ethnography in the domestic space, is far from being new. Alas, it seems that Pink (2013; 2014), had tackled and contribute to the making of the domestic ethnography the most significantly. Pink calls, the domestic ethnography, as the 'sensory ethnographic', in which 'invisible' elements, subjective to the most, are crucial to the understanding of social situation and the constitution of the social space.

Therefore, sensory and emotional elements such as smell or taste, but also emotions and mental state, would be a key theme in the collaboration of the ethnography made in this research, as a mean of collecting relevant pieces of data, as if also of non-human elements and actors. Pink, as well as Ingold (2011), and Stoller (1997), create an important separation and unification of the space between crafting ethnographic data, and between presenting and visualizing that data. In that sense, a creative approach was selected to bring ethnographic data by images and self-made designs of houses, as collected in the ethnographic work (combining with other data to create confirmations and possibility of imagination).

Alas, while Pink is sensitive and useful for the understanding and the right and visual point of attention of the ethnography itself, Pink was busy working with the participants over the habits of home, by integrating in their lives. In my situation, the collected ethnographical data needed to be taken in a limited time frame, and by preserving the normal and 'authentic' course of the every-

day. As such, another approach was taken, as in different situations, I played a covert role, as a normative guest, and in others, an overt role, as a researcher who is conducting interviews (O'Reilly, 2008; 2009).

Wrongly, in my opinion, the matter of 'undercover ethnography' raises over the years, ethical debates on the morality of creating a disguise, a fake role of the researcher, which could create an interaction of mistrust and dishonesty (Calvey, 2008). In such cases, the advised option, could be of a beginning of a covert role, that later becomes overt with the deepening of the relationship with the participants. In other cases, it considered necessary in the effort of entering problematic or intimate fields in which anonymity is the only option (Estroff, 1985). The issue, as learned, gained its reputation as it was often associated with research that dealt with illegal and criminal phenomena, in which anonymity was indeed often necessary, to protect the safety of the ethnographer itself, or of the confidentiality of the participants. Alas, ethnographical work normally and occasionally deals with criminal acting of the social behavior, if on the legal or the moral side (Scheper-Hughes, 2004).

In this case, I wish to claim, that the fact that Airbnb is grossly accepted and grossly legal (especially in the selected three case studies), turn the undercover ethnography method to be only a tool, and in no sense a risk to me or the participant. Not a physical risk, obviously, but also not a financial or legal risk in any kind. Furthermore, in most cases, the fact that I am, eventually, a researcher, was known to many of the participants, as others did not care of my profession and my motivation to visit at their place, as long that motivation did not turn on alarms of any bad intentions of the upcoming guest. Therefore, the undercover methods were proven not only necessary, but also harmless. The few occasions in which my role was finally or mistakenly exposed[24], created no drama, as my swift and short arrival left hardly a mark in the steady stream of my stay-at-home host participants.

It is worth emphasizing more, that because of that stream of guests, in most of the ethnographic work, was in fact so natural and plausible as no special preparation was made for my arrival, and

[24] One the most 'serious' failures in my covert role was with the mini-case of M22, Mia, who would be discussed in the 4th and 6th chapters of the research's findings. In this case, I mistakenly booked on a place a few weeks after I overtly contacted Mia asking for an interview. Mia and I even chatted a bit before she declined, which did not stop me from booking a night at her home. Mia did remember our chat, but it did not disturb her one bit, as she acted visibly natural. Alas, in this case, as in others, the image of 'observations' could not produce the same scenes I managed to obtain.

so I could indeed blend in, as part of the community, part of the flow of names in which I could receive and enjoy the type of interactions, in which a guest is only and first, a profile.

That being said, the covert ethnographic work was chosen, as it is probably the only scientific method that could represent, even in ethical sense, the very nature of the Airbnb phenomenon, as a service whose very idea is of exposure and unnatural penetration of strangers into the domestic space. Nonetheless, the ethical and sensitive structure of the covert ethnographic work, was the one that define my own behavior, as I did everything possible to avoid any social activity that did not initiate by the hosts themselves, so events could present the closer image of the host 'natural' home dwelling, while preventing any discomfort that host could suffer from my own visit. The fact that such an intentional passive role I have took upon myself (and was naturally anyhow), still led to many social interactions, only prove the efficacy of the covert method, and its harmful practice.

In reality, what flourished is a crop of mini-cases that are eventually separated from each other, and each mini-case contains a unique and biographical story, which is entirely relevant to the research itself. The initial plan had been set to do at least some of the ethnographical part after an agreement with a selected host, according to which I would witness the first encounter between them and the guest, and maybe in some other encounters afterwards. Alas, soon enough, it had become clear that such a scene (which would require the consent of the guest as well), would be too artificial, and would deliver very poor results (O'Reilly, 2008; 2009). In addition to that, in the test period25, 90% of the selected subjects rejected that option, claiming it could scare some guests, or be uncomfortable for the guests and themselves as well. The hosts' understanding also reminds the very fact that in a productive ethnography, the researchers must place themselves in a natural position inside the chosen scene. That is the reason that after the test period, a new designed ethnography has been selected, in which, the goal was to spend 1 night in each of 30 selected mini-cases in every city (90 days of ethnography in total – 90 mini-cases).

 In this design, the goal was to obtain maximum knowledge about the conditions and settings of the house and the host, their marital status, the residents of the house, motives to do Airbnb, and all while being disguised. The aim of this practice had been to arrive at a decent and legitimate hour to a new house, get to know the host, and leave the next morning to a new mini-case, after collecting all the needed information. The hosts did not know they were taking part in a research,

25 The full planned schedule and actual schedule of the research would follow in the next part of this chapter.

and all of the collected data was preserved in a way which would leave no trace of the participant and of their house. By using ethnography this way, I have become the second participant and an active (and even intense) user in the community, an image that reduced even more, any concern of the participant, concern that in fact, was not necessary.

- **Digital ethnography**

The covertness of the traditional ethnography, can be considered even more complex, as in the digital space, I could daily work in overt roles (to track interviewees) and of covert roles (to order a night booking, to interact with former and future hosts I would visit or not visit in the end). In this sense, or in the frame of digital ethnography, as instructed and introduced by Pink (2016), the digital ethnography in this research, was an opportunity of multiple layers production of useful data. Digital ethnography, according to Pink, is not merely a translation of the traditional ethnographic work into the internet, but it is holistic understanding of different spaces, spaces that were not thought before as social spaces, my stepping and exploring them for the first time. By using the concept of social world, Pink extended the traditional definition of social space, and allow it to absorb many kinds of social spaces, and the variety of different digital spaces out there.

The 'digital ethnography' frame was selected – instead of similar ethnographies of the digital space, like 'Netnography', virtual, online, or cyborg-ethnography – since its features fit better to this research. For example, the importance of the balance between offline and online spaces of research fields, and by allowing digital space to acquire centrality in the shape of offline events and behavior, and in the constructed behavior of social order (Caliandro, 2014). In a research that is focused on a digital platform, which is the beginning and the outcome of a social yet capitalistic service, such approach could not be more relevant. Furthermore, Pink is extremely attentive to the importance of the reflective manner of ethnography. For Pink, the ethnographer is a first and a crucial eyewitness, who has their own set of values, and cultural point of reference (Pink, 2014).

Finally, Pink views the fruits of the digital ethnography as numerous and multi-layered. The digital space is a field to study practices, exactly as Airbnb and Airbnb hosting, is a practice of itself. If in the fashion in which Airbnb and Airbnb's digital space becomes a place of rituals and of daily significance in the daily routine. In addition, the digital space is a fruitful area for understanding 'things' and their influence on the social behavior and the social interaction. A thing could be Airbnb service itself, or the different aspects in engaging with hosting online, with arriving or

departing guest, or with Airbnb itself. The digital ethnography, eventually, is a space of interaction and exchange of data. Being such an open space, it is a rich and accessible field of research (Murthy, 2011).

Digital ethnography was perceived from the beginning as an inseparable part of the ethnographic work itself. First, because the initial interaction with hosts had to start through Airbnb platform. And secondly, because the process of finding the subjects could reflect on the experiences of hosts and guests in this process, which could and indeed was, a useful source of information. Therefore, the digital ethnography that was planned can be described as such:

(1) Contacting potential respondents – using Airbnb (subjects are aware from the initial contact about my position as a researcher).

(2) Ordering Airbnb rooms in selected cities and creating first contacts with subjects – using Airbnb (subjects are not aware of the research).

(3) Collecting data about the hosts – profile information, house rules, room features, sleeping conditions and arrangements, and photos – of all mini-cases (interviewed or ethnographic)

(4) Collecting data on hosts' reviews – collecting all data that guests have left about the host and the hosts' responses – in all mini-cases (interviewed or ethnographic).

- **Visual experimental research**

Visual methods have already been proven in many empirical works as efficient in collecting authentic and valuable data, especially in situations in which subjective and qualitative data is needed (Wagner, 2002; Natali, 2016). Because of the particular notion of research, which deals so thoroughly with the concept of home, I have decided to experiment and learn about such types of research, in which unlike the other methods, I had no previous experience. After putting several methods aside, during the test period[26], the visual research was focusing on **mental maps**. Mental

[26] Methods that have been removed along the research: **Biographical interview** – the aim of the research at first, was to create prototypes of a general vision of home in the context of the entire course of life (Richardson, 1990; Rosenthal, 2004).   In that frame, the goal was to conduct three full-length biographical interviews, The method was to support 8 hours long each, with three hosts, discussing their lives and their relation to home throughout their lives, without discussing Airbnb. In practice, one such interview was conducted, with a senior Italian Airbnb male host, but due to time and budget limitations, interviews such as this were not conducted anymore and the one interview is not part of this research analysis. Other visual experiment methods – during the test period, a few other **visual experiments** were conducted, however they were found less favorable by the participants, but mainly, they were less productive and empirical. One such example is displaying the participants images of anonymous Airbnb hosts from another city (participants in Jerusalem would review images from Milan, Milan from Lisbon, and Lisbon from Jerusalem), asking them to describe and mark the rooms they see by saying their opinions about each room and the items in them.

maps are known to be a creative but also a productive way to trigger and attract the participant's mind to think and to connect to their true emotions while creating geographical and personal data. Following the work of Boschmann & Cubbon (2014) and Leonardi (et al., 2009), as both works focus on the emotional and geographical aspects of the spatial and visual perception of home, two methods of mental maps were given to interviewees.

The first one involved guiding interviewees to write the letter H in the center of a blank page – which symbolizes the location of their home – and then asking them to create a 'map' around it, describing ordinary and favorite places they visit during the week. For the second map, interviewees were requested to draw their home, in any style they desire (realistic, semantical, symbolic, etc.), and after they were done, they were requested to choose two objects or items in the house that help them 'feel like home', and to draw them in their location in the 'mental home', while talking about them. In both exercises they were asked to explain what they did and why. The aim of these experiments was to trigger different and out of the ordinary thoughts about home and what is outside home, and to discuss home and its objects, while creating a visual image of those thoughts.

Third, in this last exercise, the participants were asked to mark their home on a printed google map. Looking at the map, they were asked to share their opinions about the borders of what they consider home, and their feelings in and towards other parts close to their home. As with the mental maps, the point of this exercise was to trigger and open the participant to geographical and spatial thinking, which would help them enrich the data they are able to provide, in a relevant issue to the research question and sub questions.

2. *'Engaging with Home'*
The Work of Art in Domestic Ethnographic Research

2.1 Introduction

Immediately after the approval of the research proposal, in July 2017, the research has begun. Its first stage was a period test, focused firstly on exploring the accessibility to the research field, and secondly to inspect the major parts of the research methods, and especially the visual experimental methods, as a source for good quality data, and at the same time as a friendly method to engage

with interviewees who I was going to meet for the first and only time. The decision to create a test period has also created a situation in which the first case study was also the last one.

In each city, six months of research were invested in total. The decision concerning the length of work dedicated to each case study had been determined by creating a full schedule as provided to me by the university, in order to assure I would obtain enough data that would allow me to claim empirical results on the specific case studies and on the phenomenon as a global one. In those six months, the aim was to know and get familiar with the city, its infrastructures, the locals, the tourists and touristic places, so I could get a sense of living in each of the cities as a host and as a guest. In that period of time, the main goal was set to obtain a number of 30 ethnographic mini-cases, and 20 interviews. In the second part of this chapter, I would extensively describe how research goals and methods were applied in reality, while providing a chronological display of the work of the research.

2.2 Chronology of research

In this paragraph I will display the chronological progress of the research as actually practiced during the course of two years in the researched countries and cities.

July 2017
Approval of the research proposal

July - August 2017
Test period of methods in the case study of Jerusalem

September - February 2018
6 months of full study of the case study of Milan

March - September 2018
2 months of full study of the case study of Lisbon

October - January 2019
4 months of full study of the case study of Jerusalem

February 2019 - June 2020
Analysis of the findings, writing period

- **Test period in Jerusalem**

The test period in Jerusalem was held between July and August 2017, followed by the creation of protocols of the hosts' interviews, and of the ethnographic goals and notes. During that time, I have visited the city and even lived there for a while. Jerusalem, relatively speaking, was foreign to me (in comparison, much foreigner than Milan was to me at the time), as an average secular Israeli, who does not live in Jerusalem or near it, Jerusalem was pictured as a religious space which is relevant only in religious occasions. Occasions that the Israeli secularism still preserves[27]. Therefore, visiting and getting to know the city was crucial and important to understand what hosting in Jerusalem is, and what tourism in Jerusalem is.

In the test period, the main test was on the **semi-structured interviews** and the **visual experimental** methods**.** Throughout the research, a search for informants was handled in two ways. 10% of interviewed informants were found with the help of other informants (hosts who knew other hosts who fit the criteria), and family and friends who knew hosts (who fit the criteria). While the vast majority of the interviewees, 90%, were found throughout the entire research using the following process:

(1) **Starting** a search on the Airbnb website, using the location filter (in this case – Jerusalem borders), and accommodation type – private room).

(2) **Creating** 'wishing lists' on the Airbnb website (using my private profile) to sort out potential mini-cases that have already been checked and other that should be checked.

(3) **Examining** each mini-case by looking for clues on whether the hosts are stay-at-home hosts or not. Airbnb, methodologically, does not force Airbnb hosts to clarify their housing situation, and information on number of rooms, residents staying at home, whether the hosts themselves live at home or not, normally remains unclear[28]. Over time, useful tools were found to be mentioning house pets, activities with the host and by the host, and the terminology used to introduce the apartment or the service.

(4) **When cases were found to fit the criteria** – **sending** a message to the hosts through the Airbnb messaging service explaining the reason for contacting them and what is required

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[27] Example for such religious occasions for the average secular in the city of Jerusalem, is the practice of the Bar-Mitzva ceremony, held for boys on their 13th birthday, which is performed in the Western Wall. Such a memory is a typical one for most secular Jewish children in Israel, and is still considered as such even today, while other practices have been slowly fading and reduced to a much secular, yet traditional, proportion.
[28] The methodological work itself has created numerous insights and stand-alone data, which would be noted in relevant chapters and in later discussions.

of them if they agree, while checking that, as assumed, they indeed fit the criteria. The first message to hosts was sent as **an inquiry**, meaning, a question about the listing, which is the only possible way to message hosts without actually performing a reservation. The inquiry, however, must contain specific requested dates, which had often created a confusion for the hosts, and even made them impatient. The lack of knowledge and understanding about how the Airbnb website works by many of the hosts had created demands on their side to delete my inquiry, wrongfully thinking that I have blocked the dates. Over time, and with the help of hosts who have explained this to me themselves, I have learned how to guide other hosts, whether they have cooperated or not, to send me an offer for my supposedly requested dates, in order to avoid any possible punishment by Airbnb, as after their offer I had 24 hours to accept it, which I of course did not. Hosts were also found to be worried about being the last one to answer in the messaging exchange, wrongfully assuming that they would be punished if they do not reply in a specific time limit (1-2 hours), while this punishment method actually only applies on the first reply to an inquiry.

(5) **When host agreed to interview** – it has become an interesting challenge **switching** from the Airbnb messaging service **to a free communication platform**. Without completing a transaction, Airbnb blocks the possibility to write certain and many words, phrases, and pieces of information. For example, it is not possible to mention other social networks, to write any addresses, phone numbers, or even names. Methodologically, this has raised many challenges, which could be summed up in two. First, hosts who have found it difficult to find a way to switch to another communication platform (usually technologically challenged hosts), have eventually given up and stopped communication altogether. Secondly, Airbnb, while using their communication system, also warns hosts (and guests) of any interaction outside their system. The inability to communicate properly, has scared some hosts of being punished by Airbnb, and some have preferred to avoid such communication. Finally, around 20% of the participants have asked to switch to another platform, like Facebook, in order to verify me as a 'decent' user. The switch to such an application has reassured those participants and helped them make the decision to allow a stranger into home even without the Airbnb platform.

Because the following process was repeated over and over until reaching 20 interviews in each city, it would be efficient to understand the methodological difficulties and the amount of time

spent on finding informants by displaying the ratio between the number of inquiries and the positive responses which ended in switching to another platform. In the test period, I achieved the best ratio throughout the research, of one positive response to 7 inquiries (as a comparison, the ratio in Milan during the entire research was 1 positive response to 13 inquiries, and in Lisbon, in the first period only – 1 to 50 inquiries).

In the point of switching to another platform of communication, a meeting had been set at the host's home and Airbnb apartment. In the test period, 13 interviews were conducted, lasting 2.5 hours to 4 hours each. In addition, all visual experiments were performed during the interviews, and all desired digital ethnographic data was collected for the mini-cases.

- **Case study of Milan**

After the test period in Jerusalem, some visual experiments have been removed, but the interview's time frame remained according to the initial plan, as all required 20 interviews were conducted for 2.5 hours to 4.0 hours, and the remaining visual experiments were performed, receiving very positive feedbacks from the participants. As mentioned, the ratio in Milan stands on one positive answer to 13 requests (meaning, about 260 hosts were approached in Milan while 20 have agreed to the interview).

After the interview phase was almost over (including the collection of digital ethnography and visual experiments), a similar work started to be built on the ethnographic work. As already mentioned in the first part of this chapter, ethnography in all cities was calculated as 30 mini-cases per city (completing 50 mini-cases in each city together with the interviews).

The ethnographic realm in each field and mini-case has been rather short (between 18-24 hours each), which is why my goal was to collect as much independent data as possible through the work on every new mini-case. Characterization of check-ins and check-outs, full examination of the apartment, and an attempt to uncover clues about possible changes[29]. When it was possible, and according to the natural 'flow' of the hosting, interaction between the hosts and me have occurred, usually when sitting together for a cup of tea or coffee. Rarely (around 20%) interactions went deeper to an evening together with a glass of wine or a morning chat with shared breakfast. In

[29] Often, discovering changes in the domestic realm or even in hosts' lives was possible with a combination of digital and traditional ethnography.

those occasion, it was possible to obtain additional data on the circumstances leading the host to start working with Airbnb (motives), or to discuss the familial situation (for example, a child who has left home after graduating high school).

In many cases, a deeper interaction did not occur, for example, when due to the lack of a suitable 'space' to do so, an interaction could not have occurred at all (for example – an apartment that has no living room and the kitchen is banned from using). In such cases, other clues were found useful, or alternatively, some information has stayed unknown. Finally, out of the 30 mini-cases, only one host did not actually live in the house. Symbolically enough, it was the last mini-case[30]. The ethnographic work in Milan was especially important because the interviews in the city were relatively and too homogeneous, as a big proportion of the interviewees were elderly retired women. The ethnography, instead (overall applies to all mini-cases), has displayed a very diverse and mixed population, that most importantly, creates an image of the entire society[31].

In Milan, and due to budget limitations, logistic and personal issues, I have managed to gather all of the mini-cases together, staying in 30 different apartments, mini-cases, and hosts in the duration of 32 consecutive days[32]. The movement around Milan while carrying most of my belongings with me, has created a strange and unique feeling of nomadism, leading me to new reflections on the meaning of home and its role in one's life. That feeling grew even stronger, due to the gap between check-out hours of one mini-case and the check-in of another[33], which has led to daily hours of vagrancy. That happened especially in the case of Milan, where an extensive part of the ethnography took place during Christmas season. The unique days of holidays have allowed me to witness a time related homey behavior, which had an enormous impact on me as a guest.

Therefore, the experience of the ethnographic work has led to a constant two-hat perspective. The one, of the researcher, who seeks to discover as much objective data about the host and their home as possible, and the second, as a guest, a client, who eventually suffers when staying in an unsuitable place, and expects a good service and a comfortable stay, something that was often

[30] Even in that mini-case, it was found that originally, the host had been living in that apartment before, but as the family grew bigger they have decided to move to another apartment in the same building and turn their former home into an investment, combining one constant tenant and two Airbnb rooms. That chronological scenario was found extremely typical in Lisbon.
[31] Demographic analysis would be presented in the next part of this chapter.
[32] In two of the mini-cases in Milan I have stayed for two nights due to logistic and personal reasons.
[33] For example, a host that requires check-out by noon, while the next check-in is allowed after 4pm

lacking[34]. The negotiation between the two positions, creating fascinating debates and ideas, which would be displayed in the findings and discussion of this thesis.

After collecting all interviews and ethnographic mini-cases (overall – 19 interviews and 31 ethnographic cases – 50 mini-cases in total), the digital ethnography and the text analysis of all mini-cases was added.

- **Case study of Lisbon**

The first two months in Lisbon have been the most challenging throughout the entire work on collecting data. During that period, the ratio of interviews per requests has been 1 to 50, which is the reason that at the end of the period, after managing to hold only one interview, some changes have been made in order to help participants agree to participate in the interview and reduce their demands. Although in later interviews, some participants have blamed the bad weather for other hosts' objection to participate and they thought that the bad weather had affected their mood negatively, there are in fact some important reasons that were found for the difficulties during this stage:

(1) **Language –** Lisbon is the only case study whose language I do not speak nor understand, forcing me to use English instead when communicating with participants.

(2) **Fear of Airbnb –** many participants have made it clear to me that they are certain that Airbnb could 'punish' them for interacting outside the platform, and therefore refused.

(3) **Fear of the municipal authorities –** this is probably the most common reason for refusing to interview, because of two situations: (1) they did not register, and feared that I work with the municipality to track down unregistered Airbnb hosts. (2) they did register, but they feared that I had been sent by the municipality to check registration details which could eventually lead to raising their taxes.

(4) **Fear of a stranger –** in many occasions I was explained that in Lisbon it is a known method of operation before robbing houses, to find legitimate reasons to visit people's homes (checking gas, water, etc.) in order to check the property and prepare for the robbery[35].

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[34] The story of this ethnographic work would only be hinted in this research. Nevertheless, because of the unique preferences and experience of this ethnographic work, in all case studies, a methodological note would be written separately.

[35] That reason, as it seems, has defined the nature of interviews in the second period in Lisbon in many senses.

While many potential participants have refused to participate in the interview for no reason but their simple unwillingness (in all cases, of course), in Lisbon the fear of reasons (2), (3), and (4) were extremely visible.

During that period, ethnography was not planned nor practiced.

The struggles during the first period in Lisbon, and my concern that the city may not be big enough to provide the necessary number of interviews (when also the research schedule could not suffer such a delay) with a ratio of 1 to 50, I have decided to dramatically reduce the terms of the interviews. If before I have only accepted interviews that were held at the participants' homes, at this stage I suggested their home as a location but agreed to conduct it in other locations, according to their decision. The duration of the interviews has been reduced to 1 to 3 hours (most interviews lasted between 1 to 1.5 hours), and most of the experimental visual methods have been removed. Due to these changes, the ratio has improved dramatically, reaching 1 to 20. In many cases, interviews have started at a coffee shop and quickly moved to the participant's home (always initiated and offered by the participants themselves).

The ethnographic work has begun during the second period, but unlike the grueling efforts made in Milan, in Lisbon, the mini-cases have been divided into three seasons of 7-10 days each, which has completed all together 30 mini-cases. Comparatively, in Lisbon, only in two mini-cases a deep interaction with the host has been established (which should be linked to the language barrier), and in the others, data was collected from the house and from digital ethnography in order to complete any missing data, to the satisfaction of the research[36].

While Milan has provided 29 mini-cases where the hosts were actually stay-at-home hosts and only one did not live in the apartment, (but he did still fit the criteria set), in Lisbon more such mini-cases were found, and 5 out of the 30 were indeed mini-cases in which the hosts have presented themselves as stay-at-home hosts but have actually turned their residential home into an Airbnb apartment or a semi Airbnb apartment.

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[36] The research in Lisbon had suffered a serious setback as in the beginning, while sleeping in the home that was acquired for the entire research period, was robbed. The robbery led to the loss of significant amount of unbacked-up data and budget issues. That accident led to some decisions to reduce methods used.

- **Case study of Jerusalem**

The second part in Jerusalem has only required the completion of a few interviews and the entire ethnographic work. Just as in Milan, the ethnographic work in Jerusalem was held in 30 consecutive days of moving from one Airbnb apartment to another. Alas, the ethnographic work in Jerusalem has suffered from a few cancellations due to calendar mistakes of the hosts and especially due to the dissatisfaction of hosts from one-night stay reservations. Therefore, only 25 mini-cases were actually collected (instead of 30), but all of them represented different types of stay-at-home hosts, while deeper interactions have been established with about a third of them.

After the ethnographic part, I stayed in Jerusalem for two additional months, in which I have completed the necessary interviews. Those interviews were shorter as at that point the sense of fatigue and repetition have started to be very noticeable, and the collection of data seemed completed and thorough enough.

After those four months I have returned to Milan, to finish the complete analysis of all findings.

2.3 Demographic and descriptive information

This research in its core is based on 88 ethnographic cases and 57 interviews, completing 145 qualitative mini-cases in total, in three cities. The demographic realm of Airbnb stay-at-home hosts is important, because more than everything, it displays an extremely diversified research sample, which is not only a research sample, but also a very important evidence for the claim that Airbnb and especially stay-at-home Airbnb hosts are not a niche part of the entire population (in any of the cities), but rather a sociological phenomenon that concerns all parts of society, and in every socio-economic situation: families, singles, divorced, widowers, as well as workers, freelancers, unemployed people, housewives and husbands, seniors and students all use Airbnb, for different motives and for different solutions.

In the next graph, the gender differences in each city will be displayed:

Graph No.3: Distribution of Research Participants by Gender
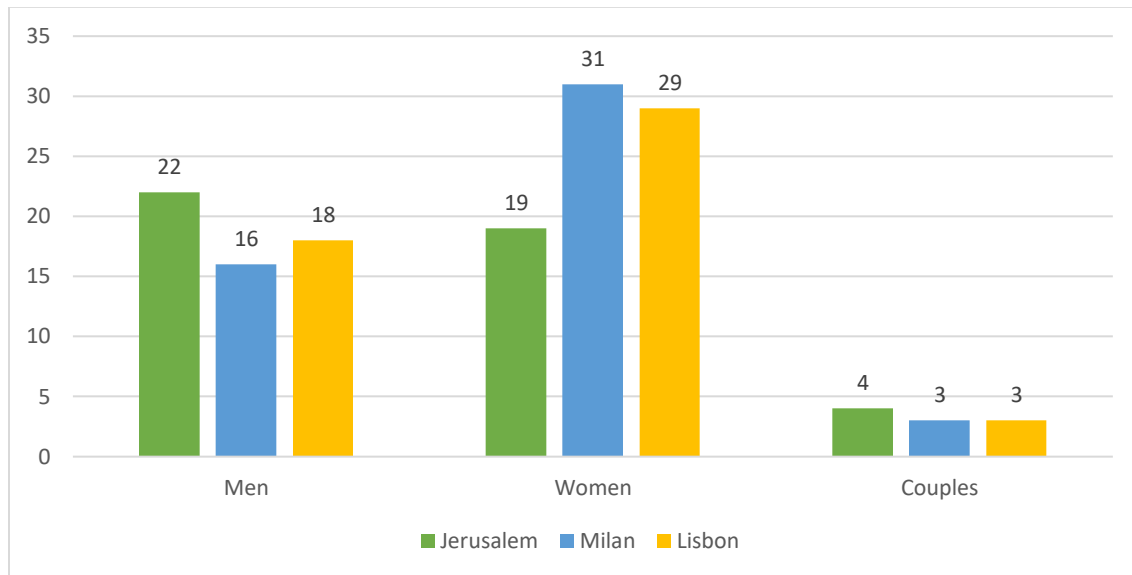
In all case studies, it is possible to notice a gender imbalance[37], as women have agreed to participate in the interviews much more than men[38] (a gap that, without planning, has been balanced by the ethnography). This graph also shows that women are significantly more sampled in Milan and Lisbon, and it is necessary to add that in many couples, the women was the one responsible for the platform and hosting, which has reduced the number of men.

[37] Couples were marked as one person only when one of the partners had a clear responsibility for the listing and the home and the other's responsibility was not clear or non-existing. A couple was marked as such, when there was a complete and somewhat equal cooperation between the partners. In addition, it is important to emphasize that all genders, including third genders were part of this research and taken under consideration. Alas, no such genders were found among the many mini-cases.

[38] There is a solid ground to presume that my skills as a researcher and my own gender and personality have shaped that data.

In the following graph the age distribution will be displayed:

Graph No.4: Distribution of research participants by age[39]
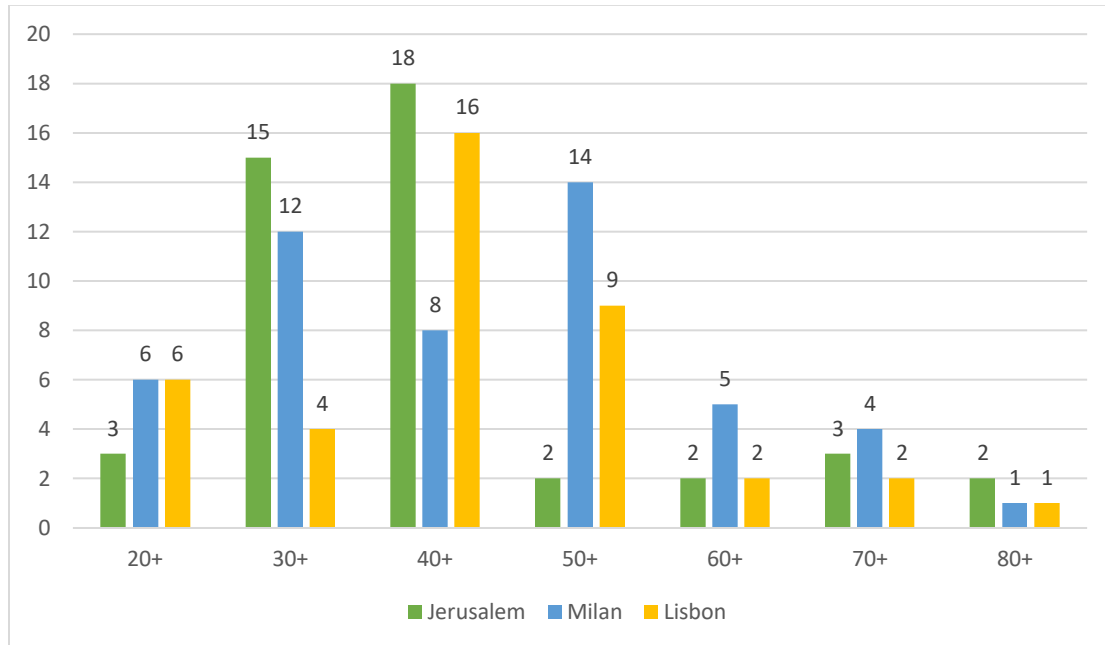
In graph No. 4, can be seen that the most common ages in all case studies are 30 to 50 years old. Nevertheless, it is also possible to find hosts in their 20s and hosts between the ages of 60 to 80. Although this graph does not presume to give an accurate rate of the overall population, it perfectly demonstrates how stay-at-home host are of all genders and all (adult) ages.

Another interesting demographic information is that while in Jerusalem and Milan only 17% and 18% of the hosts are foreigners, in Lisbon, the rate is much higher, reaching 30% of the participants. In Milan, the diversity is quite strong, as there are hosts from Africa, East Asia, and Europe. In Jerusalem, most foreigners are American Jews, and in Portugal, most foreign hosts are from Brazil.

Other demographic data is redundant to be quantified, as it is so varied. Jobs, for example, where it was possible to find employees working in traditional jobs, and others working in the creative sectors or freelancers. Marital or familial status, where all possible options were found, singles, couples, married, living together, with or without kids, divorced people and widowers were all quite visible as hosts. Finally, the seniority of the selected mini-cases is diverse as well, varying

[39] Couples who belong to different age decades were calculated as an average.

from new hosts to hosts who have been working with Airbnb for over seven years. Either way, most hosts range from 1 to 3 years of experience with the platform.

2.4 Research process and data analysis

During the entire research, different kinds of data was collected, as it spread between 145 mini-cases, and data of the urban context of the three case studies:

(1) **Interviews** – 57 mini-cases were based on interviews were collected and transcribed, of 1 to 4 hours each.

(2) **Ethnography** – 88 mini-cases were based on 95 nights and days of ethnographic data was collected mainly by recording a voice note of between 10 to 40 minutes, for each mini-case.

(3) **Digital ethnography** – throughout the entire research periods (18 months) digital ethnography was initiated by approaching participants in overt and covert ethnographic methods.

(4) **Text examination** – over 10,000 text pages were collected from hosts' profiles, listings, reviews, and interaction via Airbnb during the ethnography.

(5) **Visual data** – over 2,000 photos were taken and collected during interviews, during ethnography, and from the listings on the website.

(6) **Quantitative data** – basic quantitative data was collected by using different sources like Airdna.co or InsideAirbnb.com.

There are two main principal methodological approaches which were used to handle this great amount of data. The first is of thematic analysis. A thematic analysis is extremely popular in qualitative research because it allows the researcher to create order in massive amounts of data by using themes, and identifying those themes by the number of times they appear and in different kinds of situations (Vaismoradi, Jones, Turunen & Snelgrove, 2016) . Most of the work in this project was done by a traditional thematic analysis, using manual technics.

In addition, this research and this project is perceived as a narrative research (Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach & Zilber, 1998; Squire et al., 2014). Meaning, first, every theme in this research is taken under the scope of the contextual story of every case. And second, for each of the 145 mini-cases, a narrative was built, in order to fully understand the chronological chain of actions, and to discover

patterns of narratives of different people and different cultures. Such an approach has helped to create even more order and sense in the massive data while interpreting and finding empirical evidence for those patterns and their meanings, as typical chains of actions.

2.5 Limitations of the study

A project with such a great scope, a significant amount of data and research methods, can claim, as I believe, to empirical results that cover the entire phenomenon of Airbnb, as Airbnb's specific global service, as a 'sharing economy' service, as an expression of a new social technology, and as part of the urban tourism development. Nevertheless, some important limitations are part of this research and must be taken into consideration.

- **The position of the researcher**

In this research, the main social act which is displayed during the expression of the phenomenon, is the relationship and the interaction between the host and the guest. Such an interaction normally takes place in private spaces of the domestic realm, and they are held alone. Therefore, the position of the researcher is extremely problematic, and is bound to contaminate the observed scene. Thus, the approach of becoming the guest myself and absorbing the situation as part of the interaction has been selected. This solution has given the research an effective and productive source full of exclusive data about the hosts and their homes.

Alas, such a method has some obvious setbacks, which, in my case, were all related to my character and my abilities to interact, and to interact in multi-cultural situations, with strangers. Such skills or the lack of them must have severe implications on the interactions and on the chain of actions leading to one or another type of interaction. This is the reason that the ethnography itself was not focused on on-going interactions, but mainly on the technicalities of every check-in and check-out, and on other random situations. Further information about those kinds of interaction has been completed through digital ethnography and text examination.

- **Scope of the ethnographic work**

Another important limitation is the way in which the ethnographic research was designed. In this research, I have decided to favor quantity, as the research is heavily qualitative. The combination of a significant amount of mini-cases – 145 mini-cases in three cities, with a deep qualitative research, has created an empirical research that could properly generalize onto the phenomenon. Alas, because of schedule and budget calculations, each ethnographic case has received only one night. This limitation has had an influence on a few matters.

First, inability to create a significant relationship with hosts and to receive direct information about their intention to interact with guests. This limitation should be taken in the right proportion, especially because of the first limitation. Secondly, I suffered from some kind of a diversion in the ethnographic population, especially in Israel, with hosts who do not enjoy the hassle of one-night stay guests and cancelled that possibility. While those are significant limits, the methodological learning of those limits about the phenomenon, was extremely useful[40].

3. *'A Tale of Three Cities*'

A Semi-Comparative Overlook on the Case Studies

3.1 Introduction

The cases that were chosen for this research, as already demonstrated, were selected under an urban perspective, in which all cases are cities that are undergoing urban processes, which creates developments in the housing situation, and leads to several trends. While there are a few but important links that connect the case studies, the research itself was not designed to create comparative work between them. Instead, an approach for qualitative case studies was selected, in which four-scale pyramid was built. In the first scale, the mini-cases of each city, which were explored and interpreted separately. In this chapter, I would explore the urban context that is of the second scale, a scale that with a productive and selective comparative mix-methods between the different narratives and processes of the city, can create an induction to the third and last scale, of the Airbnb service itself, and the general Airbnb stay-at-home hosts phenomenon.

[40] The actual experience as well as the ethnographic difficulties would be written in a methodological note separately.

Therefore, although cultural and urban processes can be proved to be crucial in one setting of a selected city over another, the cultural uniqueness of each of the cities is kept in the background of the findings displayed in the following chapter. Hence, those are the differences between the case studies that were understood, rather than the actual values, ideas and colors that lead to that gap.

There are number of reasons for that decision. First, as already discussed, the research as a whole could not ingest the entire historical and cultural baggage that each of the case studies conceals. Secondly, as a micro type of research, I wished to understand the participants first, and their urban context next, an urban context which was extracted first and foremost from the informants' own point of view. Thirdly, Airbnb itself, as a mechanism of an intimate global production and consumption service, is asking to settle the contradiction of a global and unified hospitalizations norms, with the unique experience of 'living like a local' in infinite locations around the world. That contradiction is well described in the research field, by the actions and emotions expressed in it. Thereby, a new culture emerges, a global one, as it would be further described as well as its implications.
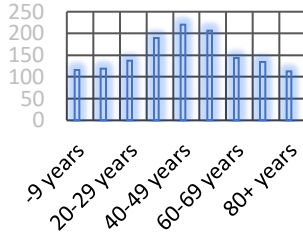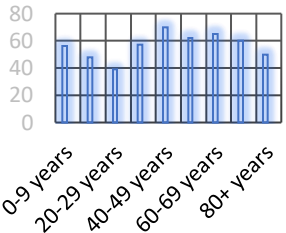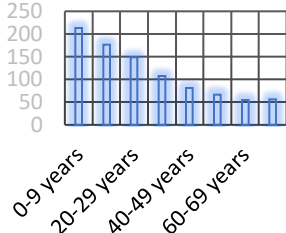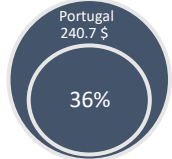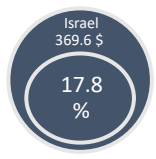
At last, what was chosen to be the focus of this work, is the narratives and stories of the accumulation of 145 stories, whose spread over such different case studies and cities, could empirically prove the Airbnb phenomenon as a global one, and as one that could hint on similar developments in the future of cities, tourism, technology and economy.

In this manner, I have the ability to see more relevant patterns in the properties of the phenomenon, to understand the cultural and urban context in order to identify (through the gaps, differences between the cities), and to (1) reassure that processes that have already been explored in the city are indeed reflected from micro findings, or to move in new and to-be-researched furthermore. And (2), to interpret the fashion and nature of the phenomenon through its influence on hosts in different cultural contexts, as an image of the transition as part of the post-Fordist economy from a local and cultural trade spaces to global and unified markets.

In this chapter, I wish to present a contextual display of the three case studies, which would allow a framework for understanding the urban and economic situations of the cities, and understanding Airbnb itself and its implications on the city, in the three fields of research. In the first part of this chapter, I would represent a limited comparative look on the differences and similarities of the

three cases, followed by three more parts which would improve the resolution on each of the case studies.

3.2 The case studies in numbers

	Milan, Italy[41]	**Lisbon, Portugal**[42]	**Jerusalem, Israel**[43]
Population	1,378,689 Women 52% / Men 48%	507, 220 Women 54% / Men 46%	919, 438 Women 50% / Men 50%
Age (in thousands)			
GDP	Italy 2, 073.9 / 10%	Portugal 240.7 $ / 36%	Israel 369.6 $ / 17.8 %
Contribution of tourism	8.5%	14.5%	3.5%
Airbnb listings	22,109	22,242	3,828
% of private rooms	19%	24.2%	14%
Mean price	91 €	92 €	132 €

[41] The data for the case study of Milan, Italy, was taken from the website of the municipality of Milan, from Istat.it, from the site Airdna.co, and InsideAirbnb.com.

[42] The data for the case study of Lisbon, Portugal, was taken from the statistical website of the municipality of Lisbon, the Portuguese statistical organization, from the site Airdna.co, and InsideAirbnb.com.

[43] The data for the case study of Jerusalem, Israel, was taken from The Jerusalem Institute for Policy Research, from the site Airdna.co, and InsideAirbnb.com.

3.3 The case of Milan, Italy

Ethnographic work in Milan
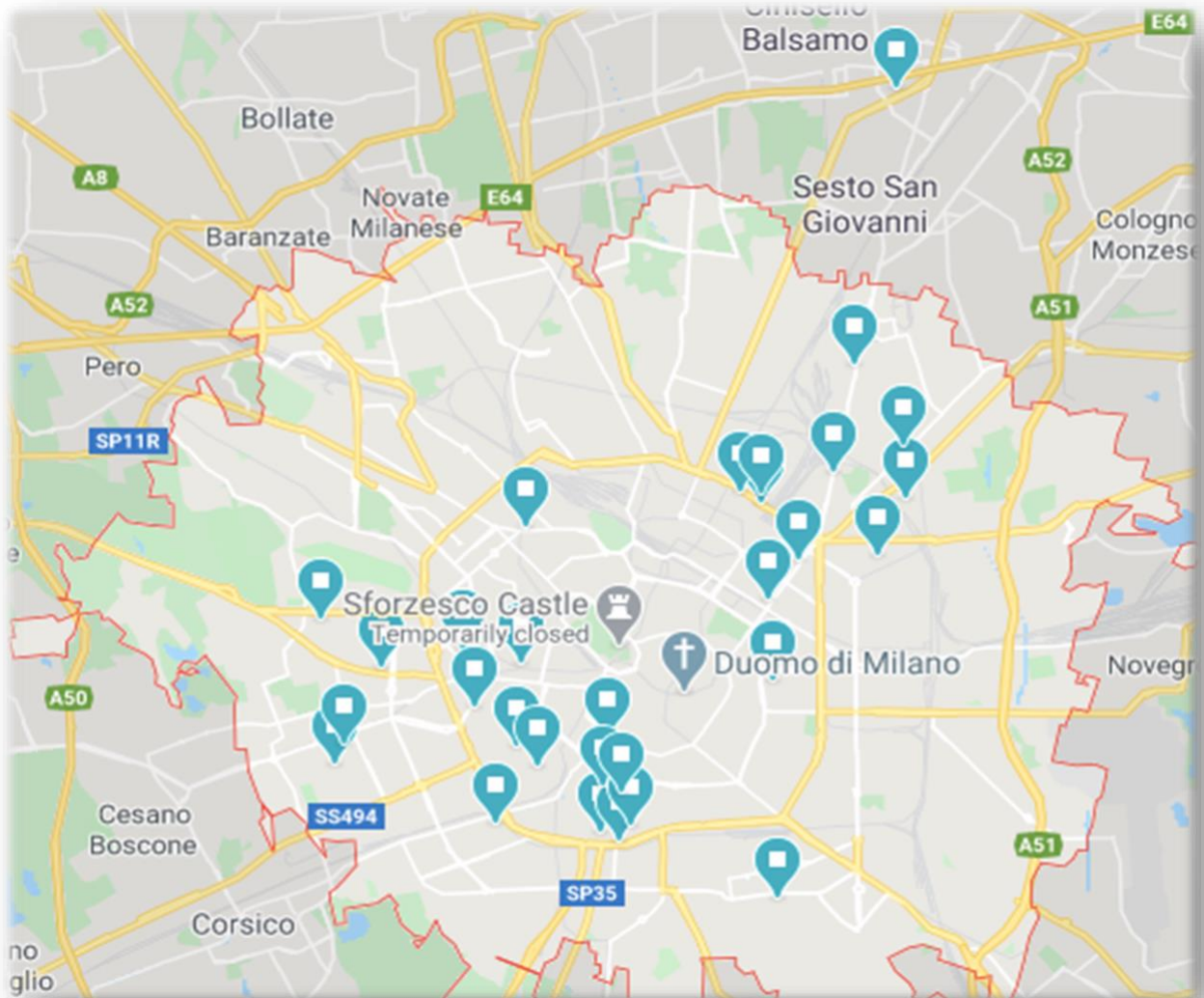
The city of Milan is a 'global' city located in northern Italy, in the region of Lombardy. It is the capital of its region and the second most populated city in Italy. According to data from the end of 2018, the city itself has an estimated population of 1,337,689 residents, while the entire metropolis, the largest in Italy, has a population of more than 7.5 million people[44]. Milan is considered one of the greatest economic spaces in Europe, and one of the most important centers of the creative industry, especially in matters of culture, design, fashion and culinary. Historically, Milan was and still is an important junction on the way to France, Switzerland, and the Alpes.

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[44] All data about Italy or the Milan area are taken from 'Istat.it', unless stated otherwise.

The population of Milan is mostly Italian, as Milan is considered the most attractive city for Italians from other regions, and especially from the south. The largest immigrant groups are from the Philippines, with over 40 thousand residents, and from Egypt, with almost 39 thousand people. Other large groups of immigrants come from China (over 30,000), Peru, Sri Lanka, Romania, and others[45].

According to the Mastercard's 2018 Global Destination Cities Index[46], Milan was rated 15th in the world in number of visitors, with 8.81 million visitors in that year alone, ahead of Rome that was more visited two years earlier. Milan is a terrific example of a touristic reality that includes both leisure and business ambitions.

Airbnb in Italy is considered the 3rd largest Airbnb market after the United States and France. Their success is divided into three regions, the one of Lazio, and especially Rome. The one of Tuscany, and especially Florence, and the one of Lombardy, and especially Milan. Comparing the size differences, in Rome (that covers 1,285 km2), there were only 9,900 listed hosts in 2016, while in Milan (that covers only 181.76 km2), there were 9,600 listed hosts by then. At the time of writing, Rome is already flooded with Airbnb listings, with as many as 29,436 listings (according to 'Inside Airbnb').

There is an inconsistency in some of the data regarding the impact or the gravity of Airbnb in Milan. For example, Airdna.co, one of the most important websites for Airbnb statistics, marks a number of 16,839 listings in the city of Milan, as of August 2019. However, according to the Corriere Della Sera, the most popular daily newspaper in Italy, there are only 13,669, as of end of March 2019. The free and most academic website for Airbnb statistics – 'Inside Airbnb'[47],in however, claims that the number of listings inside the borders of the city of Milan is 17,659.

Similar differences can be found also regarding the balance between people who share a room in their home, and others, who leave home or rent per se, another apartment. On Inside Airbnb, 72.5% of the listings are of entire houses[48], in which, to recall, allows no or almost no interaction between the hosts and the guests. 25.5% of the listings are of private rooms, but there is no clear data that

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[45] Data obtained from Istat.
[46] The Mastercard's 2018 Global Destination Cities Index.
[47] Inside Airbnb.
[48] Interesting anecdote of the term 'entire house'. Only lately, Airbnb decided to change that term, which was one of the basic features of the service, to 'entire place'. Another small but symbolic modification that could be seen as a step towards a new terminology, in which home is not at its center.

claims to know if a room is part of an Airbnb rental, or part of an authentic home[49]. The rest, about 2%, are of a couch or a mattress in a shared space. In Airdna.co, the number of entire houses is much higher, rising to 77%, and only 21.5% are of private rooms.

Inside Airbnb also helps identifying 'active users', a listing or a host, and it has found that 70% of the listings are of active hosts. An active host is a host whose listing has been available for more than 60 days a year. Another important data found on the website shows, that more than 60% of the listings are the only listing the host holds. This means that most of those hosts are either sharing their own home or renting a second apartment. In addition, people who have more than one listing, could be renting out the vacant rooms while staying at home, or alternatively, giving the guests the option of taking the whole apartment. Once again, such data and the blurriness of that data clarifies the inability of guests to know what they are actually receiving, in many occasions.

As in many other cities, Milan has started with a few dozen listings in 2010, but it was only during 2015, the year of the international exhibition, the EXPO, that the number of listings has multiplied. Research shows that the EXPO was a fundamental catalysator in Milan's rise from the great recession of 2009. However, with the flood of leisure and business tourism coming for the EXPO, many other initiatives have started as well, with the help of the local government, but mainly independently (Ambrosini, 2016; Pasqui, 2018; Gruppioni, 2017).

In the beginning, Airbnb's entering to Italy did not create much of a reaction from the hotel industry, but it has changed in 2015, or as Salvioni (2016) explains it: "… *"hotel chains […] paid little attention to the spread of the sharing economy and only after the rapid growth of platforms such as Airbnb did they recognize the importance of such alternative hospitality service provision…"*. (page 35).

At the time of writing, Airbnb's share in the hotel industry in Milan alone is at a low number of less than 10% of over 9 million-night stays overall, of both hotels and P2P accommodations. These numbers are actually quite questionable, as the ISTAT, the official Italian statistic organization, cannot count any P2P (in Italian – Alloggi privati) that is not registered. While Italy is pursuing a clear policy and regulation of the field, such efforts are still in their infancy. Either way, the relatively low numbers, and the positive approach towards urban and social initiatives, keeps the debate about Airbnb in the city, somewhat silent.

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[49] That important methodological fact would be discussed and explored during the findings of this research.

Research shows, that the 'sharing economy' has been a 'good fit' for the city of Milan, as a city whose cultural actors have always been very active and aggressive in setting the tone and the urban agenda of the city. In addition, Milan has always been very successful in creating an equation of such demand and supply, which has led to more innovations than ever before and a strive for creative solutions. Finally, and as noted before, Milan has been fast to respond to the great crisis of 2008 by looking for social alternatives, that with time have flourished and helped Milan achieve its current economic stability (Colombo & Rebughini, 2019; Galimberti, 2013; Bernardi & Diamantini, 2016).

Milan, as one of the top centers in Europe, an economic center, and the center of a rich student environment, together the flourishing of the creative economy in the city, holds the capacity and the audience for urban 'sharing economy' platforms to emerge (d'Ovidio, 2016; d'Ovidio & Cossu, 2017; d'Ovidio & Ponzini, 2014). Studies shows, that it is possible to separate the inner 'sharing economy' expressions that aim to make living in the city better and more social, from the global 'sharing economy', that aims to create a connection between locals and foreigners, for business and shared interactions. For example, the Chinese enterprises of Mofo or MoBike are examples of inner services of bicycle sharing (or access, depends on the chosen definition for 'sharing economy'). On the other hand, the applications of HelloTalk or Tendam, offer a language exchange service where users can connect and teach each other their native language while learning from other users a new language they wish to learn.

Milan is also very known for a lively 'squat scene', that uses neglected structures to create a space for art, music, culture, and sport for the locals. Often, such squats are occupied by different movements or ideologies, that by using those spaces, receive a room and a place of expression for their identity and their beliefs (Adinolfi, 2019; Pedrini, 2018; Verga, 2015).

Furthermore, Milan, as the capital of the creative industry in Europe, is also a pioneer in creating co-working spaces. Such spaces are built in a young, creative and free style, offering all office the services that freelancers or small companies need, from secretaries, cafeterias, print services, conference rooms, and a place to hang out at the end of a long day (Pacchi, 2017; Mariotti, Pacchi & Vita, 2015; Bernardi & Diamantini, 2016). Finally, other than Airbnb, the active 'sharing economy' market of house-swapping, in which people exchange homes, sometimes and often internationally, with other strangers, is considered very common (Forno & Garibaldi, 2015; Giachino, Re & Cantino, 2017).

3.4 The case of Lisbon, Portugal

Ethnographic work in Lisbon
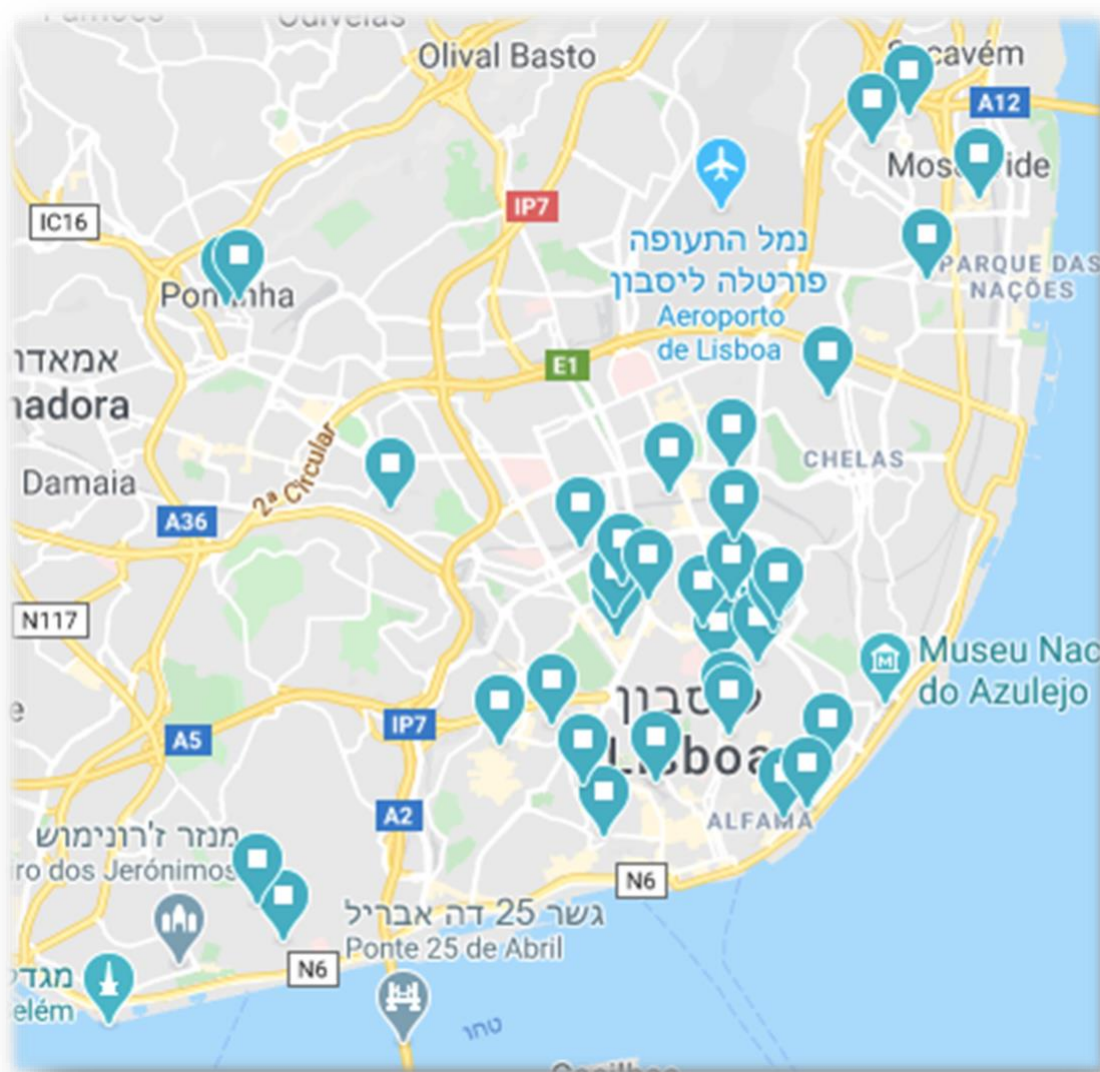
The city of Lisbon is the capital city of Portugal. In the city itself, according to data updated to the end of 2017, the population is around 505,526 residents, while the entire metropolis has a population of 2,942,097 people[50]. Interestingly enough, while data shows a small growth in the metropolis area (between 0.49% to 0.55% every five years), in the capital city, there is a reduction in the population (in 2010, the city had more than 545,000 residents). Lisbon is considered one of the greatest touristic spaces in Europe, and the biggest economic and cultural center in Portugal.

[50] Unless stated otherwise, all data on the city of Lisbon is taken from the statistic website of the municipality of the city.

As Milan, and many other European cities, Lisbon should be seen both as a small municipality with over than 500,000 citizens, but also as an entire metropolitan area, with more than three million citizens, with approximately one third of the entire Portuguese population in Portugal. The largest immigrant groups are from the two former colonies. Brazil, with over 100 thousand residents in Portugal, most of which have settled in Lisbon, and Cabo Verde, whose largest immigration wave took place last decade. Other large groups are of immigrants from Ukraine, Angola and other former colonies[51] In the city itself, more than 12,000 immigrants from Brazil, almost 8,000 immigrants from China, and more than 6,000 people from France[52].

Lisbon has already been established in the academic literature as a key case study of a city that has gone and is still going through enormous modifications as a result of actors coming from the outside, modifications which are all connected eventually to processes of tourism (Barata-Salgueiro et al., 2017; Rodrigues, Machado & Freire, 2011). Tourism in Lisbon has developed a result of neo-liberal governmental policies, which allows local communities to focus on economic growth and sustainability. By allowing such policies, the city is extremely affected, mainly by modification of spaces and the loss of authentic population and landscape, and as a result, a tourism gentrification process (Gravari-Barbas & Guinand, 2017; Cocola-Gant, 2018; Guimarães, 2018).

In the academic literature, there are some differences in determining the initial period and the extensity of the process of 'touristification' which the city of Lisbon has gone through in urban spaces, and how processes of gentrification are actually the fault of that. Some believe, that it was the international exhibition of the EXPO, which in 1998 has created a great development of spaces for leisure and tourism in the eastern side of the city, on the Tago river, which is called nowadays 'Parque das Nações'. A slow and modest process has started there, of new residents with a better socio-economic status, who invest in and improve buildings and therefore attract more leisure products, such as restaurants, stores and supermarkets (Swyngedouw, Moulaert & Rodriguez, 2002; Carrière & Demazière, 2002; Metaxas, 2006). Others claim, that it is possible to identify twenty years, from 1980 to the year of 2000, in which a moderate process has stopped, and a more intensive process has begun (Tulumello, 2015; Mendes, 2013; Bettencourt & Castro, 2015).

That process, must be shortly connected to the 'Troika program', or the European Troika, an important term that represents the assembly of the consortium of the European Commission, the

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51 Data taken from the Portuguese statistic organization.
52 Statistic website of the municipality of the city

European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund, as a solution for the economic crisis of 2008, that harm the most to the Greece, Cyprus, Ireland, Spain, and also Portugal (Moury & Standring, 2017). The Troika, was meant to perform a type of 'creditors', in which those countries received financial help (as a facilitator of what became the European Union), in a form of loans, and by following demands and 'orders' by those creditors. Such demands, like increase in taxes, selling governmental organization to the private market, lowering public wages and cutting pensions for public workers, are only a few of those demands that were part of the agreement between Portugal and the Troika (Magone, 2014).

Portugal, considered as an important case of the economic system inside the EU, as in several aspects, the 'rescue plan' in Portugal, of 78 billion Euro, was considered successful as Portugal was the country that succeeded best to follow the agreement by initiate a difficult Austerity plan. That plan, had created over the years of the plan, several political as well as social crisis, as while the agreement was fulfilled and the economy indeed slowly recovered, the employment rates continued to be high, and work rules had changed, creating an unhealthy balance between work and poverty (Valentim, 2019).

Nevertheless, it is possible to note two main visions of discussions, of tourism in the frame of the 'Troika agreement'. The first, is that Portugal has managed to overcome the economic crisis, as other countries, like Greece, did not, on the expense of the local and financial socio-economic level, by increasing unemployment and increasing levels of poverty, and on the similar mini-cycles and seasonal bursts of financial contributions of cities such as Lisbon and Porto from tourism (Andraz & Rodrigues, 2016). The second, is that the Troika plan supported and accelerated global trends in the ability to reproduced and also make more efficient, touristic investments, by making them more accessible and friendly for international tourists. Such a trend, as well, create outcomes of gentrification, and the steady disappearance of local and cultural spaces and even traditions for multi-cultural opportunities (Malet Calvo and Ramos, 2018)[53].

The 'touristification' that Lisbon has been going through in the last decades, is the result of it achieving a massive marketing success. Lisbon is seen as a new trending city to explore and to 'feel like a local' in, and of the same trend of attractiveness, it is considered a 'safe' and attractive investment, which creates a spectacular flow of money into the city (Gravari-Barbas & Guinand,

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[53] In their important work, Malet Calvo and Ramos (2018) creating a qualitative image of the touristic phenomena in Lisbon,

2017; Cocola-Gant & Gago, 2019; Torres, 2016). The outcome of this process is the increase in rent costs, and also the fight for basic infrastructures around the city, which cannot contain the flood of tourists. Furthermore, and even though research shows that the policy in Lisbon is to support the locals and to create spaces and services for its residents who feel crowded by tourists and investors, those spaces are eventually shared with the tourists, and balance is still to be determined on the urban space itself. It is important to note as well, to the decision on the making of creating such balance, by banding licenses of touristic ventures, in certain spaces (Judd, 2015; Torres, 2016; Encalada, Boavida-Portugal, Cardoso Ferreira & Rocha, 2017). Unlike Milan, and with similarity to the case of Barcelona, in Lisbon there is a strong debate between the residents and the local government, which has failed so far to find the right balance between a tourism centered economy and the preservation of life and culture of a declining population.

It is possible to note a few evidences for the touristic growth in Lisbon. First, there is a significant increase in the numbers of hotels in the city. Until 2008, the rate of new hotels openings has been quite steady. Since then and until the time of writing, 73 hotels have been built, almost half of them belonging to big 4-5-star hotel chains.

While the key target of investors is young and modern tourists, the short-term renting in Lisbon has caused a dramatic economic growth as well. Unlike Milan, Lisbon is particularly rich in the number of market networks for short-term accommodations. Leading of course, is Airbnb, followed by booking.com, 'Homeaway', and finally 'Uniplaces', which is focused on students travelling for semester periods (Barbosa, 2017; André, 2018).

Airbnb in Lisbon has probably had one of the fastest growth rates over the years, from only 2,000 listings in 2014, to an incredible number of 15,700 listings in 2018. At the time of writing, according to Inside Airbnb, there are 16,230 Airbnb listings, a number similar to the one shown on Airdna.co. Airbnb in Lisbon also shows lower numbers of 'entire-house' listings, 74.8% of the listings, and 23.8% are of private room. While such data should be taken into consideration, the RNAL, that is in charge of registering of unprofessional business of tourism, claims of smaller numbers, which could defiantly symbolize the on-going process in Lisbon of regulation of the Airbnb service, a process that to this day, is absence in the other selected case studies.

Unlike Jerusalem and Milan, and in order to control and limit the growth of P2P accommodations for tourists on the expense of rent prices and supplies for locals, Lisbon has regulated the relationship between P2P accommodations and the local government, demanding that hosts

register as P2P private accommodations. Hosts who have already been hosts before the new regulation, could continue working and hosting, as long as they complete the procedure within two years (Carvalho & Policarpo, 2018; Franco, Santos & Longo, 2019). New hosts, however, could not start the actual calendar for first guests, until they received their registration number. This way, the local government controls the fees that could fund the infrastructures which is needed for accommodating more tourists, and it could also have full control on the details of tourists staying in the city, for security reasons.

Statistics show that Airbnb's competing with the hotel industry in Lisbon did not hurt the hotel industry. Furthermore, as of 2013, a steady but substantial increase in the revenue from every hotel room is noted, from 55 euros in 2013, to 101 euros in 2019. The percentage of occupancy has increased as well, and as already mentioned, the number of hotel rooms has increased to over 35,000 hotel rooms, a significant amount of rooms to the size of the city of Lisbon.

Lisbon, contrary to Jerusalem, or Milan, is often very developed in 'sharing economy' expressions of services that are directed to the touristic potential of the city. As such, in the last years UBER has turned from a significant to a leading actor in the personal driving services of Lisbon (Carvalho, 2015; 2016). Lisbon, whose main Airport is in the city itself, and has a particularly challenging slopes and a challenging public transportation system, has found in UBER (as in other applications and regular old-fashioned taxis) a critical solution. Lisbon is a perfect example for a 'sharing economy' expression that has the ability to be a solution for a certain population while hurting another actor in the market. In 2014, when UBER had just started working in Portugal, the taxi lobby appealed to court asking to stop their operation as an unfair competition, an appeal that has been approved and which stopped UBER for a while, and eventually, now they are only operating in a few cities including Lisbon. This condition has led to several big protests around Portugal against the damage caused by the 'sharing economy' enterprises.

Lisbon is also dealing with a struggling infrastructure that has a difficulty absorbing the mix of migrant workers, tourists, and locals. This is the reason that initiatives have to deal with using the 'sharing economy' as green solutions, like offering electric rental cars instead of petrol cars, and education program that would lead tourists and locals to preserve the city better (Baptista, Melo & Rolim, 2014; Vasconcelos, Martinez, Correia, Guimarães & Farias, 2017).

In addition, as mentioned, the 'sharing economy' is extremely present in the accommodation sector, with big investments in properties that are intended to be used, and are therefore marketed, in

'sharing economy' platforms, even though the public eye does not see such initiatives as local or shared in any manner (Picascia, Romano & Teobaldi, 2017; Gant, 2016; Ferreira, Ramos & Lahr, 2019). As a result of the public attention and criticism, the Lisbon authorities were among the first to negotiate an agreement that regulates and forces registration of hosts who have a profile on Airbnb. As already discussed, registration leads in many cases to tax collection, registration of guest lists and declaration of incomes.

Lisbon, unlike the other case studies, is required to handle a delicate situation of allowing the flow of money into the city in order for it to eventually penetrate and affect the economic situation of the work weary locals. On the other hand, such 'sharing economy' expressions are focused on the global urban, and the changing of the space, the landscape of the place of local urban, which is lost forever. Airbnb as an important actor in this equation, is a fascinating case study.

3.5 The case of Jerusalem, Israel

Ethnographic work in Jerusalem

Although with much controversy, the city of Jerusalem is the capital of Israel, in the Middle East. Within the official borders of the city, according to data as of the end of 2017, the city itself has around 901,302 residents54. Geographically and politically, Jerusalem is a confusing cluster of municipal borders, the 'green line' that was determined in a ceasefire agreement with Lebanon, Syria, Egypt and Jordan (but not with the Palestinians who have lived and still live in the territory today) crosses the city and in some ways divides it, and also, the wall (or the Israeli West Bank barrier) that although is still under construction and although it does not actually comply with neither the municipal borders nor with the 'green line', it has already managed to tear apart villages and families, all, naturally, on the east side of the borders.

The demography of Jerusalem is quite a chaos in display as well, as the city is divided between east and west. In the western part of the city (and other Jewish settlements in the east) there are more than 560 thousand Jews. In the eastern part there are more than 340 thousand Muslims, and about a dozen thousand Christians55. Statistics show a clear increase in the city's population in the last decades, both of Muslims with 60 thousand more residents, and Jews that grew in similar numbers. Nevertheless, the political situation in Jerusalem is impossible, leading to hundreds of thousands of Palestinians who are born into a reality of non-citizenship, and a life of struggle between borders (Baumann, 2016; Nassar, 2015; Salem, 2007; 2018).

Although Jerusalem is the capital city of the state of Israel, Tel-Aviv is its economic force, leading in high-tech start-up companies and a service-based economy. Jerusalem, instead, suffers from an extreme and large scale of diversity between people from different demographic sectors, and different socio-economic situation as well. In Jerusalem, historically, and also today, it is possible to find the highest rates of unemployment (32% unemployment rate towards 19% in Israel), the poorest (37% of the families in Jerusalem are poor, 'only' 10% in Tel-Aviv, and 53% of the children

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54 Unless stated otherwise, the data about Jerusalem was taken from The Jerusalem Institute for Policy Research.
55 These numbers represent only the 'registered' residents of the city. Most Palestinians of East Jerusalem do not hold a citizenship of any country, and instead, their legal status is of 'permanent residents', a status which can be revoked for several reasons, such as studying or working abroad for more than 7 years or when due to bureaucratic or other reasons, a resident is unable to prove that their 'center of life' is in the municipal borders of Jerusalem. According to data provided by the Ministry of Interior, between the years 1967-2014 the residency of 14,416 Palestinians from East Jerusalem has been revoked, a practice that continues to this day. In addition, in 2003 the Israeli Parliament has legislated a 'sunset provision' (a temporary order, which continues to be renewed every year to this day) to the Nationality and Entry to Israel Law, according to which, Palestinian residents of the West Bank who are married to Israeli citizens or residents cannot apply for a family unification process and therefore, in many cases, while they in fact live in Jerusalem, they are not registered as residents (some receive military permits allowing them to stay in Jerusalem for a limited time) and cannot register their children who are left undocumented. This creates a situation in which the accurate number of the residents of Jerusalem is unknown and is much higher than the formal number. According to "Hamoked, center for the defense of the individual" (2015).

are poor, 'only' 19% in Tel-Aviv)[56]. In addition, Jerusalem is known, even more than the rest of Israel, in a very high 'cost of living', and especially in comparison to the city's average income.

One of the most debated issues in Jerusalem, is the fact that the housing situation in West Jerusalem is very complicated and costly, which is also because Jerusalem attracts many American and French Jews from high-socio-economic backgrounds, who in many cases buy property as future investment, leaving it empty and unused, often for the entire year. The attractiveness of the city by investors and its religious history and importance are what makes Jerusalem a very touristic space (Zaban, 2016; 2017; Daniel, 2017).

As a result, Jerusalem and its surroundings (like the Mount of Olives, Temple Mount, or Bethlehem) are described as a product of religious tourism, or Christian tourism, of pilgrims from around the world who come to explore the historical and most sacred places in the world. The bordered political reality in Jerusalem creates a particular balance between locals and tourists, as Jewish locals cannot enter some of the sights that the tourists visiting Jerusalem can (Shilo & Collins-Kreiner, 2019; Butler, 2018; Timothy & Ron, 2018).

Religious tourism in Jerusalem dates back to 1850, as pilgrims, then and now, come to experience and practice religion in the holy land. The attractiveness and importance of the city has been evoked also as Jerusalem became at that time a cultural and economic center, leading to a fusion of money and religion in those days (Feldman, 2016; Leppakari & Griffin, 2016; Griffin & Raj, 2017). This is how Cohen-Hattab and Shoval (2014) explain the importance of Christianity and how religious urban tourism has flourished in Jerusalem:

"…Since the end of the Ottoman period—primarily from the second half of the nineteenth century—the entry of global powers to the Holy Land over a relatively short period and the increase in their political influence has been evident. A concrete expression of this is without a doubt the accelerated building of consulates, churches, monasteries, hospitals, and schools by world powers and churches. The centrality of the pilgrims and tourists in these processes is indisputable: they were the primary consumers of these services…". (page 194*).*

Jerusalem has evolved since the time of the British Mandate for Palestine (which ended in 1948), and has gone through processes of urbanism and tourism, in which, slowly, historical,

[56] These numbers are probably higher when taking into consideration the unregistered and undocumented Palestinians who live in the city and due to their lack of status (which prevents, among other things, health insurance, registry in school and working 'legally') they are in a low socio-economic situation.

archeological and mainly sacred and religious spaces, are being transformed into today's touristic precinct, especially the historical areas and the old city (Cohen-Hattab, 2004; Gola, Perugini & Samir, 2010; Brin, 2006). Alas, the political atmosphere and issues of security have always, and until today, prevented Jerusalem from being a real touristic city, and a significant player in the field of urban tourism. The pilgrims visiting Jerusalem have very different preferences. They usually come in large groups and stay in special and low-cost accommodations and places that can handle such large groups, that are occupied solely on religion consumption (Feldman, 2016; Leppakari & Griffin, 2016; Griffin & Raj, 2017).

In the last decades, Jerusalem is emerging towards developing spaces that can offer solutions for voids in the secular locals' needs, and in tourists' as well, as together they are the majority in the western part of Jerusalem. Such solutions include places that are open also during the Jewish Sabbath (which begins on Friday at dusk and ends on Saturday evening), or clubs, pubs and other nighttime leisure (Cohen-Hattab, 2013; Shtudiner, Klein & Kantor, 2018). In addition, there is a culture of 'squats' that has been developing in the last years in Jerusalem, leading to the creation of civilian initiatives of public spaces, that are transformed for the sake of social activities, culture, art and music (Hasson, 2012; Baum, 2015).

In the public debate, Jerusalem rarely receives the attention of the market, as opposed to Tel Aviv who is traditionally the center of attention. In addition, in the last decade, with the flourishing of home accommodations, Tel Aviv leads as the most toured city and the best touristic investment in Israel. In Jerusalem there are 88 hotels that deliver almost 11 thousand rooms (as of 2011). While in Tel Aviv there are 72 hotels offering 8,076 rooms. Meaning, there is some misconception in Israel about the real touristic force in Israel. Although Jerusalem has more hotel rooms than Tel-Aviv, its revenue is the third in Israel, after Eilat, a beach and resort city, that accommodates large families and young people in hotels, with more than 11 thousand rooms all together, and after Tel-Aviv.

Like in Milan, the official data of Airbnb (and the like) accommodations in Jerusalem is quite limited, as the city does not collect or contain an obliged system of registering such accommodations. In fact, and once again mainly, in Tel-Aviv, which is filled with small companies that transform houses into Airbnb rooms, the hotel industry has been pushing the authorities to act against Airbnb hosts by demanding tax authorities to track them down and impose taxes on them. In addition, the government is being pressured to issue a new tax for Airbnb hosts, which would

be expressed in the collection of municipal taxes. Already, although for a very short time, a special and heavy tax has been imposed on owners of more than three properties. All of these actions were done in order to solve the grave issue of housing, especially in the dense city of Tel-Aviv (Haramati & Hananel, 2016; Ram & Hall, 2018; Ram, Isaac, Shamir & Burns, 2016).

According to Airdna.co, Tel-Aviv currently has over 11 thousand listings, while in Jerusalem there are only 3,770 listing. Such important findings point at the potential and investment made in Tel-Aviv, while using tools of gentrifications, decrease in rent offers, and increase of costs.

In Jerusalem, the different processes that are being developed have more of a political agenda than a financial one. As mentioned before, Jerusalem is changing slowly, as a result of the actual pace of the city, and the different interests that are working at the same time for different causes.

In Israel, a website called 'Agora' (a cent, in Israeli currency) has been active since 2003 offering a negotiation platform for people who seek to dispose of objects from their house, and others who are looking to get objects that they need, for free. In Jerusalem, neglected old houses and factories are being reused with the help of local authorities as spaces of joined work, art, and creative initiatives. In Jerusalem, many local initiatives strive and succeed to produce cultural, religious, or social value among people with and without any mutual background whatsoever (Hasson, 2012; Salem, 2007; Hallward, 2009).

Recently, an application called 'EatWith', has started working in the city. The application produces international exposure to already existing services of chefs who cook at party dinners or lunches together with the guests. In Jerusalem, the cooks also take the guests, who are almost always tourists, to shop for the ingredients at the local and famous 'Mahane Yehuda' market. The connection of the application is, for now, much more successful in Tel-Aviv, as many more services are offered there, while Jerusalem moves slowly but steadily towards the western world (Ketter, 2019; Gyimóthy, 2016).

Overall, Israel is considered typical in its reaction to the 'sharing economy' expressions, which can be explained by the population's massive and maybe even obsessive use of social media, together with having one of the highest rates of cellphones per person all over the world (Poushter, Bishop & Chwe, 2018; Green, Dagan & Haim, 2018). In Israel, after the big 'tents protest'[57] of 2011, the

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[57] The 'tents protest' refers to one of the biggest and greatest protest movement in Israel since its establishment. It started with a young woman, Daphni Leef (25 years old at the time), who could not afford renting an apartment in

public attention and awareness could never be greater, and therefore, people began searching for alternatives that could reduce their life expenses, which is overwhelmingly high compared to other western countries[58].

Israel is also responsible for many international applications of very basic services used today. Fiverr, a global trademark for services, with over 1.3 million services offered around the world (Hannák, Wagner, Garcia, Mislove, Strohmaier & Wilson, 2017; Lee, Webb & Ge, 2015). Moovit, a popular application around the world for finding best public transportation solutions, that uses the community to signal problems, delays or traffic jams (Farkas, 2016; Farkas, Feher, Benczur & Sidlo, 2015). An even more successful 'sharing economy' application is Waze, that helps drivers navigate through traffic and the police, with an online community that gives tips and warnings on-the-go, while the app itself uses the users to calculate accurate distances and timing of arrival. Recently, Waze has added another service for car pools between strangers who participate online and automatically in the driving cost (gas, tolls, time) while reducing cars on the roads (Amin-Naseri, Chakraborty, Sharma, Gilbert & Hong, 2018; Davidsons & Infrance, 2016). Such initiatives, which have economic benefits for the company, also have a green and actual shared agenda. All of those applications use ads to support the work on the app, and the actual community of users create more accurate results and help the service become better.

Another important field around the world of 'sharing economy' is sustainable agriculture. By using advanced technology and cheap infrastructure, people could create their own self-cultivated field on small plots of land or even vertically. Israel advances technologies that support minimal use of

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Tel-Aviv. As an act of protest, she decided to put a tent in the richest and popular Rothschild boulevard, and invited people to join her. Soon, the whole boulevard was full of tents, and protests around the country have erupted, against the cost of living, and the housing condition. The protests were claimed to have a political agenda (against the right regime). Until today, there are great disagreements about the influence of the tents protest on the situation in Israel, while a few leaders of the protest became leaders in some of the left political parties (not including Daphni Leef herself, who did not continue her acts in the parliament after the weak and unclear end of the protest). Either way, the social and cooperative atmosphere in and between the tents and in similar tents that rose around the country has created a strong awareness, which is seen as the victory of the protests in the eye of the public, leading many companies to reduce prices and offer more sales.

[58] In short, it is possible to identify a few main objective reasons for the high cost of living in Israel: (1) the security and army needs which take a high percentage of the government budget, (2) the failure to integrate the Arab Israelis into the Israeli economy, (3) the Jewish settlements in the West Bank, where the government spends significantly more per resident, mostly for securing the residents, and the cost of housing is significantly lower than in Israeli cities within the 1948 borders, (4) the significant population of orthodox Jews whose participation in labor market is very limited, caused due to the lack of general education and the exemption from army service, and who, because of high fertility rates and low income benefit from tax exemption and receive additional governmental allowances, (5) an unhealthy connection between religion and democratic principles which leads to a steady yet historical political situation of support of religious institutions.

water or space, in order to produce food for the poor in developed countries (Puschmann & Alt, 2016; Demailly & Novel, 2014; Schroeder, Anggraeni & Weber, 2019).

Finally, the Jerusalem Institute for Policy Research, has studied Jerusalem as a case study for possible collaborations between the city and 'sharing economy' organizations like Waze, or Splacer, a service that helps people who are looking for unique locations for private events, to find owners of such places who are willing to lend their space for a limited time. Such cooperation, in addition to more simple initiatives like free libraries or book shelves exchange, shows the pursue of Jerusalem for the 'sharing economy' as a space for shared and unique interactions, while using the small city and its hidden possibilities.

*"... How quickly we forget where we
come from*

So remind me

Remind me that I come from gold

From cholao and guaguanco

From sancocho y empanadas

Mi gente

My people

We come from harmonizing chaos

*From unpaved jungles and dissenting
prayers*

From street vendors and street lights

*From lively corners and vivid dance
floors*

From the flight of the condor

And the beak of a parrot

We here with rebellious steps

We come from relentless yells

We live from fermented dreams

Aguardiente

*White has never seen the darkness in our
beauty*

But know that now my city rises

Know that Cali suena

Like thunders

Weave and wave the voices

We move

At 3 million pupils per hour

45 revolutions per minute

482 fists per second

We breathe through the ashes

Of our skins

Our hips

Are drums

Our fingers

Pens

Our eyes

Are gates

Our souls are mountains

Oiga, mire, vea

Mi gente

Mi raza

Mi casa

I bring y'all words

From this place

I call

Home."[59]

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[59] Written by Juan Pablo Vasquez Varela, performed in a poetry slam event in Cali, Colombia. From the text: 'Cali Pachanguero' (2020).

Part Three: The De-Domestication of Home -

Findings

1. 'Trial and Error', (or),
An Introduction to the SAH's Chronological Path

1.1 Introduction

A deep exploration of the lives of the Stay-At-home-Hosts (SAH) reveals that, as expected, being a member of the Airbnb Stay-at-home host population, has the potential of leading to outstanding courses, or patterns of transition. Outstanding, in the frame of scope of the influence the Airbnb service Transition, that as a result of other different sociological phenomena, has put the story of the stay-at-home hosts hidden so far. This sociological phenomenon is a result of three major important developments, in the relationship between society and technology, between the city and tourism, and finally, between one and his or her home.

As discussed in the introduction of this thesis, the perception of 'home' is so basic, integral, and inherent, and it is hardly discussed properly today as a research field. Such lack of research on the domestic space, is directly linked to the public debate which is focused almost entirely on the public space. Issues such as women equality at work, LGTBQ historical struggle for the right to the city, or national immigrants' problems, are all issues that are dedicated to the public space, while 'home' is changing repeatedly, and is kept almost unnoticed.

Thus, the findings in this research have been divided into nine chapters, in each, a different layer would be revealed, presented as a discussion on the meanings and implications of the uncovered findings. The chapters would display findings of two kinds. (1) Chapters that would focus on a specific or several stages of the Airbnb Stay-at-home-hosts Evolution Path (ASEP), (2) chapters that are relevant to the entire ASEP, and alternatively, focus on a specific sociological concept.

In this introduction, I wish to display the order of the chapters, and present the ASEP, both as a useful tool for this findings chapter and as a crucial and inseparable part of the findings of this research.

1.2 Airbnb Stay-at-home-host Evolution Path (ASEP)
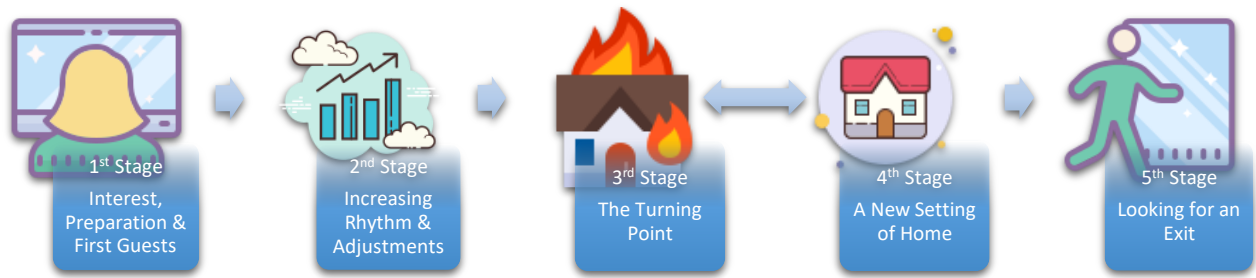
ASEP is the accumulation of the results and findings of this research which would be described in this chapter by the integration of different research methods that have allowed the creation of 145 timelines and narratives. Each of the subjects were framed and found to be in one of the above stages, as each of them has specific and unique preferences which would be described shortly in this introduction, and more widely in the relevant chapters of this findings part.

1st Stage – Interest, Preparations & First Guests

The 1st stage has been identified chronologically, beginning in the moment in which the potential SAH starts to think about using Airbnb as a host, continuing with a series of actions that precede the arrival of the first guest, and ends with the end of the drizzling hosting intensity (would be discussed further). It is possible to clearly identify the 1st stage of others, through the following preferences:

Airbnb as a new adventure - Hosts in the 1st stage have never initiated the hosting process in Airbnb before. Hosts who wish to start hosing with Airbnb, are normally people who have not used Airbnb themselves before, even as guests. They are familiar with such an option, but they have preferred other accommodation settings for themselves (hotels, hostels, guesthouses etc.). Hosts who have experienced Airbnb as guests are less common (around 29% of the mini-cases), and they are usually more aware and active in the search of social value (or, as it is called – the 'Airbnb spirit').

The scope of Airbnb SAH's motivation to engage - Hosts in the 1st stage have a wider spectrum of motivations when starting with Airbnb than they have in future stages. One of the more important findings which would be described here is the fact that can be seen a consistent

contraction of motivation range. While in the 1st stage SAH reveal a wide range, from social needs and spatial motives to financial desires, urban developments and more, in future stages, the motives are reduced to financial dependency and routine based motives.

Concern and fears - Hosts in the 1st stage have bigger concerns and fears than in future stages. Such concerns vary between safety for themselves or other family members, and the safety and conditions of their home and its furniture or other valuable (sentimentally, financially, emotionally) items. Such concerns tend to decrease in a quick, or a slow process, as usually **embarrassment** replaces **fear**.

The drizzling hosting intensity – Hosts in the 1st stage have the lowest levels of intensity of hosting compared to future stages. This stage is identified with first guests who arrive occasionally in a drizzling rhythm, of less than once a week, in which hosts normally have an extensive amount of time to regenerate between the guests, restore their home to its previous setting after guests leave and mainly, learn about the website and how to communicate with Airbnb.

An examination of the mini-cases shows that stage 1 normally lasts between one to four months. Alas, there have been found mini-cases of successful and pleased SAH whose stage lasted around one year, and others, less pleased, whose stage lasted no longer than two weeks.

The first stage would be discussed thoroughly in **the 2nd chapter –** *'meet the hosts'*.

2nd Stage – Increasing Rhythm & Adjustments

Both the second stage and the fourth stage discuss the adjustments performed at home. However, the stages should be distinguished by the differences between the adjustments that are performed in each of the stages. The differences are best expressed by the level of awareness of the hosts towards the changes. In the adjustment stage, hosts start to perform small changes which they hardly notice themselves. They are performed in two main fashions. (1) A steady increase or a steady high-rhythm intensity in hosting (normally 1-2 guests a week), (2) a minor discomfort or discomforts leading to 'light' changes in functions of items or rooms. It is important to note, that the above-mentioned options appear in most mini-cases and they appear together, making it easier to notice the second stage. Such repeating patterns appear in the eating habits of SAH in all cities, and are displayed by reducing dinning time when eating at home, mild changes in eating hours, eating less at home (instead, eating at restaurants, with a partner, family or not at all), reducing the

complexity of meals (in order to reduce the preparation time) and eventually, reducing big hosting dinners or party dinners.

Some of the key preferences in the 2nd stage are as follows:

The wave hosting intensity – Hosts in the 2nd stage reach a wave-shaped hosting intensity, in the sense that just like waves, guests come one after the other, slowly becoming a part of SAH's routine life. Alas, like waves, the routine of living with guests begins and creates changes in that routine. The routine could be derived from a steady increase in intensity of hosting, continuing with a steady and high level of intensity throughout stage 3. Movements from hosting 3 guests in two months, to 5, 7, and 9 guests in every following week, are good and common examples among the mini-cases, which emphasizes a pattern in which minor changes are occurring unnoticed. The wave hosting experience is crucial for the understanding of the SAH situation, in which they develop their habits, terms and approach towards hosting with Airbnb.

Development of relationship with Airbnb – Hosts in the 2nd stage build the foundations of the relationship and hierarchy with Airbnb. Airbnb, is an on-going, always evolving operation that uses its technology to constantly increase its profit in a variety of methods and marketing strategies. Alas, the use of its technology, as strategy, which is not talked about enough, is the relationship between the host and Airbnb. In stage 2, SAH have more encounters with Airbnb because of the increase of guest volume and also because of other different situations in which Airbnb needs to negotiate, mainly in daily situations in which Airbnb educates the hosts to follow their tips regarding intensity, prices, limitations, as check-in and check-out procedures. The fashion in which SAH make decisions during this stage constructs the type of relationship SAH have with Airbnb, which could lead to the reduction of their agency in their own home, and of the nature of their hosting. In many (and most) mini-cases, subjects express an acceptance which, in their own view, is of an employer (Airbnb) and an employee (SAH) relationship. The establishment of such hierarchies or others in the spectrum, leads to significant implications in later stages.

Home or items loss/distortion – As explained, minor disturbances lead to minor changes in SAH's homes and lives. In this stage, the previously dominant emotion of fear evolves to the emotion of embarrassment, which as demonstrated in the theoretical part, is the strongest and most affectual emotion in the social realm. Embarrassment is created as Airbnb leads to an unusual phenomenon in which strangers repeatedly become part of the domestic space. The living room, as it was also found, is considered the 'soft spot' of homes, and the space of daily intimate moments

between family members, couples, and also alone. The mobility of Airbnb guests (in the wave-shaped intensity) harms this delicate space, leading to the reduction of functions which the living room fulfills, to the movement of household members to other spaces, and eventually leading to the loss of the living room as an integral part of home. Such patterns, which were seen in all cities, put in question the actual survival of home, and its meaning in the futuristic western society.

3rd Stage – The Turning Point

The turning point is a typical result of one of three possible scenarios, which were recognized in all mini-cases (from the third stage and forward). (1) The accumulation of too many minor discomforts that start becoming noticeable, (2) the result of one or two difficult hosting experiences, (3) the outcome of a major biographical change (which is occasionally enhanced by Airbnb). The turning point describes a point in the SAH's hosting cycle that leads to one or more major changes in the fashion in which home is perceived or practiced. Meaning, in the way in which home ceases to be 'home' for the SAH, as it has been replaced, divided, or stay in a significant state of deprivation of domestic needs. In the practical sense, big changes emerge in the image of home restructuring, changes in room functions, mostly in order to improve the ability to host more guests. The turning point is a crucial point in which either Airbnb hosting is reduced or, as happens in most mini-cases, the change leads to a 'better' SAH, but one without a home.

Some key preferences of the 3rd stage:

Length of the 3rd stage – Hosts in the 3rd stage tend to experience this stage for varied periods of time, in most cases the change is quite rapid, lasting between one week to one month. The length is directly affected by the reason causing the turning point (mentioned in the above paragraph), when reason No. 1 leads to longer periods of negotiations between the host and other household members, as they discuss whether to perform a minor adjustment, several minor adjustments or a significant one. Even when it has been decided on minor adjustments, the increasing level of awareness leads to more discussions which eventually lead to major and decisive decisions.

Nature of the turning point – Hosts in the 3rd stage experience a **direct** negative influence by the change when the change was done due to the above-mentioned reason No. 1 or reason No. 2. In some mini-cases the influence is even more negative, when it causes the loss of the entire home (people who cannot afford their living at home anymore and/or suffer from hosting at home with

the family, decide to move the family to poorer areas outside the city center, common especially in Lisbon, and singles who move with their partners, are common especially in Milan). When the turning point occurs due to reason No. 3, the influence is negative if the hosting is not adjusted (there is no reduction of hosting, rearranging rooms, or reaction, adaptation and behavior towards new residents).

Nature of hosting after the change – Hosts in the 3_{rd} stage begin developing new **significant collateral and long-term** negative influences following the change. Such changes are manufactured by the change and reduction of motives, which leads to an acceleration in the natural progression and movement from a community-based hosting, to a client-based hosting[60]. This type of hosting demonstrates significantly higher rates of burnout among SAH. Typically, the more significant the nature of the change is, by affecting more biographical paths of SAH, the more powerful the influence is, and quicker to lead to new noticeable discomforts.

4_{th} Stage – A New Setting of Home

After the turning point, SAH start becoming accustomed to the new setting and possibly to the new perceived home. The new home is a fragmented one, it is either divided into several places or suffers from a significant feeling that corresponds with literature, showing situations in which home is no longer a haven nor a heaven, but rather a prison, a place of discomfort and movement. With a great dependency on the choices made in stage 2, home becomes virtually, emotionally, and practically de-domesticated, while Airbnb fully emerges as an employer. Ironically, the overall loss of the hosts' social ambition, and the lack of sense of community (but a market instead), makes the 4_{th} stage a fruitful ground for the accumulation of noticeable discomforts, that reach their peak in stage 5. In a few but present mini-cases, in all cities, stage 4 leads to going through stage 3 and 4 again, which multiplies the influence on the second round.

Some key preferences of the 4_{th} stage are as follows:

Movement of terminology – SAH usually follow two main types of terminology in discussion of hosting and of Airbnb. In the first stages, the terminology of and about Airbnb and the work with Airbnb, is extremely subjective, while it highlights additional value to hosting, even in times when hosting has been initiated due to a financial situation. When examining this terminology, it is

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[60] The host-guest relationship scale would be fully developed in the 5th chapter – *'Pets are the best hosts'.*

common to hear approaches that correspond with the 'Airbnb spirit', or 'Airbnb community', and even with the value of hosting as a way to represent the city or the country. Alas, the terminology changes after the 3rd stage, giving birth to a new terminology, a business-like terminology. SAH, at this point, are already experienced, they understand the prices better, calculate costs and revenues, and make decisions accordingly.

The guest as a client – Hosts in the 4th stage are likely to reach a higher levels of business approach under the spectrum of communication when a relationship, of any sort, has developed between the host and guest, in the HGRS scale[61]. If one side of the scale is presenting domestic types of interactions and relationships the could potentially emerged, the other side, of which SAH are approaching in the later stages, are of a tourist, and a client, symbolizing and reproducing global norms and settings of the global market, and of for-profit service. The implications of such a relationship is of two main results. (1) Hosts taking actions in order to reduce interaction between them and the guests. Actions such as using electronic self-check-ins and check-outs, using outside help (co-hosts, cleaning services) or reducing time spent in the cleaning routine, (2) hosts losing emotional connection with the guests who come and go, and therefore feel a stronger embarrassment-based discomfort, alienation from the guests and finally, a significant increase in their internal and external mobility.

De-domestication of home – Hosts in the 4th stage tend to feel alienated from their home. As the host becomes alienated from guests, they begin to feel alienated from their own home, from parts of it, rooms, or spaces at home. This preference is distinguished from the former, when the emotional, sentimental, and actual implications that the host experiences are derived from the undesired interaction and home climate. In this case, emotional, sentimental, and psychological discomforts derive from home itself, they are detached from the flow of guests and are felt also in times in which no guest accommodates home. It derives from the new conception that the host has upon their home and cannot be transformed back again easily.

[61] As any of the findings in this introductive chapter, would be elaborated in the next parts of the findings. The HGRS scale would be explored in the 4th part – *'Pets are the best hosts'*.

5th Stage – Looking for an Exit

The final stage in the typical cycle or path, that every SAH is likely to experience, is the one in which hosts begin to think about ending their hosting experience. Such an exit could essentially take place in every stage described in this introduction. Alas, in the fifth stage, the distortion in the SAH's life is much more significant, leading to cases in which hosts must choose between a home and a financial source. In most cases, looking for an exit takes a long period of between six to eighteen months, during which, a new turning point can emerge and lead to a new setting, which may influence the terms in the negotiation of exiting the whole hosting experience. In most cases, looking for an exit derives from the combination of discomfort, lack of emotional drive to host, and fatigue. On the other hand, the motives that prevent the host from exiting are financial dependency, inertial force, and in many cases, the difficulty of leaving a community. In a few cases, the exit occurs suddenly, if because of a total loss of control over SAH's other biographical courses (in link with Airbnb hosting), or because of a sudden positive biographical change. While more (long-term) research should be done in this matter, returning from stage 5 to earlier stages was not found.

SAH who are in the fifth stage of their ASEP were the smallest research group (19 out of 145) in the study, which is mainly because such SAH tend to become 'bad' hosts, in which Airbnb has the tools to reduce orders and help the process of leaving the community. Here are some important key preferences:

The formation of new solutions – Hosts in the 5th stage tend to describe and imagine other solutions, had Airbnb not been involved, in a much richer fashion than hosts in other stages. Part of the process of looking for an exit is the ability of mentally reforming a state of mind in which home is no longer work. Such imaginations were found extremely difficult for SAH who work or try to make a living from the creative sector. In such cases, the SAH already works mainly from home, and so their ability to disconnect from such a reality is harder.

The imaginative community – Hosts in the 5th stage tend to feel less part of a community. Airbnb is perceived and sold as a community that creates social production. Alas, Airbnb's community should and is questioned in this line of work. Airbnb lacks some very basic elements in order to be a community, such as (1) the member's ability to communicate freely among themselves, (2) the ability to discuss or negotiate company policies and thereby – hosting policy, and eventually, (3) partaking, virtually or non-virtually, in any significant stage or micro-event that the hosts

experience during their ASEP. Therefore, very few SAH still hold the sense of community in advanced stages.

Airbnb's version of ASEP – Hosts in the 5th stage tend to enjoy a decrease in reservations. Airbnb, as an organization and as an algorithm, possesses the knowledge which supports loyal SAH. For Airbnb, the social added value to the service, is a product that is sold but is not nurtured. In fact, evidence shows that Airbnb encourages the movement of hosts from a community-based relationship to a client-based one, while supporting and funding solutions in which hosts reduce interactions to a minimum. Such a strategy is actually crucial for continuous fertility of a company that tries to disrupt communications between different parties in order to prevent them from closing a deal without their monetized negotiation. By doing so, Airbnb deliberately pushes hosts out of the system and accepts new ones. Such a circulation helps the organization to enjoy new domestic and domesticated spaces for their disposal and interest.

1.3 ASEP among the case studies

The above five stages are the most efficient method by far to identify and to analyze each narrative and each mini-case of SAH.

The next graph shows the exact distribution of the 145 mini-cases studied and analyzed. To be precise, each of the following mini-cases was explored either by deep ethnographic work (88 mini-cases) or by an in-depth interview. All of the 145 mini-cases were completed by a textual and virtual ethnography, visual analysis, and relevant quantitative statistic available data, which were accumulated to a coherent and a high level of validity.

Graph No. 5: Distribution of Mini-Cases Between Stages
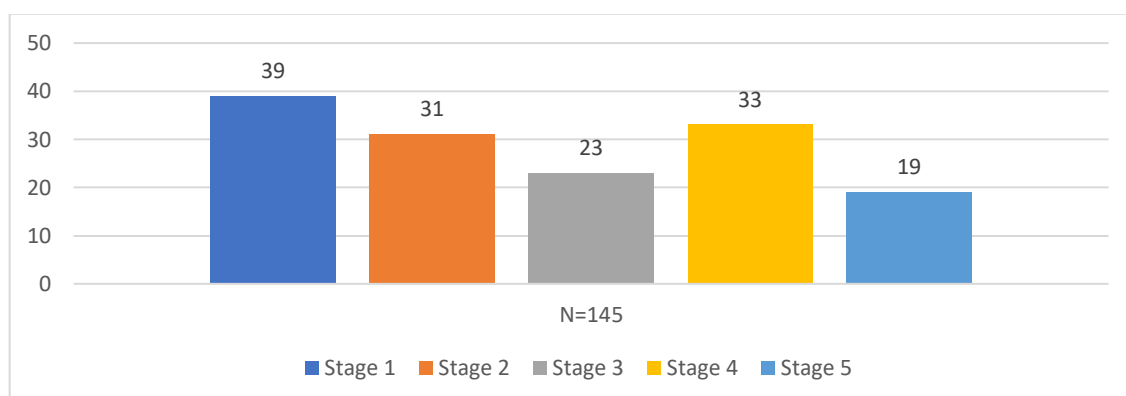
The distribution of the mini-cases in their proper stages, helps to understand the natural but also planned circulation of hosts, as they enter the cycle, adjust, learn, and change, until they are eventually pushed out of the system.

While the patterns in which SAH experience each stage are similar and could be tested in every western city in which Airbnb is a live actor, it is possible to learn about the distribution and the special nature of each city in the following graph:

Graph No. 6: Distribution of Mini-Cases Between Stages and Cities
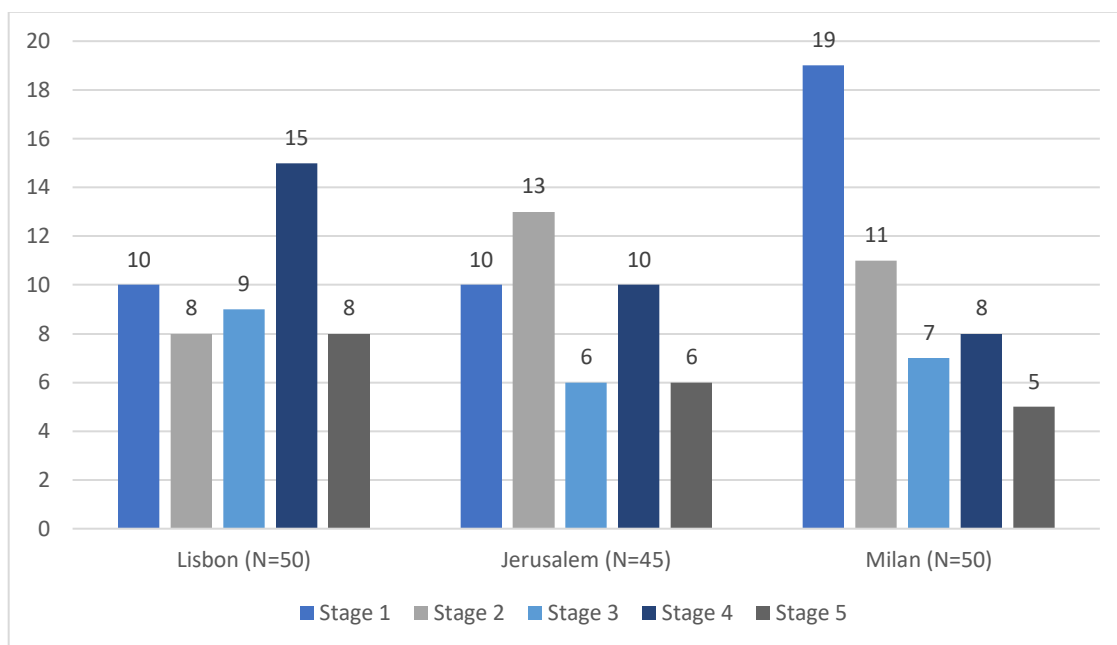
The distribution of the mini-cases in their proper stage between the cities should be taken under reasonable limitations and should not be seen as quantitative and with statistical significance. Alternatively, and with other evidence collected, it is indeed possible to notice some trends that are of importance.

First, as graph No. 2 confirms, Lisbon is the city in which the movement between stages was the fastest. One of the interesting debates (which would be elaborated in the last part of the findings), that should be thought of and researched further, is the impact of the city and the city's social climate on tourism and accommodation at SAH and towards the rhythm of SAH's ASEP. Some

evidence was found that, indeed, a more tourism-oriented city would encourage a 'negative'[62] impact on SAH's ASEP. However, too little evidence was collected to support this statement, or another in the matter.

Secondly, as found in other research methods, Jerusalem appears to be the slowest to respond or to initiate stage 3 (turning point). Such results could imply that SAH in Jerusalem are either more able to manage, in a healthy way, their relationship with Airbnb, or that they are more resilient to adjustments held in the second stage.

Lastly, in Milan, as statistics demonstrate as well, there are the highest rates (in the years 2017-2019) of new members of the SAH community. Findings show that in Milan, while absent in Jerusalem or Lisbon, there is a positive debate around the 'sharing economy', and an on-going flow of new SAH which still continues today since the 2015 EXPO.

the importance of ASEP is of a methodological tool, one that could lead to new understandings of other invasive 'sharing economy' services. By using ASEP, it is possible to identify and analyze micro and macro processes. In the micro level, ASEP is useful to obtain a clear understanding of service givers and their routine, and the chain of events that leads different service providers to experience the stages differently and to be affected accordingly. In the macro level, ASEP could and should be useful as a qualitative as quantitative tool which can be effective to calculate the typical duration and spread of other 'sharing economy' services (or other social and invasive services), and to compare such data with other processes in progress in the city. Research of the like could provide great understanding of the urban situation, and the influence of users on the city.

While the evidences and the discussion about them are yet to come, ASEP is helpful to understand the cruciality of the earlier stages to the image of the later ones, the role, or the lack of one, of the community, and the approach and simple strategy which lies behind Airbnb's action.

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[62] In this introduction, as an opening to the rest of findings' chapters, it is important to discuss the meaning of a negative influence, negative movement, or pattern. In some cases, the adjective 'negative' comes to imply a **pathological phenomenon.** Meaning, the development of a sociological phenomenon that has the evidence or the potential to be harmful to society or the individuals that are part of the research populations (SAH). In this case however, 'negative' has a more subjective manner, which comes to imply a reduction of solidarity or human connection, which is an important value by itself, but it also has a direct impact on the SAH and their ASEP.

1.4 The order of the finding chapters

The next chapters of findings are focused on following the path of the SAH in their different stages, while conducting different observations on patterns and trends of their experiences. In each chapter an introduction chapter would address the main topics, followed by a display of the relevant findings, with key mini-cases that demonstrate those findings and their meaning. Each part would end with a short discussion that would address key confrontation of the findings with what has been studied in the theoretical framework. As this is the 1_{st} chapter of the findings, the next six chapters (chapters 2-7), would focus on six different aspects and implications of the service towards the SAH lives and home.

The 2_{nd} chapter would focus on the 1_{st} stage by engaging the situations that lead people to discuss the possibility of using their home as an Airbnb service. In this chapter, I would discuss the motives for hosting via Airbnb, the engaging process, and the fears and concerns SAH have in the beginning of their journey. In this chapter, I would unwrap the idea of community or the imagined community in order to understand the attractiveness of Airbnb, not only towards guests, but towards SAH as well.

In **the 3_{rd} chapter,** the focus would shift from the SAH, to their homes. In this chapter, which focuses on the 2_{nd} and 3_{rd} stages, I would show findings showing patterns of change of homes, that caused by the presence of the guests, as well as the reaction of those changes by the SAH. In this chapter, I would draw and use Goffman and Scheff's thoughts about embarrassment and the social importance of this emotion in order to have a better understanding on the wave-shaped influence of incoming guests towards SAH.

In **the 4_{th} chapter**, focusing once more on the 2_{nd} and 3_{rd} stages, I would discuss interaction between hosts and guests, the monetization process of the interaction, dealing with ritualistic and non-ritualistic types of interaction. In this chapter, the host-guest relationship scale would be presented (HGRS), with greater attention on the guests, as key factors in the movement of SAH between stages.

In the 5_{th} chapter, which would engage on the 2_{nd} and 3_{rd} stages as well, the technological aspect of Airbnb would be discussed and expanded. The guests are part of a system that has its own terminology, review system, and finally, a carrot and stick mechanism, all controlled by Airbnb. In this chapter I would reveal how Airbnb has created an 'opaque' frame of communication between the three main parties – hosts, guests, and Airbnb as a negotiator. This frame determines the agency

that each of the parties has in every part of the service, and its implications on both the guests and the SAH.

While guests are passive actors in the 5th chapter, in the sense that they are being used by Airbnb's technology to obtain a trustworthy line of domestic spaces, **the 6th chapter**, which would put the focus on the 3rd and 4th stages, would focus rather on the direct impact different types of guests, and different types of expectations, have on SAH.

In the 7th chapter, I would shift the discussion again, moving to home itself and the changes it undergoes during the 3rd and 4th stages, towards the last staging, as SAH start to ponder over leaving. In this part, I would focus on the structural, functional, and sentimental patterns which were found while going through homes in the 3rd stage and following the changes. This part would discuss the concept of de-domestication of home and its meaning for the future understanding of future technologies and the 'sharing economy'.

After disclosing six layers of impact directed and experienced by the SAH, the next three chapters (chapters 8-10), would discuss the general concept of the Airbnb service, by engaging three different concepts and issues.

In the 8th chapter, the 4th but mainly the 5th stages are discussed, while exploring the natural gap between the idealized home to what home can actually provide to SAH. Therefore, the 8th chapters would aim to understand and explore concepts such as the 'meaning of home', or 'feeling at home', to understand the wider and more general sentimental experience of SAH due to their hosting period.

In the 9th chapter, I would discuss the nature of the differences between the genders regarding being SAH, and suggest a general observation given by the findings. In my perspective, the gender role at home and its impact on the urban and public space, is a subject which is not well developed and discussed these days. By understanding home through the lens of a homely experience (or the absence of it) with the richness or depth of such experiences, it is possible to perform significant deductions about the possible future of the nature and the image of a gendered domestic space. One that could lead to outstanding unexpected outcomes to the future of urban spaces.

In the 10th chapter, I would explore the cultural outcomes of the connection between strangers inside the intimate space of home. Co-creation of a cultural fusion is a well-established and fascinating topic of interest. Alas, it is hardly understood as a given reality of a significant

population, the SAH. In this part, I would discuss special cultural phenomena in the studied cities, while exploring cultural key concepts such as food, holidays, night life and the locals' daily lives. These are important to explore, as tourists and guests indeed have an impact on districts, but also on blocks, buildings, and homes. This chapter, would aim to continue exploring deep into the domestic space, while putting home in the frame of the city, its social climate and culture, and preparing a wider observation to be discussed in the closing discussion.

Finally, in the **11th** and conclusive **chapter**, a summary of the findings would be displayed, while engaging the nature and implications of the findings to the sociological research of home and emotions, and to the relevant urban study of technology, urban tourism, and the sharing economy, towards reaching the final conclusions of this research, research limitations, and future and possible furfure study.

"When I get home from work
I'll call up all my friends
And we'll go bust up something beautiful we'll have to build again

When I get home from work
I'll wrestle off my clothes
And leave them right inside the front door
'cause nobody's home to know

You see, a hammer finds a nail
And a freight train needs the rail
And I'm doin' what I'm on this earth to do

And I don't think on why I'm here or where it hurts
I'm just lucky to have the work
Sunday morning I'm too tired to go to church
But I thank God for the work…"[63]

[63] Written by Jason Isbell. From the song: *'Something More Than Free'*, album*: 'Something More Than Free'* (2015).

2. *'Airbnb Spirit', (or),*
Between Community and Instability Among SAH

1st Stage — Interest, Preparation & First Guests

2nd Stage — Increasing Rhythm & Adjustments

3rd Stage — The Turning Point

4th Stage — A New Setting of Home

5th Stage — Looking for an Exit

2.1 Introduction

Airbnb is seen and perceived, rightfully so, as a successful and legitimate service, that has managed, in the duration of less than a decade, to turn into a powerful force in the tourism market, in the development of cities, and the creation of new multi-cultural spaces around the world (Stone, 2017; Guttentag, Smith, Potwarka & Havitz, 2018). Throughout the last decade, Airbnb has demonstrated an impressive will and ability to evolve and to change, in the effort of addressing more segments as well as creating new ones for the experience and market of the tourist (Strommen-Bakhtiar & Vinogradov, 2019; Akbar & Tracogna, 2018). While exploring new territories in the tourism market, Airbnb manages to sustain an image of a social service, whose value is as such, along with financial benefits (Mittendorf, 2016; Jefferson-Jones, 2016).

Academically, scholars are fascinated and torn, as noted in the 3rd chapter of the theoretical part, between those who explore Airbnb as a 'sharing economy', and seek to understand the meaning of the 'sharing economy' onto the future global and local markets (Nnajiofor, 2017; Pacchi, 2017; Paulauskaite, Powell, Coca-Stefaniak & Morrison, 2017), and those who seek to understand the mechanism which attracts and makes Airbnb so successful for Airbnb guests (Stabrowski, 2017; Liang, Choi & Joppe, 2018).

The mostly narrow comprehension of the Airbnb service as a business of a seller and buyer, has led research to neglect the meaning of hosting as the actual service which takes place at home. Surprisingly enough, Airbnb, as a wide and constantly spreading phenomenon which is well known, is not perceived as 'working from home'. A subject that has been explored extensively due to its impact and pathological effects to the worker from home and to their work-home or work-family balance (De Graaff & Rietveld, 2007; Halford, 2006; Shepherd-Banigan, Bell, Basu, Booth-

LaForce & Harris, 2016). Airbnb, in that sense, is by definition, an evolution of the static and legitimate definition of 'working from home', which, as has been learned, became extremely popular worldwide in the beginning of the millennium. The instability already found in the frame of 'working from home' must be seen in regard to SAH as well, as they certainly may experience similar effects and patterns.

In addition, in previous research and as these findings show, Airbnb is consciously spreading an image in which its hosts and guests are part of a community. This community is a monetized relationship with established norms, rituals, and terminology, which is acknowledged and practiced by its guests and hosts (Roelofsen, & Minca, 2018; Andreotti et al., 2017).

Airbnb is a challenging example of an online-based community. Unlike other online communities, such as the successful Facebook groups, Airbnb is based on a pure financial and technological system, in which no real discussion between the parties is possible (on the main platform), and communication between members of the community are constantly monitored and disrupted. Unlike other communities, which are market and consumption based, such as TripAdvisor, Airbnb acts like an active and rule-manufacture negotiator.

In addition, Airbnb is unique in the sense that its profit is not derived by the use of the website (like both TripAdvisor and Facebook), but rather by the ability to create real encounters between members. Encounters that break the setting of the online community and force members to act upon and in the sake of their virtual profile (or face). As explored, online and imagined communities are well exhausted in literature, but the communal implications of the imagined community of Airbnb requires more work, especially concerning the meaning of being in the role of the 'seller' in such a community.

In this sense, it is important to compare shortly between Airbnb and another 'imagined community' that could be seen as an invasive 'sharing economy' service. UBER, another international 'sharing economy' success, is depending on much of the preferences that Airbnb is depending on. The original idea of UBER, as Airbnb, was both a social service that create unexpected encounters between the driver and the passenger, as the driver itself takes passengers as part of his personal and daily journey (Posen, 2014). And, as an unprofessional solution, an alternative, that has the potential of reducing costs. Alas, it is important to note a few differences between Airbnb and UBER, which are crucial to the imagination of a community. For starter, UBER is a much shorter service and experience, as people use UBER to get around the city, or reach an Airport, travels

that are quite short, of a few hours or less, while Airbnb services creates a connection between a host and a guest of a few days.

This distinction alone, create critical differences on the other aspects of this type of consumption. For example, UBER is to use normally at need, at point of departure, while the Airbnb service is ordered normally weeks, if not months before travelling. Therefore, in UBER, no interaction before the service is needed or frequent. Those aspects, along with the special regulation needed to become a part of the urban public transportation system, regulations that eventually were more ready to the unprofessional entrance of UBER into the market, can and should be a good explanation of how the imagined community of UBER was never really an issue, as UBER moved to other strategies, as of other services, as the delivery service from restaurants (Lee , Chan, Balaji & Chong, 2018; Schneider, 2017). .

The image of that structured crossing between the virtual and the spatial is hardly understood and developed in the academic sphere, as Airbnb is indeed unique and sometimes thought of as an anecdotal example of such space breaking technology and service. That thought would be especially challenged in this first chapter of the findings, as I would explore the characteristics and patterns of the new members of the community. The SAH, as they experience engaging with the community and encountering guests for the first few time, begin to understand that other parties would, with time, become dominant factors in the image of their home and of their every-day life at home.

The chapter would explore a few basic but surprising findings, regarding the biographical path which SAH tend to go through while engaging firstly with Airbnb as hosts, and regarding the motivations leading them to begin hosting, and their emotional and psychological state of mind as they enter the world of Airbnb.

As findings will show, Airbnb's effectiveness is by creating a sense of entering an online or an imagined community. In this chapter I would discuss the features of that community, and its relevance as an active part of the Host-Airbnb-Guest triangle.

By engaging and looking deep into the lives of SAH in the first stage, I will finally challenge the most sacred concept of the Airbnb community, the 'Airbnb spirit', and ponder about its role in the engaging ritual of new SAH.

2.2 SAH's biographical state

Airbnb, as a negotiator, offers and addresses both hosts who have free space and guests who are looking for accommodation away from home, if for leisure or business. However, study shows that Airbnb rarely approaches clients directly in order to become hosts, but rather, it creates a sophisticated system which calculates the average potential profit which hosts can make in the area that people are searching to stay at on their own vacation, offering them to host at home while away on an Airbnb vacation. Sophisticated enough, research shows that none of the mini-cases have reached Airbnb in that manner.

In fact, looking at the findings reveals that Airbnb hardly influences potential hosts directly. Instead, Airbnb's influence arrives in an indirect manner, which has become possible through the legitimacy as a hosting solution it has managed to obtain with time, since 2012. The legitimacy is derived from the fact that most Airbnb hosts have at least one person who has already engaged with Airbnb in their friends' circle, who has recommended to do the same. Such is the mini-case of Lehava (J02), a 76-year-old woman, who stumbled upon financial difficulties, and has heard about Airbnb from a close friend of hers. Or the mini-case of Fatima (L36) from Lisbon, who also had a few friends already engaged with Airbnb in Porto. Overall, 95% of the subjects have reported hearing about Airbnb for the first time from guests and hosts of Airbnb in their **wide** circle.

As displayed in the methodological part (in the introduction to the case studies), it has been strongly established that SAH are found, and should be perceived as, a 'normative' population, ranging from the age of 20 to 80, men and women[64], all working sectors and positions, and all types of family structures and socio-economic statuses. In the context of this realization, it was assumed that the variety of situations in which SAH begin to engage with Airbnb would appear accordingly. Surprisingly, some very repeated patterns are found and are to be discussed. The findings would be displayed in an overall order of the level in which the pattern in the data appears (most common comes first).

- ▪ **Career-based engagement**

First, in all cities, it was found that in most mini-cases, and in my perspective beyond reason, the work with Airbnb begins in **moments of transitions.** Furthermore, such transitions are usually the

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[64] As mentioned in the methodological part, there were no evidence to other and fluidic genders using Airbnb as hosts.

result of a forced or a proactive decision. More than half of the mini-cases have described changes at work as an explanation to the initial engagement with Airbnb.

Secondly, in cases of a forced decision, as many described in Milan and in Lisbon, troubles in the local economies have led many to lose their jobs and to look for other ways to make an income. Such a pattern is extremely relevant, as many of the people of Milan began engaging with Airbnb during the significant year of 2012, which was described by many of the mini-cases as an iconic year for the financial instability and the low morale of the city. Such is the mini-case of Alessandro (M13). Alessandro tends to greet his guests warmly and to enjoy a joined breakfast with them, as long as the guests show a mutual willingness to interact as well. Divorced and in his fifties, Alessandro is a fine example of a host who heard about Airbnb from a friend. A friend and an old client at the newspaper stand he had owned for 30 years. Prior to 2012, and especially during that year, it has become harder and harder for Alessandro to survive financially, and so, he had to find other solutions. With the active help of his friend (who has several Airbnb's listings), he managed to create two nicely designed Airbnb rooms in his home, where he lives with a roommate since he divorced his wife.

Yet, the pattern which was found the most and is the most interesting as well, in all cities, is the connection between the engagement with Airbnb and the creative sector. This pattern is driven by two main scenarios. The first, of a forced one, in which the economy (or natural struggles) leads potential hosts to question their ability to work in what their passion is usually. In such cases, they look out for solutions that would allow them to continue working and investing (time and money) in order to grow professionally while waiting for the point in which their creative career would be enough for sustaining one's self or a family's living. Such is the mini-case of Juan (L42), in his thirties, a composer, a writer and a singer, who has tried for some years to make a living from his composing skills and by participating in musical projects. Alas, his name is yet to be recognized in Lisbon, and work can be found mostly in the south. Juan has come to realize at one point, that while he likes composing, being a known and successful singer is what he really desires. And so, he has decided to quit any regular job he had, so he could focus on developing his singing career. Airbnb allowed him to do so[65].

[65] Juan, surprisingly, although his very friendly nature, was somewhat concern meeting me. What reassured him, is the fact that a few days before meeting him, I have met his mentors, a charming older couple that he knows from his musical career, and that guided him along his work with Airbnb. Rafael and Sabrina (L40), is yet another example of

While Juan has stayed in his sector after all, in many cases Airbnb is being engaged by people who move from one creative sector to another (journalism to writing, writing to home design, etc.), or into the creative sector altogether, by choice. The entering into the creative sector has been described almost consistently as 'scary, challenging but mostly, full of uncertainty'. As many others, such is the mini-case of Marco (M33), a man in his forties, who has gotten tired of his career as a music producer and a music teacher, and has decided to move to another passion of his, photography. Marco explains:

"... I've spent years practicing sound, and over the years I've become more and more of a manager, so Airbnb was the way to make a change in my career. That's why it has served me, even at the rational level, at the time. but now I'm tired ... Now I'm trying to slowly build my connections, my projects...In the beginning of the situation it was pretty difficult, so I quickly rented this room out so I'd have some kind of income, I didn't get a salary any more, and I'm done paying for the house because I started paying for it 18 years ago...in '98, so...I said ...the first thing...I already had this idea to do the site...but I never actually did it...but I liked the idea..."

Marco reveals in this text that he had thought about the idea in the past, but has never considered it seriously, until he had to.

■ **Family-based engagement**

Family and roommate-based engagements describe mini-cases in which what has led to showing interest and looking for details in Airbnb are of two different situations. many initiations of Airbnb derive from situations in which a home falls apart and one of the parents, mostly the fathers, are required to find a new home. In the first situation, The father usually look for a home that could be a new beginning for them, while walking towards a social and familial uncertainty, and, possibly create a home for their children who have been forced to find a home in an unstable situation. Airbnb offers an interesting solution in that sense, as children's rooms are designed to fit tourists as well.

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the none-existence of the community, as Juan did not meet the couple and they would not have helped them, without their friendship and their early acquaintance. Rafael, that with him I have conducted long hours of an interview, was amusingly embarrassed as he realized only in the end of the interview, that he was wearing a shirt that called to 'free Palestine', what he found as insulting and rude to me, but eventually only made the couple only more lovable in my eyes.

Such is the interesting mini-case of Antonio (L39). Antonio, 53 years old, has gone through an unusual situation, in which he claims to be a victim of sperm theft by one of his girlfriends at the time (Antonio is part of the spreading phenomenon of polyamory). Antonio has described to me the long process of court procedures, and his final goal which was to get legal recognition as the father of the child, and to be granted visitation rights. During that period, Antonio has started developing his 'Airbnb business' (business, in his own terminology), while his child's room kept changing, forcing him to be in constant movement from one room to another.

On the second situation, it is the mother that the new situation forced her to look for additional source of income, as in the important mini-case, from Lisbon as well, is of Clementina (L41), who has gone through a double crisis, as she felt both lost in her career and unsatisfied in her relationship, and decided to end her marriage to the father of her toddler. Clementina is an example of a surprising but significant pattern that occurs in Lisbon alone (in Milan or Jerusalem no mini-cases of single-mothers were found to initiate hosing with Airbnb as an after-divorce solution). In these cases, mothers have left previous homes and returned to Lisbon (from the south or the north), if because of family, Lisbon being their hometown, or because of job opportunities. In Clementina's case, she had returned home to Lisbon, but decided to initiate Airbnb because of her career crisis. However, what is truly dominated in her narrative is a familial and therefore an emotional crisis, in which she felt lost, alienated from her new home, and unsure about her will and passion to be a single mother[66]. While the story may sound extreme, the mini-cases clarify that double-based instabilities are common, even in their extreme and fragile scenarios, which could have great influence on the growth and safety of children.

- **Stable situations of engagement**

While in most mini-cases there are effective evidence of instability as a key preference of engagement with Airbnb, there are some common patterns that are stable. The most common one, is the exhaustion of living with roommates.

Such situations were found extremely relevant in Jerusalem (but a significant number of mini-cases was found also in Lisbon and in Milan), which were explained in a number of ways. (1) **Agency** – SAH who chose Airbnb as a solution to avoid roommates, explain that roommates get to have a 'say' in the house as to how the house would run, what it would look like, and even how

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[66] The interesting mini-case of Clementina would be completed as further chapters would discuss later stages.

the house would sound like (noises). (2) **Interaction** – Roommates live in the house, occupy it, and force much more interaction than guests who normally leave in the morning and return in the evening exhausted after a long day of touring and sight-seeing. (3) **Relationship** – Relevant mini-cases explain that after a period of time, a relationship with a roommate can go sour, it can create a negative climate in the house and turn home impossible and even avoidable. Guests, evidently, stay for short periods of time and eventually, *'a really bad guest also leaves and for good'*. (4) **Profit** – SAH who have a control[67] over the identity of the person who would be their roommate, sometimes arrive to the conclusion that they can make the same or more money with Airbnb and still enjoy occasionally, or even often, time alone[68]. Such a motivation is the least common among the rest.

The second most common stable situation is the one of seniors. Methodologically, it has already been mentioned that seniors were more willing, more cooperative, but surely also less occupied, to help me in my effort to explore their lives. Either way, many situations of people in old age (65+) were found, whose empty nest, a financial opportunity or an economic problem, has led them to explore the option of using Airbnb. Common situations in which children who have left home are replaced by tourists from around the world were found in all cities, but especially in Milan, in which the number of mini-cases of seniors was higher. The situation of the seniors is interesting and would be discussed later on. Nevertheless, the situation of the senior SAH is one of the most stable situations in the spectrum of the biographical path of the unstable SAH.

2.3 Motivation to engage

The connection between the biographical situation of the SAH and their motivations, in the engagement process towards the hosting experience, is obvious and would be even more clarified later on. Alas, it is crucial to distinguish between them for several reasons.

First, the ability to isolate their biographical situation allows to create depth and context in the motivation or, and usually, in the SAH's motivations to host. A divorced parent who needs a fresh

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[67] In motivation number 4, I am referring to two main situations of roommates. One, in which owners rent out their apartment to several individuals who cannot choose the other roommates and pay their rent separately. The second, is when one of the tenants is responsible for the entire apartment and pays the full rent but is allowed to sublet the other rooms to roommates of their own choice. The first was found in a few mini-cases in Jerusalem and Milan, but the later was found rather common in Jerusalem.

[68] It is important to remember at this point, that this chapter aims to express the thought and life of the SAH in their first stage only.

start and an available cashflow, and a senior who chooses to find a new occupation in order to support her vacation with her grandchildren, are two very different financial needs, which should be interpreted accordingly. Secondly, while the biographical state of the SAH is constant in one stage, the image and perception of their motivation tends to change over time while leaving behind a few cognitive dissonances, which could be completed only by understanding the actual state the SAH was in, or is in, during the first stage. Finally, focusing only on the biographical state, has allowed the important conclusion regarding the low level of stability which SAH have in the beginning.

In addition, in comparison to the biographical state of the SAH, the motivation spectrum reveals a much wider spectrum of reasons and rationality that leads normative people in the cities of Lisbon, Jerusalem and Milan to start hosting with Airbnb. As I will demonstrate, the financial motive, as noted in previous work, has turned out to be too simplistic, lacking context, and mainly, missing the core ingredient of Airbnb's success. As in the previous section, findings would be displayed in the order of significance.

Graph No. 7: spectrum of motivations of the mini-cases[69]
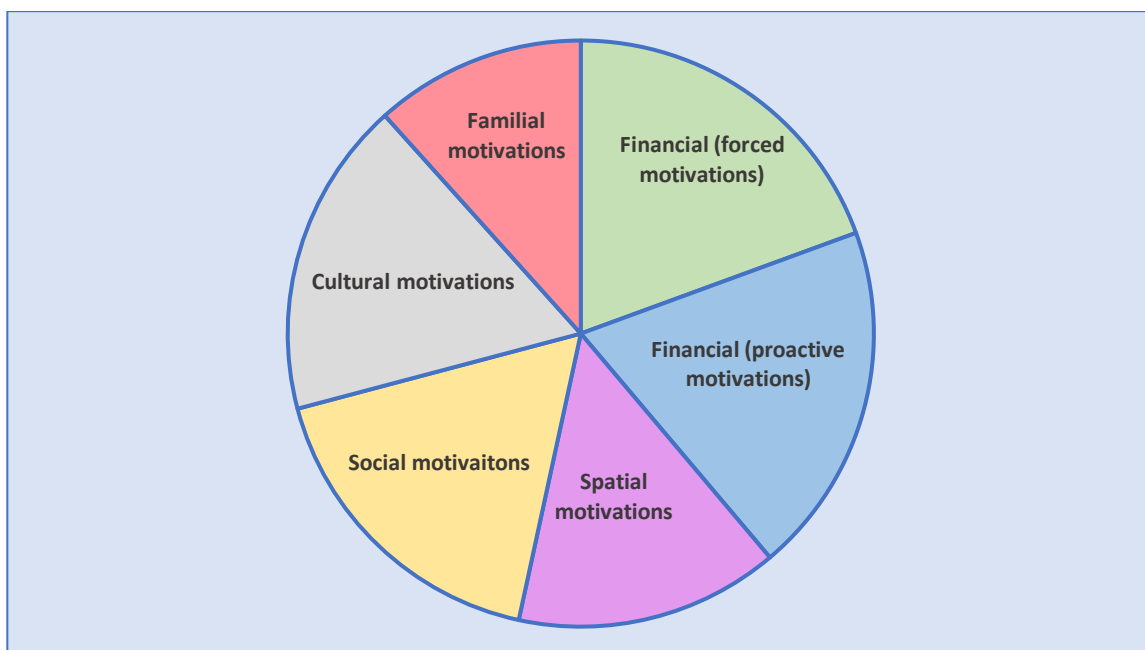
[69] To recall, a discussion about the balance and the level of quantification in this research has already been displayed in the methodological part. However, in this important part of the chapter, I ponder a lot on whether to present a quantitative and accurate map of the motivation distribution among the mini-cases, or not. This research is the result of a significant and large number of 145 mini-cases. Therefore, a quantitative exploration could be useful. Alas, each of the 145 represents and is the result of a complex narrative that as an ethnographer, I cannot lose its context and complexity.

- **Financial motivations**

The financial motivation is perhaps the most common motivation, but opposite to what is perceived and learned, Financial situations are not the main reason to begin hosting. Meaning, most of the mini-cases **did not engage with Airbnb for an economical reason or had a profit-based approach.**

While both the forced and the unforced mechanism are already described previously, it is with much importance that I emphasize in this theme the differences between forced and proactive financial motivations. First, as demonstrated, while forced financial situations have always been identified with an unstable condition, in proactive motivations, there are incidents in which such a motivation comes in stable situations. Such is the mini-case of Sheila (J01), a Jewish-American woman in her seventies, who has immigrated with her husband to Israel 20 years ago, from California to Jerusalem, following their children who have immigrated a while before them. She bought one of the most special and luxurious penthouses in the city (according to articles in international magazines she has framed on the wall, and according to my own impression), hoping to host her many children and grandchildren every week, most of which have chosen to live an orthodox-religious lifestyle. A life that Sheila had to learn and to adapt to. However, the religious and busy routine of her family, has left the rooms neglected most of the time. Sheila chose to engage with Airbnb in order to fill those rooms and create some social experiences for herself. Soon enough, the hosting experience has become a business and a source of pride for her self-image. As she describes it: *"...Ahhh, at first, I didn't know where it was going, I didn't know it would have any economic significance. Because it was so slow at first, there was nothing at first...and then I became a "super host", and my son told me, we'll use all the rooms, so in the end I had two and three rooms...Oh now after 3 years it has already become a way of life. In other words, it has now become a very serious business, and I think the fact that I was and have a life experience ... and I have a calendar, and another calendar in the room ... and blue is the left, and red is the middle, and green is the office, and I have an Excel of the booking and income..."*

Secondly, and as in the mini-case of Sheila, the economical motivation was just a small part of it. The wealthy state in which Sheila has arrived to Israel did not require her to engage in such work, yet it is has still turned out to be, as we can notice from her words, very significant to her daily life. Alternatively, other motivations have crossed her mind, such as her love for displaying her penthouse to strangers, which is practiced through hosting small conferences of local or small-

scale right-wing politicians. However, Sheila still desired the personal interaction and was curious about it, she has felt (and still does), that by hosting tourists, she can create a positive and attractive presentation of Israel, of Jerusalem, and even of the Jewish religion. One of her famous attractions is the traditional Friday night dinner (Shabbos dinner, in her term), in which tourists and family join one big festive table, rich with different dishes and flavors. This way, tourists learn about the ritual of the 'Holy Sabbath', as they all pray together and drink kosher red wine[70]. The mutual exclusiveness that surrounds, in most cases, the financial motivations, is key to understanding the mindset of the SAH in the 1st stage.

- ▪ **Familial motivations**

Familial motivations should be distinguished by the nature of the motivation, negative or positive. While the negative motivation of divorced people has already been explored in paragraph 2.2, the positive motivation is yet to be revealed. One of the most surprising data which was encountered is the value which parents give to hosting strangers as a method for educating their children, or as many describe it, *'to open them to other cultures, and other problems other than their own".* This type of motivation was almost absent in Israel[71], but very apparent in Milan, and most of all, in Lisbon. In addition to using Airbnb as an educational tool, parents have told me about gap year activities that usually involve long trips to exotic third world countries, where young adults could help, learn, and mature. All the parents who had teenagers, supported those trips, and actually expected that from their children[72].

The mini-case of Giovanni (L34), is an interesting one, because it is a case of an Italian family living in Lisbon. The family, who is far from any financial deprivation, has made an agreement with their twenty years old son. The son, Giovanni, is a high functioning autistic young man who had dropped out of university in an early stage. According to his father's agreement with him, Giovanni could make a living by renting out one room in the house, and the father would be

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[70] The relationship between home and religion in Jerusalem would be expanded in the 10th chapter of the findings: *'When in Rome'.*
[71] In general, in Jerusalem, the number of mini-cases with children was rather low compared to the other cities. This issue would be discussed in the next chapter.
[72] While the actual motivation could be of a cultural value, in practice, most mini-cases neglect that motivation in a later stage, as it would be discussed in the following chapters.

responsible for renting another one. In such a manner, the parents could teach him responsibility, commitments and help him practice his social skills.

- **Spatial motivations**

Spatial motivations refer to situations in which the structure of the apartment itself is the cause to engage in hosting. In a sense, Sheila is an excellent example of a spatial motivation due her special and historic house, which is mutually exclusive with other motivations, as noted. As in Sheila's case, spatial motivation is normally combined with other reasons. Nevertheless, often, the spatial motivation is the dominant one, each for different reasons. Such is the mini-case of Salome (L35), who lives in a big penthouse in the heart of one of one of the pastoral neighborhoods of Lisbon. She received the penthouse as a gift from her parents who knew she had been then searching for a long time for an apartment, and knew it was her dream apartment. She had seen it before and talked about it constantly but thinking she would have to buy the penthouse herself, it was too big and too expensive for her to afford. After settling in, Salome had realized how big the penthouse was, and that the second floor would be left neglected. Salome then decided, against her parents' opinion, to engage with Airbnb. working as a social worker, she admits that the extra income is indeed useful, but hardly mandatory once she did not have to pay for the penthouse.

In a different mini-case, in Milan, a couple in their late forties (M44), have tried to find a place and settle in an area they perceive as the real authentic Milan. The Navigli area, surrounded by water canals, and filled with life, night-life and a semi-touristic climate, is *'just the Navigli'* for Francesco, where he actually knows the man who sells him his tobacco, or the one where he drinks his morning coffee. He explained that that the Navigli is *"...The meaning of living in a village, which is what it feels like here, is that I can, for example, go out without a wallet and buy things, because the people know me and I can pay another time, and you can go out and you can walk and drink something and not need a car and nothing. It is safe and pleasant...".*

In this social atmosphere, Francesco and Ilaria, his wife, ended up buying an enormous house, in which they continued to explore and to add, to what has been accumulated to thousands of vintage items. Some displayed for guests, and others collect dust in the big garage. For Francesco and Ilaria, hosting was just natural, spatially natural. *"...There's something in this house, when you see the house, you realize you have to start bringing people in. You feel like this house needs people inside. What's the idea of having a big house if that house is empty? It was easy. Before, we*

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*wouldn't have done it at all, we weren't social people, but once people started coming here, the transition to people we didn't know was relatively easy. Sometimes a few days happen when we don't have an **event** at home and we don't have **guests**, so you think to yourself, that's nice ... why do you need something different from that? So, let's say I feel good about having people in the house, but I don't feel bad about not having people, I guess we just got used to having a lot of people here. And when you get used to it, you have to have a lot of people at home…*". The events Francesco speak of, is the members-club-only Francesco and Ilaria opened a few years ago, in which they host members in their home, a few times a month, for subjectively symbolic, subjectively luxury price, for events of special chef dinners, small music shows, and even some alternative theater shows. As Francesco describes it very well (and Ilaria agreed), it was the house that demanded that new lifestyle, and they just followed.

- **Social and cultural motivations**

SAH in their 1st stage, have expectations, desires, hopes and mainly, a vision of what hosting should look like. For many of them, this vision is wrapped with a social and cultural thinking, which should be understood separately, as they are not so common to come together. Furthermore, those social and cultural expectations are almost entirely built without any rationalization of the practice of hosting, or better yet, with an overwhelming idealization of the experience, before actually initiating it. Here again, the charm of Airbnb needs to be emphasized (and would be explored deeply in next chapters).

Socially, people of all ages and in all cities report that they welcomed Airbnb into their home in order to create relationships, to meet new people, and to reduce certain senses of loneliness[73]. Socially, and unlike their rival, CouchSurfing, only a few people report an expectation or a motivation to initiate a romantic or a sexual relationship with potential guests[74]. However, some differences were found between couples, as often, one partner is more financial oriented, and the other is more social oriented and enjoys the actual hosting. Socially, the image of hosting, of being a good host, and receiving feedback from guests is considered an important part of their lives and of their motives to begin with Airbnb.

[73] The levels of loneliness which were reported varied, but except for a few extreme cases, they were usually low.
[74] Even when eventually such events indeed occur and sometimes even pre-planned.

Such is the mini-case of Massimo (M24[75]), a pensioner in his 80s, who once was a sort of a 'business magnate' in old Italy, as after the sudden death of his father, he inherited the responsibility of a national enterprise, and over time, turned it to be even more central in the Italian economy. He, himself, became the face of his industry, as the head of their organized lobby. Massimo, under what was known as "Il Sorpasso", the big economic crisis of the 70s and 80s in Italy, had reduced significantly in size, and eventually retired. Hosting with Airbnb was not actually his idea. Massimo has four grown daughters from different mothers, and it was they, that understood Massimo's desire and need to share his stories of his racing career and his experiences as a child in the days before the fall of the fascist Italy[76]. The family (including the current wife), understood the potential of reducing their obligations to listen and spend time with him during their own hectic and ambitious life, and found the solution in the sociality the Airbnb service could offer[77].

Culturally, I have already mentioned the parental motive to engage with Airbnb. Other cultural motives are cosmopolitan ones. Many hosts in all cities reported that getting to know new cultures and people from places they have never visited or met people from, was exciting for them in the beginning. As mentioned as well, people were also excited to demonstrate their own culture (in Milan and Lisbon – their national one, in Jerusalem, their roots, their nationality, and their religion), their perception about design, about food, and ultimately, about life, and the way to live it[78]. Therefore, culture, or the expression of culture, is often, not only the result of ethnic or religious features, but also of the supporting of other cultures, like the cultural aspects or vegetarianism and veganism, among many others. Interesting cultural phenomenon that I stumbled upon in all the case studies, is the increasing interest in home and home organization methods, that often are described by religious, and surely, cultural terminology.

[75] Mini-case M24 of Massimo is the one that was extended into a biographical work, while the data was not used in this frame of research, the mini-case alone proved to be important and useful nonetheless.

[76] Massimo described a fascinating image of his memory as a child, as the house alone held and resided between 5-8 employees. Such as drivers, Au pairs, cleaning, and maintenance workers, that he was both their boss as a child, but they were also their actual parents. In the days before the fall of the fascist Italy, Massimo's family was already quite connected to local political players of Milan, and therefore the family, excluding the father, left to a pastoral gateway in France, until it was finally safe to return to Milan. Today Massimo lives in one of the apartments the family held in the rich and friendly zone of Wagner.

[77] And indeed, the colorful behavior of Massimo was a fresh and different ethnographic experience. As I was lucky to witness Massimo's work on hosting another guest, to enjoy his stories with a very fancy glass of white wine, enjoy his recommendation for the best pizza in Milan (I disagreed politely but enjoyed nonetheless), and finally, to have a short sense of my best Milanese experience of home, in the streets of Wagner that were part of my own space in my first years in Italy.

[78] Such issues were mentioned here only as motivations for the 1st stage, however they would be expanded in the last part of the findings.

Such is the example of Valeria (L19), an interesting mini-case of a woman in her late 30s, who holds a large and magnificent apartment in the northern part of the beautiful neighborhood of Santos. Valeria was a unique experience of instant warmth and human contact, which managed to soften her very domineering character. Alas, her sociality was visibly connected to a business, but mostly, artistic ambitions, as she opened a firm that focused on home design for business purposes (like Airbnb), but mainly, of energetic and semi-spiritual home design, following the ideas and approach of Marie Kondo. Kondo is a famous Japanese writer of home organization, which focuses on the results of energic atmosphere that unnecessary objects and items in the house can create. Kondo was mentioned a few times and, in all cities, not just as an important figure, but as messenger of ideas that they themselves, wish to deliver and educate others.

2.4 Fears and concerns

SAH in their 1_{st} stage tend to have many fears and concerns, which delay, slow down, and could eventually prevent them from continuing or changing their approach towards intensity and social willingness to fully enjoy what Airbnb hosting could ultimately, and sometimes indeed does, turn out to be.

In this section, I wish to put in focus the emotional state of the SAH, as discovered in the introduction, which is the fear that guides and dominates the 1_{st} stage for the SAH. For this matter, I shall focus extensively on analyzing situations that have been extracted from the text (reviews and profile), the emotions that arise in reaction to the host's behaviors and stories, and their own ability to share their feelings during the first stage.

Naturally, in this research I have included mini-cases of SAH who were active during my time of study. Therefore, all of the discussed mini-cases have survived their concerns and fears of the 1_{st} stage, moving forward (if they were already after the 1_{st} stage during our encounter). Alas, there is decent evidence to assuming that many hosts do not manage to overcome their fears and concerns, and they quit at this stage. Either way, more research should be done in the matter.

- **Physical and gender concerns and fears**

The type of concern with most evidence, is without a doubt the fear of a guest being harmful, to the SAH themselves, or to members of the household[79]. While such a fear is natural and rational, and indeed it was the most reported concern, it was also reported as the one with the lowest levels of actual fear, especially compared to other reported fears.

In the 1st stage, SAH tend to handle this fear by creating systems or agreements in which children would not be present in the house during hosting (especially in cases of divorced SAH), or a boyfriend would be present in the house, or a phone call away. This is especially the case of women who engage with Airbnb. Findings show that in some cases, women tend to avoid hosting men, or single men, in order to reduce the level of fear. In the mini-case of Lehava (J02, paragraph 2.2, 160), a 76 years old woman living in Jerusalem, who had been forced to host in her small apartment due to a financial situation, she describes a long, sleepless and painful process in which she has learned how to manage her fears, and to think positively about the strangers who are about to walk into her small and modest home.

Such is also the mini-case of Johana (L48), who has started Airbnb after feeling exhaustion of living with a roommate in addition to a growing sense of homelessness. She, too, shares her fears and concerns, and the way her close circle has responded to those fears: *"... Last year a guy from Iran asked me to stay, I don't know how to tell you, but when I saw it, I thought, Iran, and my boyfriend said, get it and if anything happens I will come. Then it happened that my boyfriend wasn't because he had to go to Porto or something. It was the best, he was 40 years old, he was divorced, he was very nice, the nicest man in the world, very, almost Latin because he was very emotional and talkative, very open. So I felt good and safe with him, and he was with me four nights and it was kind of interesting because the other day, he went to the bathroom, and the lock, didn't lock, something was wrong there, and he said, he saw it didn't work, and when he came out he asked for a screw, and I didn't want him to fix it, it is not his job. and I went to work. With a knife, he fixed the door. We sat down with tea, and I have a Quran, and he started reading it. So, he started explaining the Quran to me and was really nice and very kind, the best person!"*

Johana continues to share her thoughts during the first stage, and the way she worked hard to feel safe in an uncertain situation:

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[79] Actual cases that involved violence or a strong sense of unsafety were reported and would be discussed in future chapters.

"...It was a little scary at first, but in the end a great person came out. It is not an option to filter, because I think if I do, if I start filtering, I talked about it with Mama, and she told me, don't do it, because it might hurt you and be in danger and trouble and it is not safe and so on ... wait! I'm in my country, in my house, I live in a small building, only six people live here, one is a big cop, the neighbor above me, if I know everyone here, is a quiet neighborhood, something expensive, if I scream, everyone will hear, and people are tourists, they will not put themselves in a strange situation, they are more vulnerable at least fifty percent more than I am. Those who have to fear this are not me, because they are about to enter a house they do not know, maybe my pictures are fake? They don't know where they are going in ... nor does my picture, and the pictures of the rooms can be fake, I may not be Johana and I'm not a teacher...".

- **Material and sentimental concerns and fears**

While less have reported to be concerned for their belongings, such a concern raises much higher levels of fear[80] than other concerns, as it involves a fear that is composed of several layers. First, a materialistic layer of loss which is defined by the SAH's concern not to be compensated for damage caused by a guest, and so their financial venture would end with a loss, a business failure, or just unexpected and undesired expenses. Secondly, another later of fear that items with sentimental value would be damaged or stolen. Such a fear is stronger and harder to resolve, as the mini-cases consistently put emotional and sentimental value onto unexpected items[81]. These fears normally lead SAH in the 1st stage to be as attentive as possible to the safety of their items. Thirdly, people are concerned about the actual loss of home, which would be the result of the destruction of what is in it. This last layer is especially significant in drawing rules, which often shallows the interaction between SAH and their guest from the very start.

- **Fears and concerns of the departing SAH**

An important portion of the SAH which so far has hardly been discussed, is the case of SAH who leave their home when guests arrive. Usually, such SAH are of two kinds. The ones who offer a few options, if of taking a room, in which case they stay at home, or of taking the entire house, in

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[80] This fear is properly presented in the 2nd stage and would be explored in the relevant chapters.
[81] In later chapters, the adjustments that are performed due to that fear would be discussed.

which case they leave home. And the ones who only have their room or their home, and whenever a guest arrives, they leave. This type of SAH are exposed to higher levels of fears and concerns, which are expressed sometimes in worries and difficulties before the arrival of the guests, and always during the visit, as they are technically forbidden from entering their home once it has been rented as a whole[82]. For Igal (J11), this experience has been extremely difficult. Igal, in his thirties, rents a small studio-like private house with a garden. As an activist in Jerusalem, Igal often bounces between jobs and projects, and so he has decided to use Airbnb, and leave to his fiancée's place when his is booked. He described these fears: *"...look, I'm a very anxious kind of guy, by nature ... I'm more concerned, say between me and my partner, I am the Polish one[83]...So I try not to bring into my house people I am not sure about… Like I'm trying to figure out where the person is coming from, by conversation, communication…"*.

The anxious Igal, has also experienced one of the worst first guest experiences. The couple who stayed at his house came and took Igal's home from him, they did not respect the check-out time, they had left Igal to be homeless outside his own home, and left the house with significant damage that is disturbing to watch. It has been hard for Igal to recover from that pain, but he eventually did.

2.5 Engaging in the local market

Entering the world of hosting, in any city, brings along several specific meanings, which should be explored and would be developed along the stages in the future chapters. In the 1st stage, there are important differences between the cities, which should be discussed separately. From what has been learned, Lisbon is the only city with a clear and known policy, which SAH are actually aware of. In Milan, there is a known policy for guesthouses, but only one mini-case was listed as such. In Jerusalem, only very few mini-cases have declared to pay taxes by law. Others, as in the case of Milan, showed ignorance about their obligations as local hosts, and rarely followed them[84].

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[82] The tragic story of the absent SAH would be discussed in future chapters and stages.

[83] Igal refers here to a very basic Jewish stereotype of the Polish Jewish mother, to be intrusive, annoying, and almost a martyr. In other words, worries too much.

[84] It is important to notice at this point, that intentionally, no data was collected from Airbnb itself (protocols, conditions, terms, and other official data) or from communal/national laws that concern hosting via Airbnb. Although such data could be helpful, it has two main flaws. First, such data is in constant change, as Airbnb itself is. Second, this research had set the focus on the SAH and their view of reality. Therefore, what the many SAH know, is what I am invested to know as well.

In addition, the local market is expressed among SAH and their knowledge of the market they are competing in. Findings show that indeed, SAH tend to know very little about other SAH in their area, and what they do know is in light of their competition rather than of a member of a community who could assist and receive assistance in times of need. Interestingly enough, while friends are a vital source of help in the first stage, as in the mini-case of Igal, who was assisted by a 'mentor' who has helped him earn more money, and also to reduce some of his fears and concerns. In any case, as mentioned, those friends were friends from other paths, and Airbnb is considered quite secondary in that aspect.

- **Bureaucracy and taxes**

In the case of Lisbon, SAH report that new SAH must first register in the relevant office at the municipality. The registration provides a license number which can be fully tracked in a dedicated website. In some cases, SAH report that the registration has allowed them to get an exemption certification, waiving tax payments. In addition to the taxes, SAH are obliged to collect documents of identification from every guest and to report their guests and income on a daily basis. While the few who have reported such a process were divided into the hosts who understood and accepted the process, and the others who did not, and this was the key reason for them to quit (in the 5th stage), the majority of the mini-cases have dismissed this obligation and cooperation with the municipal authority, making Airbnb obliged to force them into registration[85].

In the other cases, as mentioned, people mostly showed a lack of interest in the new municipal process or in the existing of one. Some indeed showed concerns, which are part of the fears and concerns which SAH feel in the 1st stage, such as to get caught by the tax authorities and to get involved with criminal actions. However, the simple fact that SAH know, that *"everyone is doing the same"*, leads them to this uncertainty, along with the lack of supervision by the state and city themselves.

There are some implications due to this lack of supervision and inability to regulate Airbnb in Jerusalem and in Milan, and the flaws in Lisbon's system as well. In Jerusalem, two illegal

[85] Hosts who have engaged with Airbnb before their agreement with the city of Lisbon, are or were getting constant reminders to register and fill the registration number in the website. As it seems, Airbnb was allowed to remind hosts to do so, without blocking their listing for two years. Therefore, many were still not registered during my research period.

Palestinians (who did not have the proper permits that allow entry to Israel) have managed to enter the city of Jerusalem through one of the checkpoints, admitting their story to the host upon arrival. Luckily for them, their host (J18) is a left-wing activist who did not turn them in and rather helped them until they moved on to their next station, visiting their family.

In another mini-case, Yotam, a recently new social worker from Jerusalem (J15), hosted an American woman as one of his first guests. *"... Someone ordered the room for 50 days, and we saw she was not alright. She was psychotic, so I tried to connect her to a psychiatric hospital. She screamed all night, called the police, accused us of stealing things from her. But it did not last 50 days, after two days we managed to connect her to a hospital and move all her belongings away... It was a very tough story. It was very unpleasant at home, it was terrible. We said she couldn't stay here, but on the other hand the state had no solution for her, at one point she called the police again, and the police wanted to leave her outside and it was raining and cold and I didn't agree... we couldn't let her stay here cause we were afraid she would blame us for some sexual harassment or something... I was very scared of her. She was not connected, but it ended in peace, she arrived at the hospital… apparently she ran out of medication and that's what happened..."*. Yotam's story of is an extreme one who is the exception that proves the rule. Yotam is not listed in any way as an agent who regularly provides services to incoming tourists. Therefore, the authorities have no policy or protocol as to handling such situations. In this case, Yotam, maybe due to his profession, has demonstrated responsibility and perhaps even parenting skills. In other cases, situations can and do escalate to conflicts between hosts and guests.

Another such unusual experience could be seen through the lives of SAH in Milan. Maria (M41), lives with her husband of more than 40 years, she started Airbnb so she could fill the void in her lovely big house in the center of Milan. As a retired teacher and with a husband who is busy playing the violin at churches around Milan, she was more than ready to enjoy new interactions and absorb new cultures. Maria recalls her scariest event in her new experience so far: *"...Recently I had a strange and scary encounter. Before someone arrived by using my **'instant booking'**[86], I read in the reviews that this guy writes strange massages and other hosts do not recommend him. I was very worried. So those bad reviews put me in some stress. So, I called Airbnb and asked nicely what to do because I didn't feel comfortable. They told me he made an 'instant booking' from*

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[86] The important mechanism of the 'instant booking', as one of Airbnb's technological tools, would be discussed in the 5th chapter – *'The Power of the Lightning'*

Greece and they tell me that even if I use 'instant booking' order and I am not quite sure because of reviews, I can cancel the booking without penalty. So I did. However, he came on the day schedule! I wasn't even at home, my husband was shocked, but he turned out to be an innocent German guy, speaking Italian, that came to Milan for business. In the end he just stayed as planned and he was charming, but the fact that strangers knows my address like that really put me unease…". While the mini-case of Maria raises the issue of the 'instant booking', it is also another sign for a situation in which a city or a state is not involved in the regulation of the informal tourism sector and allows risky (to the guest or the SAH) situations in the intimate and fragile space of home.

- **Public opinion, neighbors, and the neighborhood**

Calculating the behaviors, stands and awareness of the studied SAH, reveals significant and interesting differences between the local public opinions (as they perceive it) of the cities. First, Jerusalem was found as the city in which SAH care and give the least attention to the public opinion among the cities. As already reviewed in the presentation of the case studies (3rd chapter of the methodological part), in Israel, Tel-Aviv is the city in which development and local trends are affected and discussed, while Jerusalem is considered relatively marginal as a market and a place of informal touristic development. The stands of Jerusalem's studied subjects indeed fit such a profile. In Milan, however, public opinion is more important and discussed. Subjects in Milan refer to the rise of Airbnb in the city and their own small contribution, as part of the new and recent recovery of Milan which is now financially stable or growing, but also *'alive'* again, *'happy'* and *'attractive'*. Finally, the case of Lisbon, in many occasions, shares similar patterns to the ones of the city of Barcelona, Spain[87]. In Lisbon, SAH are aware of a certain negative public opinion on the flood of tourists into the city, their influence on the availability of local services due to that flood, and finally, the impact of those touristic trends on the housing and gentrified situations in the city. Therefore, many SAH try to separate their service from others, such as 'Airbnb lords', in order to make a clear distinction between a *'good Airbnb place'* and a *'bad Airbnb place'* (such accurate terminology was heard numerous times in the city of Lisbon, and only there). For them,

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[87] While the case of Barcelona is, as demonstrated in the theoretical part, one of the most studied regarding the implication of Airbnb on the city and the negative public opinion of the city, no literature was found on the positions and stands of SAH.

using Airbnb as SAH, is a *'free choice'*, that does not contain a negative impact on the city, but rather a *'legitimate'* and *'authentic'* way to *'make a living in a difficult time'*.

In all cities, the relation to the neighborhood is mostly one sided. SAH tend to extensively use their neighborhood as a key advantage of the actual Airbnb space. SAH emphasize it when their home is in the pastoral and peaceful neighborhoods of Lisbon outside the central area, like 'Santos', or 'Estrela', the green and social neighborhoods of Milan, like 'Isola' or the 'Navigli', and the authentic, religious yet charming neighborhoods of Jerusalem like 'Nachlaot' or 'The German Colony'. Alas, SAH tend to give little attention to complaints of neighbors, if there are any, and pay little attention to the presence of tourists in their city in general, when those SAH are from Milan or Jerusalem.

2.6 Airbnb community's role in the engagement

When scholars discuss the community of Airbnb, there are some important preferences which are related to the concepts of the 'imagined community' and the 'online community' that should be noticed. This claim does not come in void, but it comes from an aggressive marketing of the concept of a community by Airbnb itself. Airbnb is outstandingly clever by doing so, as Airbnb is not a typical online community or group, while its main purpose and service is the goal of creating offline and real encounters. Airbnb uses the intimacy, mystery, but especially the potential of the intimate encounter, wisely, in order to cover for the very non-communal aesthetic infrastructure of Airbnb as an open website and application. In this theme my wish was to explore SAH's own stands and actual relationship with Airbnb's so-called community, mainly in the 1_{st} stage of engaging with Airbnb.

- **Awareness to a community – the story of Rossana**

Rossana (M42) is a woman in her fifties, who lives in Milan with her boyfriend, and is often away for business. She lives in one of the rich residential neighborhoods that has an impression of being safe and with a live community. Like many others, Rossana holds a mutual exclusive kind of motivation to engage with Airbnb. As a 'shadow writer' of biographies, mainly of families who wish to document the story of their elderly loved ones, or of individuals who wish to publish their own life story, Rossana has encountered financial difficulties especially in recent years. In

addition, Rossana also strongly desires and is very fond of human interaction in her quiet home that does not fit her strong energetic spirit.

She misses the Milan of the past, of her childhood, which she desperately tried to describe to me, a foreigner who only sees a boring version of Milan. Rossana has serious plans to document and use her writing skills to write a book about her encounters, good and bad, in order to define, less methodologically, obviously, the 'Airbnb spirit'. *"…Then there are those who do it just to save money, only money. And those are the worst in my opinion because they don't have the 'Airbnb spirit'. They only come here because this five-star hotel near me costs twice than my house and that's it. So, it is usually these kinds of people who are also those who claim and demand more, cause they want to spend as little as possible, but they expect treatment of 10 stars. In my opinion, most guests who do not have the 'spirit' should really stop using Airbnb…"*.

For Rossana, a community is the imagined community. Meaning, a group of people who barely have any common grounds, and in fact, do not even have any interaction between each other. What Rossana sees, is a community which is based on values, values of co-creation of culture, of interaction and learning. Rossana is an extreme yet repeating example of an alive and active-thinker of Airbnb and the 'Airbnb spirit' as abstract yet still an object, in which many, in all cities but mostly in Milan, are aware of and act upon.

- **The actual role of the community in the 1st stage**

While SAH are aware of and behave according to values and norms that have been designed by Airbnb but are perceived as a communal policy, the role of the community in all cities was found to be quite narrow. In Milan, no reports of engaging in any activity or even a discussion were found. Same results were found in Jerusalem. To recall, many SAH were assisted by a friend who is 'part of the community'. In reality, those were always friendships that were established outside the spaces of Airbnb and detached from them, before engaging with Airbnb. In Lisbon, two reports were found of meetings of hosts that took place in the city, and that did create some flimsy and insignificant relationships among them. As a whole, Airbnb maintains a separate website (which is unreachable through the main website) that allows communication between hosts, but this forum holds no visible effect on the policy and mainly on the daily work of SAH with Airbnb. However, none of the mini-case have reported using this platform in any situation, in any stage. In addition, Facebook group of Airbnb and Booking.com hosts are common in all cities, but they are normally

very market and service focused, and most discussions are on turning Airbnb hosting into a growing business. Either way, those Facebook groups also have little to no impact on SAH's daily lives. **Once again, as has already been mentioned, these findings are to be seen as valid to all stages.**

- ▪ **A disruptive online community**

One of the strongest methodological difficulties I have experienced, in all cities, was trying to switch from the Airbnb platform to any other platform, offline or online, when communicating with a potential mini-case for an interview. Airbnb marks and blocks any contact information that can represent an address, a phone number, a name, or any reference to any known online social media[88]. Many potential subjects and eventually mini-cases have demonstrated concerns and objections which are directly related to the illegitimate conversation between a host and a guest who has no intention of making a transaction. In some cases, which naturally did not maturate to become mini-cases, SAH accused me of breaking the rules of the website, of the community, and have threatened to notify Airbnb of my activities[89]. Airbnb does not allow any connection between hosts or addressing one another, and in fact, an Airbnb host cannot approach any other member, unless it is a guest creating a conversation in the frame of a specific order.

This level of hesitation among many of the potential subjects was usually reduced dramatically after managing to overcome the disruptive communication on the Airbnb platform, and especially after moving to the social network of Facebook, which has almost always changed the nature of the conversation, making it more open, free and positive, and often leading to a future meeting in which the interview would be conducted.

As studied, online communities are so accustomed in today's society, because of its technological ability to create a sense, and to have similar preferences of a regular community. Such preferences are the ability to hold an opinion, and to have ways to express that opinion. To communicate freely with other members is a crucial feature of a community, because they are the ones who allow the

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[88] As a result, and as I was taught by cooperative subjects and had taught others myself later on, I used several technics that worked only with cooperative and rather trusting subjects. Like, writing phone numbers in words, adding spaces between letters in a word, or intentionally misspelling names of social medias. For example, "you can add me on phase-book using my name r o e i b a c h a r".

[89] Needless to say, Airbnb has never contacted me in any way, despite a very extreme and odd ordering of 30 nights in 30 different homes in the same city, or approaching hundreds, if not thousands of potential mini-cases in the different selected cities.

creation of rituals, and spaces in which the norms and the order of the group could be shaped and changed for the prosperity of its members. The evidence presented in this section, shows that Airbnb does not allow such interactions, debates, and creation of rituals. Therefore, the community is not a community, but rather an idealization or the wishful thinking of a well-sold product, but also, an interesting effort, even if profit-based, to weave social values into a monetized system. An effort that indeed creates countless moments of real and priceless interactions between people and cultures. In the next chapters I would explore the actual representation of the Airbnb spirit as it is experienced by the SAH in future stages.

2.7 Discussion – 'Airbnb spirit'

Understanding the multi-layered equilibrium that SAH practice during the 1st stage, the stage of engagement and getting to know what it is like to host strangers via Airbnb, is first and foremost, the first step in understanding the relationships that SAH create with several actors. Relationships which would become more and relevant to the image of their daily life and of their home, than ever before.

As these findings show, SAH have a significant tendency to be attracted to the possibility of hosting via Airbnb in very unstable situations, for themselves or their families. Such unstable situations are not always the case of a financial situation, and for many, hosting via Airbnb is a result of numerous reasons, that hold social, cultural, and even dominant spatial reasons, motives that enrich and make the little research in the matter more complex (Lampinen & Cheshire, 2016; Böcker & Meelen, 2017).

As studied, SAH also have significant fears concerning their safety, the safety of their belongings, their home, and their intimate space. At this point, there is a good and useful reason to assume, that one of the ways in which SAH handle their fears and concerns, is the connection, or better yet, the sense of presence that the imagined community contributes to the experience of the new SAH. Meaning, while as the online community is absent and restrained by Airbnb's policy and technological technics, the community, as an imagined one, influences positively, and mainly, creates a real sense of trust between the members.

'Airbnb spirit', alternatively, is an emotional relief, a placebo, that is, in rarer occasions, also a compass, an idealization of the human interaction that leads to magical moments. Alas, the

attraction to Airbnb, and unlike any other similar socially declared mainstream enterprise, is built on that feeling and that belief. In other words, 'Airbnb spirit' should be seen as a phenomenon that represents the new technological life. It represents a deprivation, a deprivation of a connection, of a personal face-to-face interaction which is slowly fading away in a world whose future holds unknown changes, if of heading towards a robotic work force, education which would be taught via technology, or work relationships that would be only technologically-based. Airbnb, in order to offer an intimate interaction, the most intimate one, corresponds with the fears and deprivation of human contact, and as Rossana said rightfully so, *"...I miss what my city once was, a beautiful chaos of strangers interacting in busy streets and coffee shops, small grocery stores and my private tobacco place…".* Airbnb Spirit, in that sense, is a regression, to a domestic space which is being used to replace the old public one. But in order to do so, it must become public, first.

While these issues would be expanded in the final discussion (chapter 5), it is with importance to address two issues that arise in the demonstration of the findings of the first chapter.

- **The emotional power of fear**

Exploring and tracking down the emotional state of SAH in different stages was a fascinating, even if exhausting and challenging job to do, chasing small clues on one hand, and SAH's own perception of different stories or events, on the other. A mini-case could reveal a story of great discomfort, a sense of home deprivation and even exhaustion, as in a quite modest event in which two female-guests hardly communicated with the host, making him feel alienated from his own home. Alas, same reactions and patterns could be found in another mini-case in which a male-guest was aggressive and nearly reached physical violence towards a single-mother SAH. Emotions, therefore, could be quite subjective, and must be taken in their wide context, of a personality and of the person's biographical path. Such cases have demonstrated the relationship between preferences of 'working from home' and some of the emotions, instability and mainly, the loss of balance between work and home (De Graaff & Rietveld, 2007; Halford, 2006; Shepherd-Banigan et al., 2016).

In the 1st stage, the dominant emotion which was detected was fear. Fear, in this case, was described as a direct concern towards specific objects (self, others, items, home). And indeed, SAH report direct concern for all of the above. Alas, I would like to suggest another angle which could come handy in the future chapters. Hosting, as an intimate exercise, leads to inner questions

regarding what could change in the future. A criminal behavior is not only normally prevented with a successful enforcement and punishing system, but also with an efficient social deterrence mechanism, which creates representations of stereotypical criminals who are perceived as negative and unattractive.

In this sense, the fear of Airbnb is also a fear of a possible change. Change of lifestyle, change in the socio-economic situation, and change in self-perception due to the actual practice of hosting via Airbnb, which involves serving, cleaning after, and following up on the bookings of strangers, who might be younger or in a lower socio-economic status than the SAH themselves. Finally, the fear is so wide and clear because it occurs at home, where change is limited and mostly chosen, whereas, in the case of SAH, it is eventually unknown and uncertain.

The gravity and depth of the SAH's concerns are even more emphasized with the emotional and cognitive influence of the imagined community.

- **In different directions**

As I designed a qualitative research, based on a limited, even if sufficient, number of min-cases, I believed that my tendency to create observations and distinction between the cities would be done in quite a careful manner. Alas, and as findings show, the differences between the cities in certain patterns, and dominance of others in one city rather than in another, had too many evidence to ignore.

Without getting too ahead in the discussion, the 1st stage effectively demonstrates that while individuals engage with Airbnb for different motives and in different situations, cities collide with the rise of Airbnb in specific settings. As shown in this research, SAH in Milan hold a pretty homogenic vision of what Milan was in the past, and what it is now. This conscious identification of SAH in Milan, has led many to engage with Airbnb while holding different agendas, whose relation to the processes in-development in the city are indisputable, and would be expanded furthermore in the next chapters.

In Jerusalem and Lisbon, however, the directions taken are different, and visible. Lisbon, as findings show, has much more awareness and attention to public opinion, and engaging with Airbnb could be quite controversial. In a city that is enhancing with tourism-based investments and growth, and with people who protest and already know how to resist other so-called social

initiatives that put in danger the delicate fabric of the city (Barata-Salgueiro, Mendes & Guimarães, 2017; Cocola-Gant & Gago, 2019). SAH in Lisbon, therefore, seem to put little attention on representing the city, and more attention on doing right with the city, defending their culture and creating spaces in which tourists cannot be heard, but rather have to listen. While culturally and practically, there is a good reason to question that determination, it would be discovered later on.

Finally, in Jerusalem, it seems that in the shadow of the city Tel-Aviv, which keeps growing and expanding its touristic ventures, the Airbnb service in Jerusalem is much more modest. In its visibility and number of listings around the city, but mostly, as part of a personal yet trendy solution of the young segment of the city, that looks for arrangements that would help them to 'get by' and deal with the cost of living, while preserving their own sense and domestic version in the holy city. It is important to note, that as the SAH in Jerusalem are indeed very different in their intention towards the Airbnb service, from their friends in Tel-Aviv, there are such limited ventures also in Jerusalem. Ventures that are hardly felt in the local frame, and rarely expressed by SAH.

2.8 Conclusion – **Starting on the wrong foot**

In this chapter, I my wish was to explore and enter the lives of stay-at-home Airbnb hosts, and thereby, to understand their state of mind when entering the world of Airbnb, their motives, fears and concerns. As a declared community, it was important to address the contextual situation in which Airbnb is considered as an imagined community, or an online one.

Findings show that there is a necessity in separating the SAH's biographical states and their motivations. Biographical states which are mostly unstable, especially in the course of career or family-based issues, which put SAH in hard and more unstable conditions. Patterns which were found extremely present, are of SAH who are in the creative sector, or trying to be part. While the concept of 'working from home' would be explored more extensively in the next chapters, SAH do show signs or patterns which are related to working from home. Alas, while it is the actual job that normally creates the instability of workers, for SAH, instability is common before engaging Airbnb, and therefore Airbnb turns to be another layer of instability.

Findings also show a wide spectrum of motives, from financial, social, to cultural, and even spatial motives. Therefore, in most cases, profit is not the dominant factor in deciding to engage with Airbnb, but indeed it makes a crucial factor and a trigger.

Community, on the other hand, is alive and it is an actor that is felt by SAH. However, the community does not participate, nor does it play any physical or virtual role, in the daily lives of SAH. Alternatively, it was suggested, that the community is framed in its absence as an online community, as the 'Airbnb spirit', which plays a cognitive and emotional role as well as a compass for good manners and social will. Such values are perhaps the manner in which normative SAH overcome their concerns and fears regarding hosting, as fears for themselves, others and their home, could only be a representation of their fear of change, a change that is sure to come.

"...Lord, I'm one, Lord, I'm two, Lord, I'm three, Lord, I'm four

Lord, I'm five hundred miles from my home

Five hundred miles, five hundred miles, five hundred miles, five hundred miles

Lord, I'm five hundred miles from my home

Not a shirt on my back, not a penny to my name

Lord, I can't go a-home this a-way

This a-away, this a-way, this a-way, this a-way

Lord, I can't go a-home this a-way..."[90]

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[90] Generally credited to Hedy West. Performed by *'Peter, Paul and Mary'*. From the song: *'500 Miles'* (1961).

3. 'White Elephants', (or),

The Emotional Response to the Presence of Guest

3.1 Introduction

The observation of home, as a domestic space, and therefore, as a 'space', and a place, is a key argument and point of reference, that helps understanding home as a place of production, and consumption, that has some crucial features in the establishment of every-day needs, that can be fulfill, virtually, only at home.

According to Giddens (1984[91]), Space (along with time) is the place in which social activities occur. However, the abstraction of space as well time, leads to a necessity of something more solid, in which people could create an interaction with. This is the place (Allen, Massey & Pryke, 2005).

The domestic space is strongly perceived as one of the most basic spaces in which the process of 'placing' and the producing of meaning into space, have the deepest meaning to people's biographical path, in every culture and since the establishment of home as a permanent space which needs to be guarded and protected (Romano & Trisciuoglio, 2009). It is so, as home is well dichotomized and designed to complete the landscape of the urban space, in the emotional, social, and cultural sense (Zukin, 1995). Such approaches perceive the house as the extension of the individual, with his attempt to negotiate their face (Goffman, 1978), and not less, their class (Chapman, 1999).

As discussed in the introduction chapter home was never 'only private' or 'only social'. It was a mix of spaces with different functions and different ways to organize them (Clarke, 2001). With the increase of the population, and the beginning of rise of the urban order, home started to change, and to turn into a source of different needs. Apartments became smaller with time as a result of

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[91] And shaped before him by Bourdieu, 1977, and reflected once again by Harvey, 1990.

the increase in the population and the density in urban areas, and the very fundamental classification that the urban order could provide. In addition, new forms of communication reduce the image of the domestic space as a social space (Madanipour, 2003), as individualism and privatization have led society to require more private spaces (Tosi & Archer, 1980).

The urban order, as already reviewed in the theoretical part, can be defined as a process that, over time, has efficiently divided labor from family, creating a reality in which home becomes, symbolically, a synonym for privacy and private space. As a dichotomy, Simmel (1950) properly describes the urban, as a heavy and intense set of production of stimulations, both in the emotional and the cognitive sense. According to Simmel, the public and urban space became hectic, and busy, in the emotional and cognitive sense, what led to a 'new' human behavior, in which people were habituated to screen and reduce their perception to those stimulations, while their interpretation of the space was adapted accordingly, allowing a blunt and indifference response to the happening in the public space.

Home, as a reaction, has turned into the counter-space to the urban and public space, becoming more closed, more private, and even more hidden (Somerville, 1992). Such modifications of home that happened in the beginning of the urban area, have regulated the presence of different parts of one's face, personality, and behavior in each of the spaces. Home is exclusive space of intimacy, agency and a steady, deep, and known relationships with a few others (Douglas, 1991).

While the study of mobilities has not been explored enough, home is a fascinating and an important and unique type of movement, in contrary to the busy, fast and unpredictable rhythm of the urban and public space, home is identified (or should be identified) as a space in which the mobility is predictable (or thought to be), and the 'lines', or lanes of movement are very constant and limited. Home includes much less stimulations and it allows the attention and focus of his members (Somerville, 1992).

In literature, the connection between the Airbnb service and Airbnb hosts and their homes, seems to be only in its beginning, as new work is beginning to understand not only the motives and experience of the guest as a consumer of urban tourism, but also the result of the Airbnb services in the micro-level, and in the frame of the host experience.

Such is the case in the recent work of Saturnino & Sousa (2019), who wish to establish an understanding of SAH's tendency to behave differently in their domestic space, and in the very relevant research field of Lisbon. Such a tendency, they determine, comes from an emotional

process in which the host's main motive is the perceived importance of gaining good reputation and thereby, increasing their popularity among potential guests and increasing their potential profit. The two have followed the concept of 'emotional labor' of Hochschild[92] (2012), following the work of Goffman, of shaping a change in Airbnb hosts as they accept their 'role' as service providers. This change to an emotional state which seeks to present professionalism, makes them change their behavior, but also modify their home, while money becomes the only real motive[93].

In another work, the importance of emotions is discussed as well, as Roelofsen (2018) has also done ethnographic work in Sofia, Bulgaria, on 11 cases, with a mixed and mostly non SAH participants. In her work, she describes the methods in which historical and political establishment of home and hospitality create actual changes in the shaping of homes of Airbnb hosts, and lead to change in the behaviors of hosts, who wish to provide an authentic and rich Airbnb experience. This change, she determines, creates feelings of (un)homeliness, which alienate the host from their own home.

In this chapter, I wish to follow the work of Scheff (2006), who pushes Goffman's theory into the emotional realm. According to his understanding, emotions (as studied in the introduction chapter) are to be learned as a key factor in the human social behavior, as people react to social events, and behave according to the emotional triggers they encounter. For Scheff, the emotion that has the strongest power over the social behavior, is the emotion of embarrassment. Embarrassment is an embedded emotion that aims to create distress and discomfort in case of a social disorder or inappropriate behavior or display of face, which occur in different settings of spaces and places.

This chapter is focused on the 2nd, as 3rd stages of ASEP, as I would examine the relation between home modifications which occur because of the hosting experience and the hosting routine of SAH, and their emotional state and actual behavior. In this chapter, I would like to demonstrate the empirical efficiency of understanding home modifications and behavior of hosts in the frame of the range of emotions which SAH experience during the 2nd stage that leads, eventually, to the third and critical stage.

In these chapters, home modifications refer to changes which take place during the 2nd and 3rd stages. Such changes, are identified (as explained in the first part) as relatively minor changes

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[92] As discussed already in the introductive chapter.
[93] Other few works that engage in the concept of 'emotional labor' in the context of Airbnb hosts were found, focusing on the very nature of interaction and structured employee-employer type of relationship, which would be discussed in the next chapter.

(objectively and compared to changes in the 4th stage), and as ones that do not draw much attention or awareness by the SAH. These themes are divided into three types of modifications which are implanted on space. One, is modifications of the way in which space is thought of. The second, is modifications which are implanted on the use of space, its functions. And lastly, changes that are implanted on physical objects.

As explained, the 2nd stage is defined by a change in the intensity of hosting, which is the actual cause of such home modifications. In this stage, the intensity changes from a drizzling hosting intensity (slow and occasional) to a wave-shaped hosting intensity (steady and intense), which causes those modifications, as the practice of hosting is no longer possible to handle while separating the daily routine from the hosting at home. The modification in display are the result of solving minor conflicts without dramatic decision making.

3.2   Patterns of home modifications

The nature of the 2nd stage is identified by the very nature of guests who arrive in what I have found appropriate to call, a wave-shaped intensity. The metaphor of waves crashing (normally calmly) into the shore, leaving their traces on the frontline of the beach. As waves, guests have similar influences on the homes they visit, they have immediate noticeable implications on the domestic space, the way it functions, and the items which are in it. Alas, the significant and hardly reversible implications are the ones that go unnoticed, as they slowly change the routines and the use of the space and its surroundings.

As explained, the importance and power of the steady flow of guests in the 2nd stage are of those tacit modifications that SAH experience but lack the awareness (in real time) to create a discussion upon them. Instead, SAH responded and reacts to those changes, unconsciously. The 2nd stage ends as their awareness to the changes and discomforts grows and surfaces their consciousness and a reaction, or reactions, are due to be determined.

Patterns of home modifications, in this chapter, refers to the fashion in which SAH experience their home before the 3rd stage of the turning point, and their behavior as a result of that experience. In the next chapter, I would discuss direct influences of guests upon their hosts.

- **Space modification**

The difference between the modification of 'space' and the ones of 'function', lies in the very nature of the domestic space as a fundamental 'place' in western (and non-western) lives. Alas, SAH deal with conflicts that damage and challenge the image of different spaces of their home (which are to be resolved later on).

The development of any place, as an imagined 'whole', is the accumulations of events and the production of emotional and cognitive understandings of the meaning of a space that has a title, a name. Alas, the accumulation of these never ends, and therefore it creates a constant change in the image of home.

SAH, in that sense, experience such a space modification, which be described as follows[94].

Geographical mobilization of place - In the heart of the definition of 'place' lies the core idea that a place is unique. Meaning, a 'place' of home exists only as one image, and especially, in only one geographical location. SAH experience a destabilization of the place called home, which appears in their thoughts and actions. The disruption of space usually arrives in two forms. The first, as guests tend to change the homey sense of home. Understanding this change of feeling may be better understood by following the story of Sonya (M28), a divorced retired teacher in her sixties from Milan. Sonya, who lives alone in her beautiful but big apartment that used to accommodate her with her husband and their four children, reveals two of her current concerns. She wants to fill her big house again with people to care for, and wishes to find a new love so that together they *"could enjoy [her] planned trips around the world…"*. Sonya despises the silence of her empty house, so she tries to find arrangements that could bring *'warmth'* and *'joy'* into her welcoming home, if of short rentals in the image of Airbnb guests or more traditional contract-based tenants. On the evening I spent at Sonya's home I got an idea of her difficulties: *"…In the evening, I set to leave Sonya's home to have a meeting with an old friend. Leaving my room, I noticed that as Sonya complained, the roommate was closed in his room, and Sonya was working with dough in the kitchen. 'Where are you going?', she asked me worried, and I explained that I have a meeting with an old-time friend. 'It is a shame, she said, I'm making pizza! You'll love it!' 'I would probably eat out, but I am curious to take a bite!' I answered. 'Okay', she said disappointed, 'eat as much as you*

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[94] It is important to note that while this theme discussing the meaning of place and its modifications, those are subtle modifications, that become significant at the turning point itself, as it would be described in the 7th chapter – 'Bull in a China shop'.

want, it will be ready for you!'. On my way back I felt a little hungry and I remembered the possible late snack waiting for me. The smell entering my daily home didn't fail. It was waiting for me with a big note: 'Roei, eat as much you want, I made it for you!'. Luckily, I insisted on finding the light switch, only to realize that what was made for me was a prosciutto pizza, with the meat blended into the pizza in a way I don't like. Everybody were already asleep, and I returned back to the room hungry…". (From note M28).

In the morning, Sonya was extremely disappointed that I had not even tried the pizza, and she was hoping to hear that it is a kosher issue (it was not[95]). Neither the Airbnb guests nor her Italian tenant who had lived there at the time, have restored her space as she had hoped they would, and misses it was. Even worse, although in my case Sonya gave me the impression that she enjoys my company, it is not always so, as in many cases, the 'place' that SAH know as home loses the domestic uniqueness of home due to the staying of guests, and it becomes even more alienated to the SAH. Instead, Sonya is changing it over time, to make it more and more looking as a hotel, while she itself, looking for other solutions, outside of home, or by focusing more and more of her plants.

Secondly, while Sonya was an example of a SAH whose space no longer fits the image of the place they used to know, in many cases, the geographical uniqueness of the place of home leads to thoughts of other places which could be a substitute, even if partially, for what was used to be home. Family, romantic or sexual partners, friends, and also public areas are used to replace different parts of the image of home. It is important to look closely at the thinking processes of such cases. For example, the mini-case of Yehuda and Ron (J10). The two men are orthodox Jews and romantic partners who live together with their old dog for the last two years. The combination of deep religious beliefs and practices, along with a declared and almost subversive gay life-style, is indeed fascinating, but seems irrelevant to the actual lives of the two, who describe and demonstrate a reality of a calm and open community and neighborhood, in the middle of the holy city of Jerusalem. The two enjoyed expressing the difference in their vision and thoughts on hosting. Yehuda, enjoys and feels comfortable around strangers, but has a careless and

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[95] The ethnographic work, as noted in the methodology, by its intimate and unique settings, has brought many challenges that lie on expectation and norms of human relations and on the Airbnb ritualistic manner and interaction (to be discussed in the next chapter). One of them, was my own particular limits and restriction regarding food. As in this case, such restrictions led, not once, to awkwardness which has eventually ended in peace with my participants.

unprofessional vision of hosting via Airbnb. The other, Ron, strives to give the homiest service possible, but 'loses' his ground in the presence of strangers.

Two views of the place called home (M28 – the left image – Ron, the right image – Yehuda)
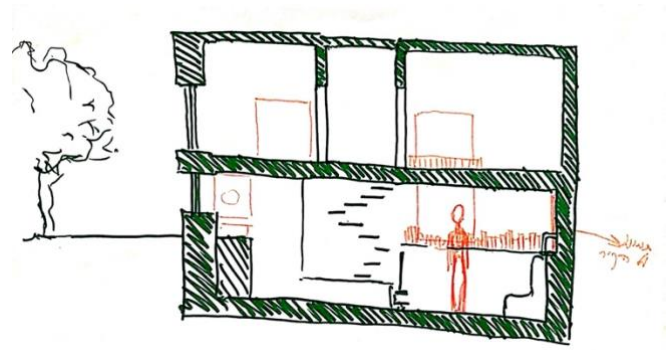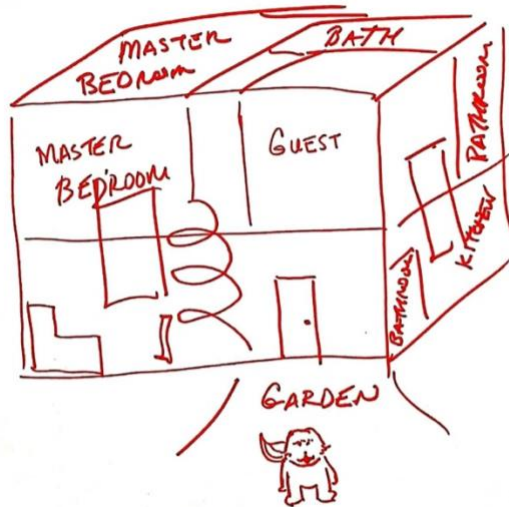
As we can imagine, and as explained by Ron himself (the image on the left), the place of home has a physical and closed spatial form, one that is protected (also by the dog). For Yehuda (the image on the right), the house is open, like a book, in which he feels comfortable be exposed, in this case, by Airbnb guests. Therefore, both of the partners are experiencing different spatial disturbances. The first (Ron), in the spatial meaning of home, as he closes himself at his room during the morning, avoiding the guests. And the second, of Yehuda, whose professional-image of hosting, changes his emotional state as well, but in a different manner of the sensation, that lead him to be more professional and to behave more 'appropriately'. Both of their emotional responses, lead to spatial yet subtle changes, and their final image and perception of home. In the 2nd stage, guests create modification in the way space is seen and felt, as in the cases of Sonya and Yehuda and Ron.

Material modification in the form of space - A place, in a space, is indeed an accumulation of memories and events, however, it is also a scene, that aesthetically fits the image of the place and the growing thought of a space as a certain place. In this sense, in the 2nd stage, reports from the cases imply that gradually, the domestic space begins to change aesthetically[96]. An aesthetical

96 To recall, the 2nd stage is identified by unnoticed modifications of home and of the feeling of home for the SAH. Methodologically, it could be considered problematic to refer to unconscious experiences in such qualitative work. Alas, the notations that change are subtle yet occurring unconsciously, and I have obtained them through three kinds

change of the spatial form could be expressed by pictures that have been removed from one or more spaces, objects with a sentimental value which have been emptied of their value or meaning, or room arrangements that slowly change from a scene of hospitality and welcoming guests to a functional approach. To understand the strength of such changes, it could be useful to read the way Ahava (J14) is referring to an image that was hanging on the wall of her Airbnb room: *"... Take this map of Jerusalem, for example, it is a very political map…I know who took it and why he did it and so the context is very political. It is close to my heart, it is me! But when I went on my trip to Canada using Airbnb, I understood that is not the kind of things…what people hang, they hang pictures of flowers or birds, Beautiful things ... So then I realized why I took it out of the room, because you bring people home with you, you don't have to provoke or challenge whoever comes ... I have a picture of the wounded warrior, a picture from Yemen, that a woman holds him ... it is full of beauty and love ... And people who come to see will clearly say they are both Muslim ... So, if I put it in the room, then people would think they were being challenged. Once my son brought something with the symbol of the Tibetan struggle, I would never put it in a public area of the house, I put it in my room on the inside…"*

Ahava, in her 80s, is very conscious about how home has changed for her, and especially those spaces that are allocated for guests. Alas, she explains that a conscious state was absent at first, in addition to her (past) technological difficulties, her need for control, and her willingness to change home for Airbnb which was high, unaware and misunderstood.

The accumulation of a new history - So far, space as a place has changed, mentally, emotionally, and esthetically. Alas, the main core of this change lies in the core of its establishment, events that allow a state of mind that is unique to this space alone. SAH, naturally, collect many new events during their hosting, which are usually remembered well, as they are not at ease during the time of hosting. What used to be a special event, of a stranger being hosted in their home, has turned into a constant state of hosting in the beginning of the 2nd stage, losing from its uniqueness. In this stage, negative events, often big ones, do not lead to big changes. Alternatively, SAH are exposed to a possibility in which those events would change their view towards the place they call home. A good example of the subtle, yet significant, meaning of such events could be understood through

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of data: (1) direct reports by SAH who were after the 2nd stage, describing different changes, subtle or unnoticed, until a certain point (3rd stage), (2) text examinations that demonstrate a 'chain' of small changes which the SAH were not aware of, and (3) ethnographic work, which, with the help of SAH, could be deducted to events which occurred in the state of mind of SAH during my stays with them.

the view of Brigida (L32): *"... The website has changed a lot, at first, I was hosting six years ago. The goal was to create collaborations and interactions with guests, today it is different. They come and have no desire to talk to you, they are even surprised that you are at home at all. They don't understand why I give them tips, they're not used to it. They just rent an apartment, they don't think about the interaction and don't want them. I explain to them that we share the bathroom cause it is not even clear…"*

Brigida, in this conversation, claims that at first Airbnb was not like that, but viewing her profile suggests that it actually might have been so from the beginning. In fact, Brigida did not notice how slowly her feeling of comfort has changed, making it feel natural to her when in the view of her guests, her bathroom is not her own bathroom, when her position as a host, as perceived by the guests, is not as her position at home, and finally, when her home is not what they see as her home. These gaps and the events that express these gaps, seem to the SAH, anecdotal, semantical, even linguistical. However, when reaching the 3rd stage, the turning point, the changes have already become developed and rooted in space and accepted by the hosts.

- **Functional modification**

The domestic space in western cities nowadays is considered a closed and sacred place of privacy. Over time, the house has changed and has been divided into different sections and different functions, which have significantly contributed to the way in which home is viewed as a whole. In these findings, some of those functions or rooms of functions are vivid, showing a colorful collage of the way people use home in general and the way SAH are being shaped to use it, differently.

In this section, I would display an image of the change of functions by following the most affected functions and spaces inside the house, emphasizing the difference between a set of common practices and how they are maneuvered, in this stage, not by a calculated and discussed decision-making. But rather, by the sum of daily and spontaneous decisions, that only over time, become static and final[97].

The living room - The living room is considered, by far, the most important space at home. It is as such, because for many, including SAH prior to their hosting, the living room is the adequate

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[97] In this theme I am focusing on homes in which a central big room is located in the entrance, and a mini corridor, or none at all, leads to the other rooms. In the 7th chapter – *'Bull in the china shop'*, I would discuss different house settings and their change at the turning point.

space for most functions and activities. It is where familial and social gatherings and activities take place, it is where the host shares mutual moments with their loved ones. It is a place of consumption of entertainment, but it is also the place to read a book, watch TV, listen to music, or even play video games. It is a place of intimacy, for the family to spend time together, or partners. Such intimacy includes wearing 'comfortable' clothes (or little, or none at all), and the possibility of creating sexual activities. The living room is also the place where many people are accustomed to eating in (sometimes, during consumption of entertainment), if of light meals or heavy ones. While the bedroom is the place for sleeping, many SAH describe the living room as a place of rest, where they would take naps, pointing out the importance of the sofa as the main and most important item in the house, or the item that is most crucial for their sense of home. Finally, many also describe the living room as a place of work, in which they have the space and often, also the utilities to create a productive work environment.

The many functions of the living room are probably what makes many of the SAH consider the living room the most important part of the house, and more importantly, what makes them feel most at home. Alas, in the 2nd stage, SAH also consider this space, together with its functions, as most affected. In this stage, the living room often, gradually, becomes neglected. Over time, SAH do not feel comfortable in the living room, as in most houses, this room is connected to the entrance door, and the room is exposed to traffic that cannot be foreseen nor controlled.

As a result, consuming entertainment is reduced over time, and in other times it is moved to other spaces, if at home (usually – the bedroom), or outside of it. Intimacy, with its different aspects, is almost entirely considered inappropriate and even strange. Eating times are reduced as well, moved to the kitchen and more often, outside, and light meals are reduced or lose their rituality in the living room. Work is often disturbed, and the living room is replaced by coffee shops or the bedroom. In most cases, the movement of functions from the living room to other spaces damages the experience of the functions, or it leaves the SAH without a replacement for the functions all together. Alas (and contrary to patterns after the turning point, the 3rd stage), while functions have been reduced and even cancelled, as the use of the living room and the presence of SAH in that space starts to dim, the living room turns into a big white elephant.

Such is the case of many of the studied SAH, in all cities, including the mini-case of Aurora (L37). Aurora, in her fifties, has decided to make a change in life and start, at the age of 50, her doctoral degree in education. Aurora lives in one of the quieter and more familial areas of Lisbon, Estrela,

she owns a luxurious penthouse whose living room is occupied with an expensive surround music system, and a big television, along with a prestigious sofa set, lighting, and artwork.

Living room (and stairs to the Airbnb room) of Aurora (L37)[98]

Nowadays, Aurora admits that her hosting prevents her from enjoying her living room, and that she hardly uses it. The proximity of the living room to the entrance door, and to the only bathroom in the house, has led Aurora to feel uncomfortable to consume entertainment or to eat in the living room. As such, many functions have been reduced or moved to her current boyfriend's house. In the case of the living room, as Aurora demonstrates, it is the actual presence (or traffic) of guests that makes it neglected, but it is also what leads the SAH to behave according to their own perception of the image of a host. Alas, in a wave-shaped intensity of hosting, a SAH is required to be a host and not a resident, in their experience, on a daily basis, 24/7. Aurora has tried over time to find the right balance for her or to reduce the presence of guests by forbidding them to use

[98] Still images were edited to avoid identification.

the living room, a decision that did not result in a change of her approach towards that space, or of her experience of it, an understanding which many SAH come to realize only on the 3rd stage.

The kitchen - While the living room is considered the soft belly of home, as it is located in the center of the house, and attracts so many functions, the story of the kitchen is completely different and attracts entirely different problems. The kitchen is the place where food is cooked and prepared, a ritual or a practice that is considered by many of the SAH the homiest ritual of all, especially in cases in which SAH do not live alone. Apart from food making, SAH tend to enjoy a few other activities in the kitchen, such as eating, and especially the ritual of drinking a hot drink on the kitchen table.

Interestingly enough, the kitchen is one of the most discussed themes regarding the boundaries of the SAH towards Airbnb guests, and one of the first ones to change after the 1st and 2nd stages. In the kitchen, it is not the presence of the guests that is found difficult for most, but the guests' preparation of cultural foods. In all three cities, Asian cooking was found disturbing and invasive, but it was the cases of Milan and Lisbon that were more rigid and decisive about the use of the kitchen, and in setting rules for that space in earlier stages[99] (or at the turning point).

Cases have reported struggling with issues of food-making times and trying to work out a way to separate the use of the kitchen (if allowed at all) between hosts and guests. Unlike the living room, the kitchen is perceived as a space in which only one meal could be prepared at a time, and therefore hosts often feel disturbed when their schedule is violated by the needs of guests[100].

In the 2nd stage, the kitchen becomes most discussed as SAH tend to be more aware of its disruption than of other spaces. Alas, even with a higher level of awareness, until the turning point of the 3rd stage, decisions are being made and actions are being taken on a daily basis and in an impulsive way. Such is the mini-case of Livia (M47). As in many cases, at one point, also Livia, a 90-year-old woman, has decided to prevent the entrance of guests to the kitchen. For Livia, the reason was that she herself has moved from her bedroom, permanently, to sleep on the sofa in her decorated and renovated living room, that is shared (divided by a table bar) with the kitchen:

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[99] Such findings would be explained more thoroughly when engaging the relationship and interaction between SAH and their guests in the 3rd part of the findings – *'pets are the best hosts'*.
[100] As would be discussed in relevant chapters, the kitchen is also the space in which most disputes occur, if by guests who use the space against the host home rules, by preparing foods that repels the SAH (such as meat, or stews), or by wanting to use the kitchen even if it is not allowed at all.

"...when I'm here (in the living room), I'm fine because everything is here. But of course, the bedroom is very comfortable. Because when you're sleeping there the bed is always ready, while here I have to stop to make my bed every evening. So, it is still another job even if overall, I'm fine here…Yes (Livia stops to ponder), yes, you do less things like other than to go to sleep. So, if you live where I live it is a little messier…The house changes for you when you have guests. It changes and it changes you, so you always need to adjust the feeling according to what happens. At one point I realized that in the morning, when they want breakfast, it felt too penetrative, but I already made a name for myself for my great breakfasts, which means that in the end it is no longer your space. So, I found a solution…".

The breakfast offered by Livia (M47) (on the right image – before the turning point, on the Left image – after the turning point)

The solution was, for Livia, the creation of a 'rolling breakfast cart', which she has, over time, educated her guests to find outside their room every morning, ready for them to eat before going on another day of travelling. While that solution suits Livia (and relates to points given in the state of mind of the 5th stage, the time of our encounter), Livia was able to recall this realization, and to follow her increasing awareness of that disturbance. Furthermore, the mini-case of Livia is important to our point, as the kitchen, seen in many cases, was the catalysator for the initiation of the 3rd stage. A stage that allows finding comfort and stability in her life, but also physically dividing her home into two, while the home space she has got left, was still constantly penetrated.

Bathroom and shower - The last important space that should be noted in this context of the 2nd stage towards the 3rd, is the bathroom and shower, the approach towards it and the changes which occur there. The bathroom and shower were noted mainly by female SAH in regards to issues of hygiene and the use of toiletries by strangers, and noted mainly by men regarding the actual use of the shower and its availability in the presence of guests[101].

Bathrooms and showers, are also a common trigger for initiating a turning point, but in the 2nd stage it usually leads to minor adjustments, in preparation time in the morning, before going to work, or in the routine (or ritual) of getting ready to go to bed. In many cases, SAH hide their precious toiletries (if of an expensive brand or quality or expensive special organic shampoos, conditioners, etc.), and purchase for their guests cheaper, quantity-oriented products, or alternatively, leave the bathroom and shower seemingly 'naked' and unused.

The sense of penetration to the shower and bathroom is described differently as it is reported by female SAH, in a manner that suggests that this area at home should be considered as a 'sub-place', one with preferences of its own, one that also violates the sense of home differently. The bathroom and shower, naturally but importantly, are the only ones in the public space that are shut, usually locked, and bordered. They, perhaps, represent a different part of intimacy, the intimacy of oneself in a space which is unique and single in its ability to legitimize a self-search, care and attention in the physical sense. Tereza (L31[102]) tried to discuss that feeling with me:

"...My problem is that I believe in people, I'm not afraid of people, I have a black belt! So I'm not afraid. The people who host in their home are very special, they are good people, they are good hosts. They have an open mind, it is not easy to have a stranger in your house and to share your stuff. I don't share my bathroom, there is one for the guests. I always give the room or house to the same guest, I never have a division of different guests in the house (at the same time). But most houses do divide, because they have only one, which is very difficult, it is very intimate and very difficult. In my opinion, I can't even imagine what it is like, I've always lived in big houses with several bathrooms, so I've never experienced such a situation. But I will need too, because

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[101] The availability of the shower was found extremely crucial in Jerusalem, as in this case study, like in Israel in general, the common method of getting hot water is by an electric boiler (accompanied, but not always, by sun-heated boiler that is only useful during the long summertime in the Israeli climate). This method requires waiting for 20-60 minutes between showers, and in which hot water is limited. In Lisbon and Milan, as is accustomed in Europe, water is heated by gas, and is normally constant and unlimited. The scenario in Jerusalem naturally generates problems for hosts and for guests.

[102] Tereza's story is a very significant story of an Airbnb host, and would be discussed furthermore in the 9th chapter – *'Sleeping with the enemy'.*

my work is unstable, there are some good months as today, and there are fewer good months…so I would need one day to settle…"

Tereza, interestingly enough, protests the thought of being afraid of strangers that could endanger her, as a host and as a woman, and that is despite the fact that since her boyfriend has left, she encountered numerous occasions of single men and groups of men who have tried to lure her into romantic or sexual interactions, to the point that she had to ask her ex-partner to agree (which he did, as they are still friends) to be written as a resident and her partner again, just to 'scare off' opportunistic males. Nevertheless, for Tereza, it is the bathroom that holds a deeper unthought of penetration, one that she admits she would have to surrender to as rainy days, in her view, are sure to come.

3.3   The white elephant in Alessio & Giovanna's home

The themes and patterns in the 2nd stage, as presented and described so far, are all defined by the independent nature of the experiences that are manufactured and absorbed into SAH's daily routine, as a result of the increasing and eventually steady level of rhythm and intensity. This wave-shaped intensity of hosting, as experienced by the SAH, should be viewed as one that thrives, first and foremost, as a result of the inability of hosts to separate their routine life without guests, to their life with them (even when they are not present). The result is a constant but implicit change which is unlike other patterns that SAH experience. In this case, the nature of the struggle is of SAH directly with their homes, as they mentally, emotionally, and even ideologically treat home and what is in it differently. This change is evidently necessary for their ability to imagine a new 'place' of home, while baring the loss of the previous one.

In this sense, Alessio & Giovanna's home is a fine, perhaps extreme, case of home space that has lost its functions, its homey and planned purpose, becoming a non-place inside The place, home. Alessio & Giovanna (M36) are a recently new nesting couple, after living in separate houses for a few years outside Milan. When the moment was right, as Alessio, in his mid-thirties (so is Giovanna) has established a tenure career in a media company, and Giovanna herself has found a steady and intriguing job, they have decided to move together and create a new family, in one of the centers of Milan – the diverse populated and hectic long street of Viale Monza. The new home, as they imagined, would be the space in which big long planned ambitions could come to life. Those aspirations were mostly invested in the living room, which was designed by themselves,

preparing a romantic and spacious room for intimacy, consumption of entertainment, and creative work on sketches and designs. Alas, living in Milan is expensive, and Alessio's history with CouchSurfing has led him to look with Giovanna for houses that could endure incoming guests[103]. Alessio described to me that experience and what their relationship with their home looks now right now:

*"...When you host, a year is a lot. We are slowly tidying up this house, it is not yet tidy, but the guest room is similar to ours, the same, actually. The guest has his own separate toilet...**but what, in order to get in and out they have to go through the living room**, so the living room for us is less private. In reality, what happens is that this kitchen here is private, so along with the website, we have no real contact with the guest, as opposed to CouchSurfing which is where you become his friend ... and therefore ... you do not feel free ... It is a real professional hosting, not just...you know, hosting. Here it is really business, and we have a lot of guests, so there is not really the time to make real contact with the guests who come.... **As a matter of fact, in the living room I constantly staying less and less... I just don't feel comfortable there**...because you think about the evening that you are tired and you want to rest and relax on the couch, then suddenly a person you don't know comes in. You feel the space is not yours, which is semi-private and semi-public...we rarely sit in front of the television, we rarely do it ... Anyway, we're here in the kitchen most of the time...".*

The fascinating case of Alessio & Giovanna is important, because it manages to catch a rare moment, in which a SAH arrives at the point of consciousness that a change is to be made. Alas, on the eve of the turning point, Alessio & Giovanna are torn between recognition and reaction, which is, methodologically, an extremely useful image of observation.

The conditions leading Alessio and Giovanna to mobilize from the living room (left image) to the mattresses in the kitchen, a small but significant change, are at the core of the mechanism in which the 2nd stage operates on SAH. In the next theme, I would discuss the findings that have shed a light on the micro and personal patterns that bring SAH to behave upon and to react to those home modifications, until the 3rd stage.

[103] Alessio's view on the movement from CouchSurfing to Airbnb, as of others, would be discussed in the 5th chapter – *' the power of the lightning'.*
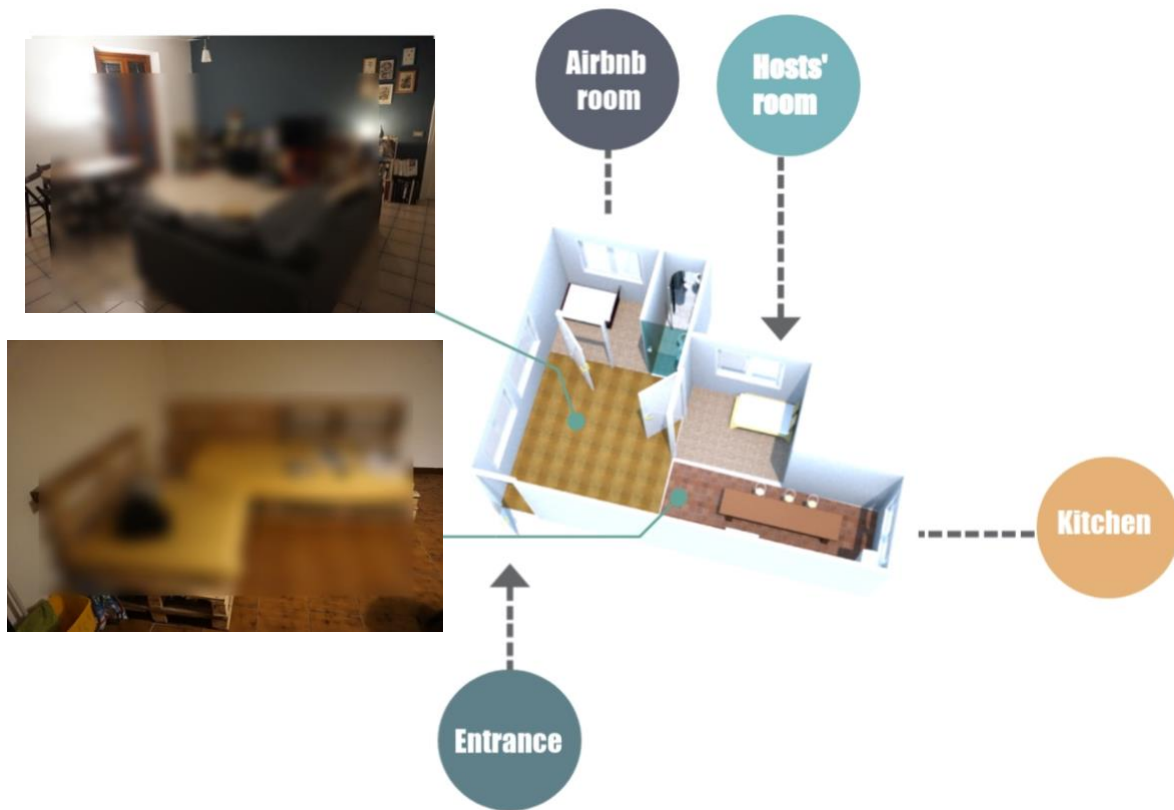
3.4   Patterns of behavioral change

According to the basic concept that lies in the process of the 2nd stage, it can be claimed that there are three main factors which affect SAH. (1) The redesigning of home, according to the perception of hosting (as discussed in the 2nd chapter of the findings and would be discussed furthermore in the next fourth chapter), and according to the presence of guests, (2) the interaction between SAH and guests (which would be discussed in the next part), and (3), the influence of Airbnb as an active factor and eventually an agency, in the 'say' they have on decision making in the domestic space of SAH (which would be discussed in the next chapters, and especially in the 5th chapter – *'The Power of the Lightning'*).

In many cases, the combination of all of these factors leads to a positive outcome, in which a SAH could experience a decent income while enjoying multi-cultural events and interactions. Alas,

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104 All 3D designs were made by the author in the freeware "Sweet Home 3D" by using sketches made by the participants themselves, photos and the personal notes (and memories) from the ethnographic work.

patterns that have been revealed so far, show that in most cases, the accumulation of external factors, as well as natural spatial modification, turns into a distortion of the daily lives and the ability to emotionally, as well as mentally, 'consume' the important components of home, and especially as an emotional contradiction to the public space.

In the 2nd stage, the intensity of hosting turns into patterns of modifications, which were described above. Alas, while modifications take place, the reactions of the SAH are still to be discovered. The reaction in this stage is crucial because it leads to two major outcomes. (1) It is the patterns of reactions that eventually lead to the movement towards the 3rd stage. Understanding the mechanism that has been rooted in SAH and motivated them to respond to certain events and to ignore others, is the way to understand the image of the 3rd stage and the turning point. Therefore, if home modifications (or the other factors that take place in the 2nd stage) are the result of this stage, the behavior, the reaction of SAH to those modifications, is the one that gives birth to the turning point. (2) By understanding the triggers to react, it is possible to sense and measure the role of home, and the psychological as well as cognitive efforts to protect it, or, alternatively, to accept its loss, by finding substitutes. Hosting via Airbnb, in that sense, is a constant negotiation between one and his, or her, home. This negotiation takes the form, as we will see, of a ritual, with certain settings and implicit as well as visible expressions.

Both, the mental and emotional processes take place in the ritualistic manner of the negotiation, as the physical and spatial expressions all end in the same 'vanishing point'. This, for the SAH, sets a clear image of a reasonable housing condition, as well as a feeling of home (if at all), which is shaped and pursued during the 3rd stage. Finally, the ritual exposes, through a deep observation, how home is so clearly connected to culture, and to the perception of home as one and specific place, and how the biographical course is a major actor in the shaping of such an image.

- **Emotion driven behavior**

In this research, the basic concept that guides the understanding and interpretation of data, reports and ethnographic work, is that unlike the urban and public sphere, it is driven, it is aware of and it focuses on the emotional state at home among the people who live in it. Following such an approach has helped with creating an understanding about the emotional state of mind of SAH towards hosting in different stages of hosting, and towards home in the different stages. Emotions,

by using a deep observation, has been discovered as the core mechanism that triggers it and calls for reaction.

As explained, the level of intensity in the 2nd stage leads to a 'habituation' of certain compromises towards the use of home and the 'sense of home'. Alas, it is important to emphasize that what would be shown in this theme, is the evidences that SAH **usually** react in the face of an emotional state, a sensual one, and only as a third and last motivation, the will to improve hosting and guest experience at home. Some emotions are fundamental in the reaction process of the SAH.

The centrality of embarrassment - In the 2nd stage, the most apparent emotion in the ritual of negotiation between SAH and their home, is the feeling of embarrassment. It was Scheff that has already identified (along with Goffman) the importance of embarrassment as a social tool that serves as a punishment mechanism in social settings. Embarrassment prevents individuals from acting inappropriately in the public sphere, and thereby, preserving the social order and distribution of social capital.

The appearance of embarrassment in the domestic space is the result of the creation of social settings in private spaces, spaces which SAH used to use as a haven from the social settings outside of it. Furthermore, and while the properties of social settings which are created through interactions would be discussed in the next part, embarrassment is also the creation of events that did not actually occur, but rather, are only the idea of it. Embarrassment, in addition, is also the result of spaces that change and functions whose legitimacy becomes unclear.

Such is, for example, the frank description of Mina (M45) to the pros and cons of hosting via Airbnb: *"... One of the hard things is that we are both pretty impulsive, and we have to fight quietly, to whisper, and this is really difficult. But the truth is that this is not the only problem, the bigger problem is that you can't moan, like really moan, because there are no doors going down the stairs to our area, there are only some kind of sheets...So this thing is really annoying, because you have to be quieter. We like to be pretty loud, so we don't like to fuck when there are guests because it feels very uncomfortable, awkward you know? It is disappointing a bit, but it is worth it, how to state it...**The disruption of this to my life is little comparing to the money we get...".***

Mina, in her late twenties, sees herself as an open minded and free spirit, who works in a tourist office during the day, and in a sex shop in the evening, a sex shop that calls for the liberation and support of the female orgasm. That is why she felt comfortable to share her experience in that matter with me. Nevertheless, in the social scene, meaning, in the presence of guests, having

intercourse the way she likes it becomes embarrassing and inappropriate. In addition, Mina does not pretend to reduce her sexual time to make the guests feel at ease, it is the emotion of embarrassment that leads her to restrain herself despite the legitimacy and 'normality' of such actions in her own bed and in her own home.

Mina is also a fine example of the conflict between home setting, agency, and the social settings which have been forced upon her. As already shown, also Mina is at the point of awareness, a point that suggests the arrival of a possible turning point.

The compliance with fear - Another important emotional state is the one of fear. As discovered, the 1st stage is defined by fear and concerns towards security issues, sexual and gender risks, and sentimental or financial fear for the house and the belongings in it. In the 2nd stage, it is possible to detect, as it has also been reported by SAH participants themselves, the reduction of such fear. Such a reduction does not come without a price, as it leads to personal processes of compliance to the possible risks, habituating them, and using percussions when still necessary.

While embarrassment acts as a social tool, and the most effective one, fear plays the role of a defense mechanism, one that is effective in the right setting and context. Alas, as the image and use of home is changing, and turns into one of a public, or a semi-public space, SAH tend to reduce the sense of fear by increasing a 'prepared' mind-set, a mind-set that helps expect an unpredictable, dynamic and constant sense of the space.

In that sense, fear is now a trigger to complying to a social and public order, which supports the reduction of emotions and the reduction of reactions to emotional and social stimulations, ones that used to be rare and unique before the wave-shaped intensity. To perceive such an outcome, it could be useful to acknowledge the approach of Karin (J06), an Israeli woman in her forties, who has, over time, changed her terminology towards what is home to her: *"... Yes, but you know, I tell myself to reassure myself that the sofa can be replaced after a few years. The carpet can be replaced…**everything can be changed**…but it is not just the material stuff you know, sometimes, the air smells heavy in the apartment. So I buy these extracts of natural scent, you know. The sticks. This smell is awful, but I buy these extracts and then eh ... It is okay, there are methods to deal with the smell. I also just have an incense that I sometimes light but I am not very connected to this spiritual idea that I really make it, but it is a wonderful idea…but eventually, once I made this change to think of home as a property and not a home, it made it very easy for me to say, it is okay, I can handle it…".*

Karin example is important, as it represent a few patterns that were detected throughout the research. The first was found in all cities, and it is that compliance with fear is connected with the reduction of the sentimental, emotional, and financial value of home. Secondly, Karin did not only reduce the value of home, but she has also changed her perception of home from a sentimental and familial connection, to a business one. Karin laughed with me about how her parents pressured her to buy a house, hoping that a house would also lead to a home, and a family that is yet to come. For Karin, she could not bear the thought of staying put in one place, until she began seeing it as an investment, a realization she has crossed upon during hosting, and her fear of hosting.

Last but not least, Karin also mentioned her effort to perform a spiritual cleansing of her home. Such an activity was detected especially in Jerusalem, and should be treated as another emotional behavior, which would be displayed shortly.

First signs of fatigue and exhaustion - Fatigue, together with the emotions of embarrassment and fear, should be regarded as the tringle of the most basic and most acknowledged emotions which SAH feel during their entire ASEP cycle. Fatigue, in the 2nd stage, is considered relatively minor in the experience of the SAH, and is connected directly to the seemingly abrupt notion of a steady and intense business, and to the presence of strangers at home.

In this stage, reports of exhaustion are not necessarily described with relation to the work of hosting, or to intense interactions. Alternatively, it is the expression of the adjustments to the modification around the house. That point is quite crucial, as SAH at this point do not 'blame' nor refer or connect the fatigue with the experience of hosting. While they are not conscious to this relation, they do indeed act upon it (by reducing interaction, mobilizing themselves inside and outside home, etc.).

While the reported levels of fatigue were relatively low, indications that they are with much significance to the establishment of the turning point were found in many of the mini-cases. Such as the one of Brigida (L32, paragraph 3.1), a woman in her fifties, who lives in Lisbon and hosts at home due to issues with her position as a journalist. Brigida shared with me a story that connects the modification in her living room with this sense of indirect fatigue:

"... I want to sit in the living room and watch TV, so I have to feel comfortable, and it is not easy. So I can't walk around naked, and I have that kind of cover on me if I walk around. I'll tell you, I was 50, and they were 30, 35 maybe ... I had a silk robe, not very short, but still silk, and no bra of course, because, I just got up, and forgot to put the cover on me, and I was still sleeping, I didn't

*think about It... And I was walking in the hallway and bumped into them, and the boy was 35, they were young. I mean, I was young as well (laughing), and the boy saw me and said, 'Oh my God, I can't look'. He was really surprised, and the woman after that was very cold with me, because in my opinion the boy was a little freaked out by all this. **And I said no, enough of that, I'll pay more attention to the cover. It was like that, it was tiring, but hardly noticed it at first.** I just forgot because it was too hot. And I was tanned, a slightly sexy situation was actually created. And the same thing, I do not agree that boys will wear boxers, I do not say, but I say if I see it, because I do not want them to be naked at my home, **because they want to do what they do at home, but this is not their home it is my home** ...".*

The living room of Brigida (L32), a space of embarrassment and fatigue

The story of Brigida, should be understood in the frame of the intimate and embarrassing unique preferences of a host-guest conflict, which indeed, eventually leads to a change in interaction, but it is first triggered by the presence of the SAH in their own home and the modifications of home and its norms, for both sides. Focusing again on the hosts, reveals something new, as Brigida reacts with embarrassment to the interaction of the three. Because if the guests would not have reacted to the image of the underdressed Brigida, she would have felt comfortable and especially,

confident with her look in her own house, as she is aware of the fact that it is her house and her rules.

Alas, it is the very presence of rules, or new adjustments, that she had been forced to apply on herself and on the spaces, she used to enjoy and consume home time, which have created a fatigue for Brigida, who is now required, according to her own demands, to be more aware, even in the very waking moments from her sleep. This need, to be conscious, careful, and attentive to what the house 'demands' from her now, has created this exhaustion for Brigida, an exhaustion she hardly understood in real time.

- **Sense driven behavior**

The second important trigger or drive for reaction by SAH (apart from triggers which are driven by the other factors – guests and Airbnb), is the sensual factor, which plays a major role in the way SAH perceive home in the 2_{nd} stage. Home, contrary to the urban and public space, is defined by the need and possibility of an attentive state of mind, whose direct meaning (by the work of Simmel, 1950), is the ability to notice, absorb, and react to more sensual stimulations.

Alas, the home of SAH, as we learn, is being shaped to be different from the standard home, as it contains much more traffic, social settings, unpredictable and unsteady rates of those sensual stimulations, that lie on the natural and structured differences between different guests[105]. As a consequence, SAH experience an interesting conflict (which is resolved at the turning point), in which home changes to a non-triggered space, but the physical habituation of home still requires a high level of attention from the SAH. At the turning point, spatial as well as mental and emotional modifications are being actively made by the SAH, who shapes home to a semi-public space, which leads to a practical outcome of a lower level of attention to sensual stimulations.

In the 2_{nd} stage, therefore, SAH are attentive to sensual disturbance more than SAH in the 4_{th} stage, and those are an active actor in behaviors, that like the emotional drives, have a key role in the image of the turning point. The sensual stimulations could be noted as follow.

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[105] The discussion about guests, types and different influences guests have on the SAH, would be expanded in the 6_{th} chapter – ' *If on a winter night a traveler'*.

Visual disturbance - First, it was found that visual stimulations are the ones that trouble and triggered SAH the most. The visual stimulations derive from the very fact that it is the visual sense that 'alters' a private scene making it a social one. The presence of guests, whether they are present at the moment or not and even before the possibility of an interaction of any kind, dramatically increases the embarrassment level of the SAH, who perceive their position as a caretaker. One that is judged by their appearance, behavior and often, as seen by many SAH, by their professionalism.

The visual stimulation is considered among SAH as the most obvious one (but in many cases, less obvious for the guests themselves), which is taken for granted. Practically, it is the one that helps SAH in the 2nd stage make a separation between their 'formal work' as hosts and their personal or family and homey routine. Therefore, while SAH are partially aware (in this stage, and fully aware in retrospect) to this separation between their behavior and emotional state, it is only when they reach their 3rd stage that they become conscious to the fact that the separation itself is not possible, and look for ways to reestablish that separation, or, in most cases, to integrate the two modes (work and home), as compromises are being made in both settings. Meaning, the domestic space is less domestic, as therefore, the style of hosting, in based on less domestic values, and more on business type of accommodation.

In order to understand the extreme impacts which visual triggers could lead to, it is possible to deeply examine the unusual ethnographic and personal experience I had one Christmas eve. Irene (M09), a woman at her fifties, lives, as Alessio and Giovanna, in the hectic yet popular street of Viale Monza in Milan.

Irene's mini-case is considered, for me, a dramatic moment in my thirty days of ethnographic work in Milan, and perhaps one of the most dramatic ones in the entire ethnographic realm. Irene welcomed me to her home on Christmas eve, a particularly sensual kind of home. As we can capture from the image of Irene's home, the first Airbnb room, the one I was accommodated in, sits in the heart of home, without a physical door to the hallway, and in front of the staircases leading to the second floor. Alas, the uniqueness of the apartment, is not only that the Airbnb room has no door, but also that the wall between the room and the kitchen is lower than the ceiling, leaving enough space to feel visual and sound penetration.

The house of Irene (first floor, M09)
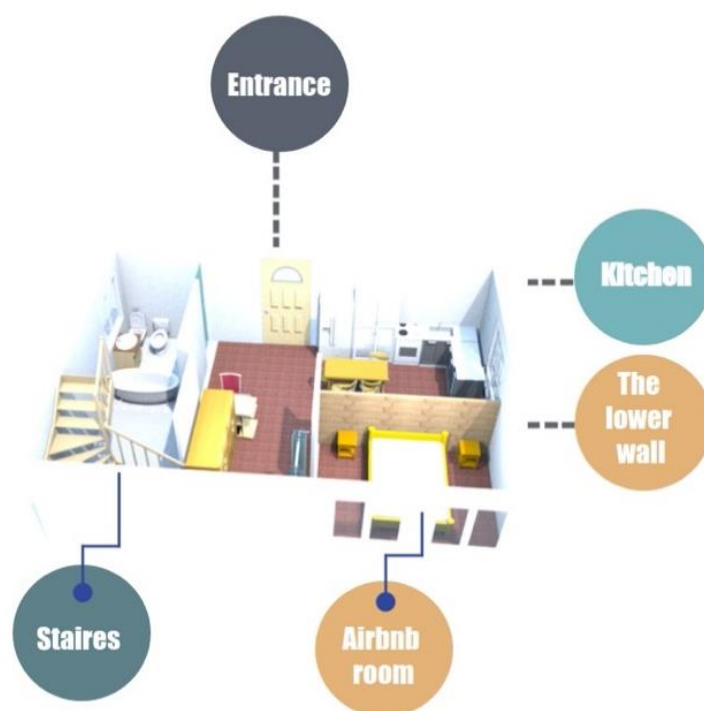
Irene raises her young son with her boyfriend although they do not live together, making them zigzag between homes daily. Her older daughter lives on second floor with her boyfriend, and they share the floor with the second Airbnb room (which was occupied on that night by two young Chinese girl-friends). Irene, a heavy smoker, delivered through the entire evening I had spent there, very strong and difficult odors of smoke. She kept me awake at night because of her impossible decibels of phone messages and calls, and terrible and even worrisome heavy coughs, which lasted all night, as she was sleeping on the kitchen sofa which was adjacent to the lowered wall.

"...in a point of exhaustion, I understood that going to sleep now would be impossible, as our shared light was still on, the Christmas tree which was in the kitchen and was covered with extremely strong and threatening colorful flickering lights had entered the room and my eyes, and the noise from her phone and her coughs didn't give me any signs of remission. So, I decided to open my laptop, and try somehow to use the weak internet line to catch one of the holiday NBA games. After a calm half of a festive basketball game, which helped me lower my heartbeat rates, Irene asked, a bit agitated, if it is okay to turn the light off. I immediately agreed, and continued watching the game in the dark, while the flickering and still frightening colorful lights from the tree were visible in the room. Irene's coughs continued all night, along with strong and awakening

snores, which made the next morning feel like a refreshing exit into the cold sun…". (From note M09).

The Airbnb room, the lower wall,

and the shared light bulb, in Irene's home (M09)

Aside of my personal experience, which continued to more events during that night and the following morning, although less relevant to this current discussion, it is with importance to notice the special and somewhat extreme conditions which Irene herself experiences in the presence of any guest. While it could be useful to discuss the motives leading Irene to decide to sleep in the kitchen on that particular holiday night, without her partner and small child, there are indications that her vision of Airbnb as her only income and job, has led her to stay, and monitor her home, which perhaps becomes extremely hectic and catastrophic in her absence, as the agency would move to her young daughter, and her boyfriend.

Focusing on Irene's experience, reveals a difficult reality of visual stimulations, which occurs in the accumulations of the household members and Airbnb guests. This, in time, blunts her grasp of those disturbances, leading her to the turning point of losing home, and to become more and more dependent on the relationship and home of her boyfriend.

Sound disturbances - SAH in the 2nd stage, are quite conscious to their own noise, and therefore tend to reduce the use of function in the domestic space and to control the use of them in timed

frames. Alas, sound as a stimulus, is a major actor in the behavior and the sense of home among SAH. Unlike the visual stimulations, which help the transition between different settings of social comfort and work obligations, stimulations of sounds are much more direct and immediate. A noise erupts, disturbs creates a reaction, and leads to an additional response by the SAH.

Sound triggers are common in most areas of the house, but they differ significantly according to their nature. In the living room, noise eruptions such as traffic of staying and especially arriving guests. This stimulus does not refer to check-in rituals, but rather to the common cases in which guests return from their travels at late or unexpected hours. Such a disturbance is hard to control, and some SAH deliver requests and rules on entering at different hours. Requests not to shut doors, to be quite at late hours, or to forbid the entrance of unlisted guests (like friends or lovers of guests).

On the same orientation, the shower is considered by many SAH as a serious sound disturbance, if because of the noise of the turned-on water boiler, or because of the proximity of their bedroom to the bathroom. As a result, many SAH set rules regarding showering hours, which on the one hand helps them control their own ability to take a shower (in the evening and especially in the morning), but also limits and reduces their own choice and freedom to use the shower as they used to.

The guest bedroom is considered a risk for a potential sound stimulation. In most cases, SAH suffer from noise coming from the guest bedroom, if because of eating in late and quiet hours, or because of small non-authorized parties, either of the guests by themselves, or with additional friends. Only rarely, vocal disturbances in the bedroom are the result of sexual activities.

Such is the mini-case of Ishbel[106] (L30), a Portuguese woman in her thirties, that despite her big and beautiful house, suffers from series sound disturbance.

> "... I don't hear them doing things, well, yes, I hear them fucking and I don't want them to feel bad about it, so I'm going somewhere else, to the living room or out, because it is not good for me and it is not good for them. And that the problem with these rooms that are all connected with a door. I try to deal with it by putting things in between, but if I talk to you now, they will hear it. So, you have to somehow achieve a level of intimacy, and a lot of friends come to me and say, how do you do it? How do you get people into your house? Certainly, the money helps to deal with it, but it is not enough, you should also know people you connect with. This is also very important.

[106] whose important story would be expanded in future chapters.

But surely this is a combination of my character and my problems with the structure of the house…".

Ishbel is an important example, because this particular SAH extremely suffers from hosting, if of single rooms in her house or when she leaves it empty for guests who take the entire home. Alas, she herself notes that she does not have real financial needs, and that her main purpose to start hosting was to enforce a social reality which she feels she cannot build otherwise. Sound disturbances, though less of sexual activities, trigger her, unlike Irene (M09), not into a social state of mind, but into losing her own comfort and homeness at home. Therefore, once again, the relationship that is maneuvered in such cases, and in such triggers, are not of the SAH and their guests, but of them and their home.

Finally, the kitchen is a major source for noise disturbances, if of guests preparing food or eating it. Alas, their vocal stimulation does not include the cultural aspects of foreign food, as they are expressed better through smell disturbances.

Smell disturbances - Often, as found through discussions with SAH participants, sensual stimulations are the ones that trigger the hardship of combining work at home, and sometimes they become immediate disturbances to the feeling of the hosts at home and to living at home. Smell, in that sense, triggers a unique an important kind of reaction, a culturally oriented one. In many cases, SAH tend to relate smell issues with culture, and to connect between bad smells and different culture.

The Asian kitchen, for example, is considered in all three cities as an odor disturbance, leading many SAH to forbid the use of the kitchen entirely, or restricting it to light snacks and breakfast. Such a notation is important, because of the way SAH have emphasized this matter. What I wish to suggest in this frame, is that strong and difficult odors that are experienced by the SAH, are not only the result of the content of one smell or another, but also, and mainly, the result of a deeper process, which could be divided into two. First, strong odors that have or are perceived as culturally typical smells, revoke or conceal, in the eyes of the SAH, even if temporarily, the cultural base and roots of their own cultural odors, and thereby, making home feel less homey to them.

Many SAH see as part of their motivation spectrum to host, the ability to present and 'advertise' their culture, and to give a good expression of it. Such a vision is found especially in Jerusalem, whose SAH are well aware that for many guests, the visit in Israel brings a first ever encounter with Israelis and with the Israeli, or Jewish, culture. In Lisbon, such an approach was found less

common, but still present (in Milan, most SAH believe that guests know about the Italian culture extensively and they were found less eager to add to that knowledge).

Secondly, the strong and forced penetration of cultural odors into the domestic realm, is often described as negative because of the perception or thought that those odors represent a lesser culture. SAH may perceive the decision not to cook the 'better' local food as an insult, deriving from their cultural narrow vision of experiencing food as part of a guest's trip, and so the approach to it is even more negative.

The kitchen is not the only space that creates a stimulation of smell, which is also often found in the guest themselves or their clothes. Such cases usually relate to people of races or from countries that are considered 'third-world' countries, they are perceived as a 'contamination' to the level of hygiene and the social norms surrounding the issue of hygiene, which is especially relevant to the choices taken on whether to accept or to reject guests with a racial ground.

Other than culture, gender is also a very common ground for smell disturbances, as female SAH tend to think or to experience lower level of hygiene norms from their guests, as Lehava (J02, paragraph 2.2), which we already met in the 2nd chapter, comments:

*"...Look, first of all there is a big difference between a man and a woman. I mean, as **soon as men arrive I'm under pressure**, at first, I wrote that I accept only females but I realized that they do not pay attention, they do not read the details...Then I saw that men do order anyway so I say okay, men will come. Because I need someone to come, and then I decided to drop the prohibition ...I have a washer and dryer here, but I don't allow guests to touch them and I don't say that I have...The machines are very delicate, they're not the best kind, they're not durable. Now, a black guy came and used it, without soap! he didn't ask me. He's a huge person. **The laundry just smelled awful! I mean around the house, the smell at home was very unpleasant**. I explained to him, I leave soap even though I don't...I left soap especially...I don't know if you know the sage of the American Indians...someone taught me how to do it. Not that there is much to learn, but it doesn't matter. Usually when someone leaves I go with the sage and I go all over the house, in the corners, all this and like Cleanses the energy...for me, it is symbolic of preparing the house....letting go of old smells...".*

Lehava, is, like Karin (J06), uses cleansing to clear the emotional, cognitive and even spiritual influences of the smells that are left behind, as she is required to handle their cultural, and especially gender-oriented, influences on a daily basis.

3.5 Discussion – 'White Elephants'

In this chapter, I wished to follow the work of Scheff and Goffman, to understand the emotional state of SAH, while focusing solely on the modification of home, and on the emotional state of SAH affected by that modification, and by the presence of guests. Findings in this chapter show, that home is going through a process that changes it physically, but it also shakes its unique preferences and the balance of the everyday, which allows the basic separation between the urban space, and the private and domestic one.

Home, for the SAH, can no longer be perceived solely as a geographical space that holds all the meanings of home. In exchange, other spaces become substitutes, and defined spaces within home are transferred, or remain deprived, if in the cognitive sense, the practical one, or the emotional and sentimental aspects. Home begins to look different, and over time it collects more and more events and experiences which are due to change the perspective of the SAH towards home, and reduce the value of home itself, and what is in it.

In each of the different spaces around home, it is possible to encounter other functions that are distorted or deprived from the SAH, who, over time, neglect different spaces at home, which in turn, become white elephants. Above others, this is particularly the case of the living room, which in most cases, is the place in which SAH (as most others) invest the most and wish to express the most of themselves and their personality. The inability to settle the image of SAH's expectations and image of this space, and the limitations that Airbnb hosting brings into the space, turns in the 2nd stage into growing conflicts of the SAH with their homes. Conflicts that are due to reach their climax in the making of the turning point.

The combination of home modifications with the presence of guests, leads to a change of behavior, one that is motivated by emotional and sensual triggers. Emotionally, in the 2nd stage, SAH move from fear to a feeling of embarrassment, which follows some concerns and first signs of fatigue. All three lead to a change in behavior, and to a need to reconcile their emotions with a professional appearance and decision making. Emotions, in that sense, are the trigger for moving from one state of mind, a familial and homey one, to another, in which their own vision and the expectations of guests as well as of the website about how it is adequate to host, becomes dominant more than ever before.

Senses, on the other hand, are driven by a more immediate and dynamic set of behaviors, that accumulate with the intensity of hosting and becomes a mental, emotional, and even a cultural

threat to the sense of home, and to the daily use of it. Visual, sound and smell disturbances make SAH question their place in their own home, leading to an environment in which home is no longer taken for granted, completing a complex experience, in which SAH unconsciously debate the place of home in their lives, and get accustomed to a reality in which home and work can no longer be separated. The process given in this 2nd stage and its interpreted meaning, should be understood in a wider perspective, and in relation to previous work.

- **Potential new developments in the public-private urban dichotomy**

Airbnb, as a meteor force in the touristic market, is well established as a catalysator for urban processes, in which many of them have a concrete negative influence on the urban life of locals in different settings (Gravari-Barbas & Guinand, 2017; Cocola-Gant, 2018). Alas, only recently, as previously noted, Airbnb has started to show interest also in its micro-level of the lives of hosts. Previous research has already showed the tendency of hosting via Airbnb to cause significant changes in the perception of home, and in the behavior of hosts (Saturnino & Sousa, 2019; Roelofsen, 2018).

The line of findings displayed in this chapter, manages to demonstrate the mechanism in which a specific point in SAH's hosting cycle (ASEP) delivers not only an emotional response, but also an on-going relationship between the SAH and their homes, which, over time, blurs the features of a domestic space (Somerville, 1992). Eventually, the arrival of the turning point and the accumulation of experiences proves that indeed, as already found only recently, home is changing, but this change does not come without a response. A response which, contrary to what was interpreted so far by the academic research, has personal, emotional, and sensual motives, that the SAH eventually seek to resolve. Not for the sake of their guests, but rather in order to solve the deprivation of home needs and to find a compromise which would allow home to be where work is.

While more findings about the rest of the process should still be demonstrated, it is already possible to claim that the work of SAH in their homes does not resolve into a balance between home and work, and that eventually, the turning point tends to integrate the two, as both work efficiency and home sensing and consuming is damaged.

This very fact, claimed on such a varied population, in the mainstream global tourism, must raise questions about new developments of the seams which divide the urban from the private, ones that technology, over time, already manages to challenge, but today, faces new types of conflicts in new spaces and new situations (Leaning, 2006; Spears, Postmes & Wolbert, 2000). Airbnb is an example and potentially the first to set a foothold of the new urban life in the sacred space of home. Alas, the blurring of the borders between them, calls to question whether the opposite can occur as well, and the private setting could set a foothold in the public realm, and if not, what would be the reaction of the human condition to a reality in which the private space cease to exists, and the evolution of new forms of space are in progress.

■ **Potential new developments in the meaning of 'emotional labor'**

The perception of 'emotional labor', as discussed in recent research, refers to a reality in which hosts are educated to express a professional behavior, by concealing their own emotions. The case of Lisbon, in the work of Saturnino & Sousa (2019), is a perfect example of Airbnb hosts who absorb the civic tourist-oriented state of mind, as they embrace it and suppress natural emotions regarding the happening in their homes. Alas, by following the 'emotional labor' of SAH, Saturnino & Sousa failed to recognize the process in which emotions are not ones which are expressed, but rather ones which trigger a set of actions, that actually defies, and eventually damages the hosting experience that they are willing and able to give.

On the same note, while Roelofsen (2018) managed to achieve deep observations of her participants, she found emotions as an end result, in which a seemingly steady and negative alienation from home is created. In the findings of this work, the point of reference and understanding of the place of emotions are put in a chronological frame, that manages to show how hosting via Airbnb, as a SAH, is a development in which unconscious processes are eventually floating the surface, and a reaction is made.

Therefore, an 'emotional labor' in this context, is not about feelings that are being suppressed and commercialized, but rather the reaction and coping with those feelings. Feelings that are not changed by desire to become professional, but actually quite the opposite, they do not change at all, but instead triggers a behavioral change, that leads to small and eventually bigger, changes of home, and the dwelling at home.

3.6   Conclusions **– There is no shame in changing**

In this second chapter, I asked to display the findings that relate to the core meaning of home modifications which are followed by the progressing emotional state of SAH as they encounter the 2nd stage of hosting – a stage of intense yet steady arrivals of guests.

The findings in this research show a definitional, aesthetical, emotional, and a mental perception of home as it is being shaped to be. All of them are subtle and largely unconscious, to the point of reaching an awareness, which triggers the turning point. Home modifications occur in most spaces inside the house but shine particularly in the domestic and intimate space of the living room. The multi-functional living room suffers the most from the traffic led by the presence of arriving and departing guests, which in turn, loses its intimate preferences, and eventually develops into a 'white elephant'. An emotionally and financially invested space that becomes hardly used.

The core of the process in the living room, as in other spaces of home, is an emotional process in which embarrassment is a key factor in the change of behavior and in the change of perception, and eventually, to the loss of home in its originated and crucial features. Triggered by sensual and emotional developments, home becomes a scene of conflict and debate that is separated from the experience and interaction with the guests themselves, and leads to a change in the direct relationship SAH have with their home.

Such changes are receiving new and first interest in the academic community, suggesting the establishment of new forms of space, which will negotiate what was once a heavily bordered dichotomy between the public and private spaces. One that puts the concept of 'emotional labor' in a new light, as SAH indeed change and shape their home in the image of professional hosting, but do so for the sake of an emotional and mental solution, rather than a business or tourism-oriented line of thinking. This line of thinking, or terminology, is developed over time because of those processes, as progress of the SAH in their ASEP creates new conflicts and new compromises.

Living this charade

Is getting me nowhere

I can't shake this charade

The city's cold blood calls me home

Home it's what I long for

Back home where I belong

The city - it calls to me

Decadent scenes from my memory

Sorrow - eternity

My demons are coming to drown me

Help - I'm falling, I'm crawling

I can't keep away from its clutch

Can't have it, this habit

It's calling me back to my home[107]

[107] Written by Mike Portnoy. Performed by *'Dream Theater'*. From the song: *'Act II: Scene Six: Home'*. Album: *'Metropolis Pt. 2: Scenes from a Memory'*.

4. 'Guest's Best Friend', (or),

Host-Guest Interactions in the Airbnb Service

4.1 Introduction

The understanding of daily lives, or the sociology of the every-day, as already discussed, was envisioned in the work of De Certeau (1985), or Lefebvre (1974), as on-going rituals, which organizes society and determines the non-written rules, the norms, in which an outcome of spatial setting and agency lead to an outcome of those rituals, for the benefit of some and the deprivation of others. Social order, therefore, is the accumulation of space, time, and rituals that allow the negotiation of different values and the conflict between cultures, that strive to challenge the hegemony, with the social tools, cards, if we will, that they were given.

Alas, while this macro view of the every-day is important and relevant, as learned, it both is useful and crucial to understand the micro processes which are part of the every-day in the cyber space, as it is in the physical and offline one. Goffman (1967; 1978), in his works, did exactly that, as he envisioned the every-day by looking at the small and infinite interactions between members of the society. Goffman's dramaturgical theory is based and considered as the most recent development of the Chicago school symbolic interactionism.

Simmel (1950) in his work, has already captured the importance of (micro) face-to-face interactions, and saw the individual in a consistent movement from isolation and into isolation, in the sense of social liberation of behavior and thought, and in the image of the stranger, a role that each individual experiences in terms of closeness and remoteness in each giving situation. People are constantly going in and out in their every-day from different circles that are defined by the interactions within and outside the circle. Interactions that not only influence their behavior, but create an imagination of past, present and future interactions (meaning, expectations), in which one can feel isolated regardless of their current social status and situation (for example, the sense of isolation in a busy train). Simmel describes the Dyad, the smallest social group of two persons,

which in a sense, survives by the sub-awareness of the members of the group, that the leaving of one of them would cause the end of the Dyad, with or without any implications of such possible event.

The Dyad of Simmel is focused on the person's individuality, and on the fashion in which such a two-person interaction influences it, only in a relation to society, or the development of a 'Triad', in which a third factor changes the dynamics between the two, whether this factor is present, or 'imagined' (was present, will be present, or abstractly present). Without the development of the Triad, the Dyad is identified with the uniqueness of the relationship, the view of each other as strangers, and the evolution of a 'relationship', in which ground settings are defined and intimacy is created.

Such an image of the social group is considered, among a few others, the core intellectual base of the symbolic interactionism, that envisioned interactions as a ritual in which mutual symbols and interpretations which are known and accepted by the society, determine the nature of an interaction. Blumer (1986), who initially marked the concept of the symbolic interactionism, describes the interaction as a 'negotiation', in which each party displays their meaning to a given situation and to the events which occur in the situation with the other party. Alas, such a negotiation does not involve the meaning of the situation itself, but, relatively to the personality, position and acceptance of the individual in a given society, the negotiation also shapes and reshapes further negotiations. Meaning, further interactions, and thereby, the image and rituals formed by society. Such an approach was and still is considered central in the sociological debate, as it reflects an image in which society as an entire unite, cannot be measured nor perceived as such, as it is the outcome of the constant and infinite interactions and negotiations which are lived and endorsed in the urban sphere.

Goffman (1967; 1978), as mentioned, developed a theory of a symbolic interactionism of himself, Goffman's dramaturgical theory. According to this theory, the individual recreates themselves by adapting their own image to the one which is expected from them. Between the two parties, there is a mutual data collection, about one's social and economic status, about one's behavior and personality, while comparing the representation of the viewed self with other known 'prototypes', whose role is to create 'shortcuts' of legitimate behaviors and rituals of interaction, that are the enablers of efficient and predictable interaction, and therefore, also an efficient response. Efficient, in social terms (reaching to social goals such as romantic or platonic relationships), or economic

(create economic or commercial agreements). Goffman's social setting is of a 'stage', in which each actor, even in the smallest social groups, like the Dyad, is required to recognize the role they are playing, while negotiating this role to reach better roles of status and to gain social capital.

Goffman sees the importance of the micro-interactions with people as a critical researchable data which is crucial for the understanding of the complexity of social actions and social behaviors. Goffman notes four important aspects of the micro-interactions of the every-day. The technical aspect of a structure of interaction, which is based on the efficacy of the rituals, towards the accomplishment of the mutual (and in part, naturally, contradicting) interests the two hold, and is possible by an accepted setting of negotiation. The second aspect is the political one. Political, in the sense of power, of agency. The political aspect determines what each actor can do in a given situation, and what the punishment system inside the social group could look like (Kivisto & Pittman, 2007).

The third, the structural aspect, is an important one, as it examines the evolution of relationships based on their categorization, in the meaning of the nature of the relationship (romantic, business, friendship, etc.), and the structural roles each is carrying, which influences the shape of the relationship (producer-consumer, dad-daughter, etc.). In the last and fourth aspect, the cultural frame of society itself, which is naturally a crucial factor in the establishment of rules of interactions, is the one that creates a coherent and smooth interactions between strangers, a smoothness that is a necessity for the effectiveness of the urban space of constant consumption[108] (Chriss, 1995).

Airbnb, in the perspective of Simmel and Goffman, is by definition, the creator of interactions of Dyads, or, as it should be assumed, of Triads that function and do not function as a Dyad, in which the development of the specification of a relationship and intimacy is much dependent on the third and imagined party, Airbnb itself, and Airbnb's system. Airbnb should be seen as a third party, in the creation of that triangle, but it is also partially but dominantly the space in which the relationship, the Triad comes to life and is established in the first place.

Research of Airbnb interactions from the point of view of the interaction itself, is quite limited, and could be divided into a few aspects. First, the nature of the interaction between hosts and guests dazzle many researches, who wish to understand the mechanism that allows the legitimacy

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[108] The exploration of the very relevant topic of multi-cultural interaction would be further discussed in 10th chapter of the findings – *'When in Rome".*

of meeting strangers, and in general, creates trust between a host and a guest in such an intimate situation (Celata, Hendrickson & Sanna, 2017; Oskam, J., & Boswijk, 2016; Mittendorf, 2016). Such work studies demonstrate the fashion in which Airbnb creates monetized stability, a sense of community and a review system that helps users trust each other and create consumption. In most cases, such works focuses usually on the guests alone, as there are expected to meet and rely on strangers in an unknown country. Alas, those studies mostly dismiss the very fact that for the host it is even a greater psychological risk, as they are not only exposing themselves to intimate interactions with strangers, but they also expose their home, its safety and the safety of their loved ones (Ikkala & Lampinen, 2015; O'Regan & Choe, 2017).

In other works, the focus on the host is limited to their motivation, as found in one of the fewest works that relate Goffman's dramaturgical theory with the Airbnb experience (Strömblad, & Toh, 2017). In this work, which is based on a netnography of the digital space of Airbnb, while using the theoretical base literature (along with Goffman and the symbolic interactionism) of the collaborative consumption, it was found, that what attracts users is the legitimacy of the service, the fact that it is perceived fair, respectful, and organized by itself. To maintain an adaptive cultural image in the site, hosts are required to display sociality, a motivated spirit to host, with organized, disciplined characteristics. Hosts, so it is demonstrated via the virtual observations, need to learn how to detach from their base cultural compass, and to obtain new values that count and are valued in the frame of interaction between them and the guests. Finally, other than the disengagement with their own cultural base and norms of interaction, hosts learn how to live in a space of uncertainty, of the guests' norms and behavior, as with the image of the guests themselves. While there are some key aspects that can lead to interesting further findings, it is important to remember that the research itself was held without any face-to-face interaction, as the offline arena remains under examination.

In this part of the findings, I wish to unlock the key features of the rituals which are managed and designed by Airbnb, while focusing solely on the interaction between the host and the guest, and by focusing on the host's point of view of the interaction[109]. This part puts special attention to the data collected in the ethnographic work, which has allowed me to experience the interaction with hosts as the second social actor of the Dyad, and by playing my role like the guests. Along with

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[109] Airbnb as a factor and a technological structural shaper would be examined thoroughly in the next chapter – *'The power of the lightning'*.

my own fixed experience of playing the guest, this part is also the result of the 'digital ethnographic' work, in which I have created online interactions with most of the participants. Finally, the research which was conducted for this part was extremely useful regarding reviews. The reviews were helpful, as many of them, reveal (1) stories of interactions between the host and the guest (positive and negative), and (2) the nature of the interaction, its depth and the chronological development of the relationship.

This chapter would display and distinguish between interactions that are vital and structured in the service, and therefore demonstrate a routine and a built-in mechanism of the different stages of the interaction, whatever in the virtual scene or the domestic one, and between the non-structural, casual interactions of guests and hosts. The non-structural events, as it would show, are the heart of the existence and development of the Dyad, as they lack the technical, and from time to time, the structure of the service that the ritualistic interactions have. In the next part, I would widen the view on interactions by extracting from the data the base in which each Dyad depends on, and the terminology of the interaction which is adapted to it. The scale would demonstrate a useful understanding of the meaning of interaction in the daily, specific interaction of each mini-case, but more importantly, the understanding of the 'movement' from one type, or depth of interaction to another, if of the specific studied host, or of a city case study, which can be identified in different levels of interaction that signify a different approach, and thereby, a different integration and influence of Airbnb (among others), on the city itself, public opinion, etc.

Understanding the very nuance of the Airbnb service from the point of view of stay-at-home hosts, like already shown in previous parts of the findings chapter, affects the hosts' emotional state and feelings inside home, and towards guests. Alas, it is more effective than that. It also gives a seemingly first 'thick description' of the Airbnb phenomenon, of the way it is expressed on a daily basis and functions as part of the wave-shaped intensity of the SAH, which could complete a bigger image of SAH situation, and the meaning of that situation, while looking at other and future invasive services of the future of social consumption.

4.2 Patterns of structured and ritualistic host-guest interaction

In this section, a 'ritualistic' interaction would refer to interactions that are planned, and as it would be possible to see, also designed, so they would lead to the best 'results'[110]. This planning of the 'ritualistic' are, naturally, the ones necessary for the fulfillment of the service. If to hand over a key, or to get one back. If to give guidelines and orientation around the house and in the city. Often, the 'ritualistic' interactions are all the interaction there is between a host and a guest, but usually, there would be also the interactions that would determine, among SAH who seek such a relationship, if one Dyad would lead to other, non-ritualistic interactions.

Such an awareness to depth and relation-scope (potential of the relationship), was found correct among most participants (those who were interviewed as well) who sought a social or a cultural value in their Airbnb experience and hosting, and in all cities. However, among female hosts, the level of awareness was not highest then men, but an element of planning was much more evident. Planning, such as inviting for dinner, waiting for the arrival of a guest for a social activity (a glass of wine, a conversation over a cup of tea). Men were found less active and only few were registered in an active (though not planned) intention towards non-'ritualistic' interactions, and with a romantic or sexual intention (a similar number of women were registered with the same approach).

Although the 'ritualistic' interactions are necessary for the establishment of the service, hosts tend and are supported to find solutions for reducing those interactions. The most active player of this reduction of the ritualistic interaction is technology[111]. In addition, the virtual interaction of Airbnb has a ritualistic fashion, but other technologies came to play as well, such as instant messaging and calling, that help hosts and guests adjust their times of interaction or even avoiding it, and the use of spreading market solutions for door keys which are based on passwords or locks, that reduce the need for the ritualistic interactions.

- **The first physical introduction**

The first physical introduction is the most common type of ritualistic interaction, and that is because it is designed to complete a successful deal between the host and the guest, provided by

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[110] By author's intention, I will leave the concept 'results' obscure at this point, as this section is to be displayed by what actually happens in Airbnb's ritualistic interactions, instead of by the interpretation of those interactions, at least until the full picture will be revealed.

[111] As mentioned, this section would focus on the digital platform separated from the active policy of Airbnb, which would be fully represented in the next part.

Airbnb. When this interaction starts normally, it usually begins at the door of the host's home, and the host invites the guest in. At this point, two scenarios can occur. The host would offer a drink (tea, coffee, a glass of water and rarely alcohol), and sit in the kitchen or in another public space. Or, the host would lead the guest to their room. Most would lead the guest their room, and start a process of giving instructions, rules, and agreements with the guest. In the full transcript, hosts would guide the guest about the keys, the rooms that are free to use, the unique method to use them (a shower handle that works on the opposite accepted direction, a boiler half broken which should be lit with a lighter, etc.). The host would continue with some guidance about the neighborhood, and other main attractions in the city, and would check if the guest has any questions.

While this transcript indeed describes the full image of the ritualistic interaction of the check-in, in most cases it is absent, and over time changes, as the host experiences problems with this transcript, and begins changing it. For example, the host focuses on certain rules that seem to them problematic, or purchases, over time, a didactic, and even an aggressive tone regarding a specific issue, or issues (like, slamming doors, making noise in certain hours, taking showers in certain hours, allowing additional non-registered visitors, etc.). The check-in is a 'ritualistic' interaction that sets the tone for the entire experience. Other than the awareness of the hosts to the importance of this first interaction, it is possible to notice a few key features of the check-in as a 'ritualistic interaction':

Texts as a substitute for first interaction – SAH learn over time, and react as an expression of that understanding, that the first ritualistic interaction is one of the most wearing parts of their work, therefore, they tend to find ways to reduce it. One such solution that SAH tend to use, is to write big portions (if not the entire transcript) in different medias, like on Airbnb's messaging system, different instant messaging applications like WhatsApp or Telegram, or physical writing of the transcript in a ring binder, a folder, or one of the most effective and Airbnb's most popular platforms among SAH – the chalkboard (or other modern versions). SAH also tend to use that platform to pass most of the most technical, somewhat negative, or limiting instructions.

Such for example, is the mini-case of Or (J31). Or lives with his boyfriend, while each of them has a room for himself. Alas, over time, and because of the flowing of money from Airbnb, one of the rooms has gone through a change, of losing its appearance of 'someone's' room, and becoming an 'Airbnb room'. *"…Then there are two boards. One in the living room with their own personal work schedule, and also the cleaning duties are written and the upcoming guests, so then was my name*

... and at night, it seems there was no one after me, but in the morning I got up and suddenly saw that a name has been added after mine... and I was sick and thought to ask for a late check-out ... but then I thought maybe this thing about leaving at 11am is critical... The other board was inside the room, on that board they offer you an umbrella, and explain how to use the public transportation card, they encourage you to take whatever you want from the kitchen, or to sit in the living room, it is a very nice board..." (a note from ethnography in J31).

I never actually met Or, in that day I was badly sick, and the keys were waiting for me under the door mat. I entered and crashed in bed, and woke up as Amir, the boyfriend, came back. He said hi, asked if I am okay, and retired to his room. The two boards were not the only visible text and they were focused on reducing interactions. Small notes were found in the kitchen, and on the boiler switch, so people could use those services without breaking them or making Or waste money. The use of notes was found in many homes (although rarely in Jerusalem), and they were ranging from helpful tips, to the more common notes, that demand leaving the public space clean, turn off unused lights, and use water wisely[112].

Unclarity of administrative work – As previously presented, in two of the cities, Jerusalem and Milan, the common knowledge of the tax regulation and guest control is of obscurity, which eventually leads to non-policy, in which SAH do not share their income or the arrival of guests to any authority. In all cities, including Lisbon, a registration of the arrivals is very rare, and guests are not required to leave or to provide a copy of any document or document number. The Airbnb mechanism supports such ritualistic interactions, in which money is never an issue for conversation, or even the last name of the guest. In most cases, the ritualistic interaction is as if the arriving guest is a resident of the household rather than a guest, while the only technical subject for discussion is the check-out time. Although, such an agreement is normally brought up by the guest, and in case the guest wishes to improve their current condition.

One such example is the mini-case of Aaron (J39). Aaron had initiated a discussion with me soon after I ordered for the night, via the Airbnb message service, explaining that this is a new listing

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[112] While the mini-case of Or is pretty rare in Israel, there is a nuance difference between appearances of notes in Milan and in Lisbon. In Milan, the request and demand for electricity saving, water, etc. had evidences that this encouragement by the SAH comes mostly from an environmental ideology, one that connects the actual use of the Airbnb service as a green economy, that should also have expressions in the service itself. Such an approach is the opposite of the approach in Lisbon, where it relates to the vision of Airbnb as a complete and holistic alternative to the hotel industry but especially to the rich, spoiled, and wasteful perceived service offered by hotels. In Lisbon, in most cases, such an approach tends to be with more economic calculations, and the desire to offer an affordable accommodation by cutting and reducing bills.

(and that he himself is new at hosting). Because I ordered only one night, he asked for more money, but as I had no concern of having too few ethnographic cases, I declined, and he did not cancel my reservation so I arrived there as scheduled. Aaron left me the keys in an old shoe in the shoe closet outside the door, and inside, I was welcomed by his addictive cat, and with luxurious toiletries and towels. Products that did not match the tacky, yet homey and hippie typical Jerusalem atmosphere. When we finally met, Aaron did not mention the money he wished to receive, nor did he indicate in any sense that I am staying at a house with rules or norms. Indeed, Aaron had no rules in his house, as to him, the ritualistic interaction through Airbnb had already began with the virtual messaging and ended there. In the morning, I woke up to the sound of the 'Darbuka', a common Arab type of drum, and left to a new setting.

Aaron (J39) spacious living room, where he plays
his Darbuka and the Tambourine (the Israeli Tof Miriam)

Reduction of interaction – While the ritualistic interaction of the check-in is important, in practice, as mentioned, SAH prefer to avoid interaction in cases in which no social value is desired. Such an avoidance is very possible, with the awakening of digital platforms and technological solutions that help SAH have also more liberty in their schedule, and less dependency on guests to arrive on time. But there are more than only technological solutions to avoid interaction. Two

typical and common options for the process of check-in is by using assistants or non-payed helpers who are in charge of that interaction.

The assistants have become an 'institute' in the Airbnb realm, and many hosts find their true financial potential in that route (as official Airbnb co-hosts must be listed as hosts themselves). The co-host reaches an arrangement with the host on their services, which usually include check-ins, check-outs, cleaning, feeding the pet, and communicating problems. The non-payed helper can be a roommate, neighbor, friends, and family. Many SAH who leave their room with the arrival of a guest (as they gave out their only room), delegates the management of the guest to roommates. Alas, the roommates, along with the co-hosts or any other human solution for the check-in, are in no sense obligated or committed to their new role, and therefore, the guest arrives at an unwelcoming home, in which the actor in-charge has no responsibility to Airbnb or to the guests. Such cases were numerous.

For example, in mini-case J35, I arrived at Yuri's home, but the host himself was at work at the time. Although I followed his instructions and took the keys from the mailbox, I could not enter the apartment as it had been locked from the inside, by Yuri's roommate. As the roommate finally realized that someone is trying to open the door, he opened the door for me, and immediately returned to his small room, without saying a single word. Yuri's roommate was not rude, he just did not know any other language but Russian, his mother tongue. What became a problem, as I was still sick, was finding the room without any sheets or even pillows.

Yuri's Airbnb room, as presented in the website and as in fact, I received it (J35)

230
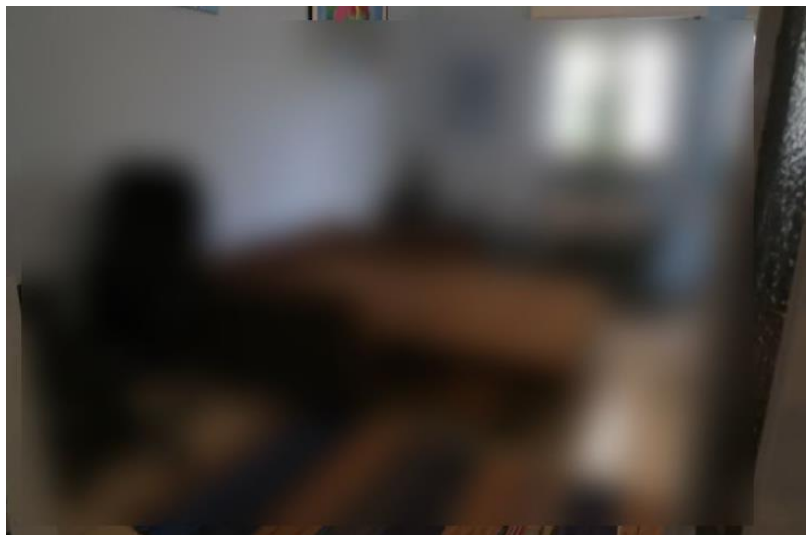
Yuri's mini-case of was one of many, in all cities (in Lisbon the co-hosting system was discovered as more significant), and it tells a lot about the establishment of a relationship without its ritualistic manner.

- **Patterns of release and goodbyes**

The second most important ritualistic interaction between a host and a guest is the check-out. Check out, as opposed to the vast majority of check-ins, can lead to a charged nature of conversation, which could be the result of disagreements that occurred during the stay. Or, instead, the result of a sad goodbye, of a friend who is now gone. The transcript of the check-out is quite homogenous. Normally, the host would ask the guest how was their stay, and they would encourage the guest to tell them how much of the city they have managed to see during their short visit. They would take back the keys and would wish the guest a nice travel. While the check-in is the beginning of a process in which the host and the guest establish a relationship, the check-out is essentially the end of the Dyad, as one of the partners is set to leave with no (probable) return.

This fact, for better or for worse, is evident in the terminology of the parties, as both tend to leave a 'window' in which they might meet again, in similar or different settings. For the hosts, such a terminology could seem somewhat strategic, as they could hope that a guest would return in their next journey to the city. Alas, from the host's point of view, such a scenario is very rare. In times in which the relationship has indeed been shaped to be meaningful, a communication would continue, but if there would be a next travel, most chances are that they would not be formed in the image of another use of the same Airbnb service, or at all. In other cases, communication does not continue at all.

Yet, a terminological and ritualistic acknowledgement of this end is heard. Interactions with guests are not common (this claim would soon be clarified as well), and therefore, the ritualistic interaction of the check-out has an 'awkward vibe', in which hosts are already ready, emotionally, and mentally, for the temporal liberation both of their home and of their role as hosts, and also for the needed re-preparation of home and the room(s) for the next guests.

The combination between the charged last interaction, with the unwillingness of the hosts[113], leads to several notable patterns: many hosts, and most hosts who do not use any solution to avoid check-ins, find solutions to avoid check-outs. Such solutions often include instructions for leaving a key (in a mail-box with a lock, provided by Airbnb, by throwing them into a slightly opened window, etc.), and by setting check-out hours that would ensure that guests would leave before the return of the host. Hosts tend to be characterized by three main types. The ones who demand (from themselves) to be at home during check-out (as a service friendly approach, or to make sure that nothing has been stolen or broken), the ones who do not plan their presence during the check-out, but eventually create a routine of no interaction, or the ones who make sure that check-out would be without their presence.

To capture the significance of the third type, it is useful to look at the extreme mini-case of Giacomo (M12). This case, which would also be further discussed, tells the story of an Italian man who uses his wealthy and luxurious office, full of opera records and books on philosophy, to pay his bills as he struggles in his line of work in the creative sector. While the room was indeed impressive and interesting, Giacomo showed visible difficulties during check-in, as he was genuinely suffering from the social encounter which was forced upon him, in the first ritualistic interaction with him. At check-out time Giacomo was home, but he did not care to salute me on my way out, as he was locked in his own part of the house. Furthermore, studying Giacomo's review history, shows that I was not the only one who felt Giacomo's social antagonism, which repeated in a very untypical ratio:

A review sample from Giacomo listing (M12)

It is a nice room in a very nice milanese house in near to the center. But the bed was not very confortable i am shure that i had bites of bed lines or something else. I had to check out at 10h in the morning and at 10:10h Matteo startet to scream from the other room: OUT! I left the apartment without saying goodbye. Strange Guy.

This is simply false. I didn't scream or said anything.

While it is not likely that Giacomo would scream at every guest who violates his check-out hours by 10 minutes, the accumulation of evidences clarifies that for Giacomo, as it is for many others (and probability at lower rates), the actual ritualistic, and obliged interaction is 'too much' for his

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[113] As the guests are not a factor of focus in this research, I deliberately ignore the guests' own mental state, which is, naturally, affected by negative or positive experiences with the host and the house, and by their future travel plans (a flight to catch, a train to locate, etc.) while in check-in it is by the long journey to the Airbnb home.

social abilities, which eventually leads to a change in his behavior and to feel pushed to the edge of his 'comfort zone' and mental state.

4.3 Non-ritualistic host-guest interaction patterns

Non-ritualistic interaction of hosts and guests are a trivial in the life of a host, but their meaning is dual and important to be explored. The first kind of an emotional and cognitive factor for the SAH, is the physical interaction itself. Hosts tend to have casual interactions with guests at most, in the public spaces of the house, if a corridor, the kitchen or the living room. Each of them delivers different kinds of conversations topics. The corridor is the place to discuss former experiences and future plans. The kitchen is the 'habitat' of a cultural exchange which is based on food and around the intimacy of cooking food, but also one of the most charged domestic places in which disputes emerge around rules of using the kitchen, preparing and eating hours, and for the most part – disturbance of noise and smell.

That is, for example, the mini-case of Lara (M46), a senior in her 80s, who lives by herself in a small apartment in one of the calm corners of Milan. Lara does not really need the money, but since she had retired, the trips with her great-grandchildren are her biggest joy, a costly joy. Alas, Lara has two major difficulties with her hosting experience. First, she struggles with technology and with any language other than Italian, as her reviews testify:

One of Lara's (M46) reviews and response[114]

is the sweetest woman! There was a bit of a language barrier, but (SENSITIVE CONTENTS HIDDEN) translate helped us out. She even took me downstairs and had one of her friends translate. She told me about things to see an do. The room was nice and clean and so was the bathroom.

Sono contenta di sapere che ti sei trovata bene e che ti sono stata utile nel farti conoscere Milano,però anche tu sei stata veramente brava.incontrarti è stata un'esperienza molto positiva.

In addition of this difficulty, which does not bother showing her true and charming nature, Lara also has a difficulty and initiates negative interactions with guests, concerning the use of the kitchen: *"... And I wrote it him that he could not cook in the kitchen. Only if they want to warm something small. But I do not cook, if they want to warm something small I can settle but I do not*

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[114] The review of Lara is a good chance to witness how the Airbnb system is not only monitoring 'forbidden' words in the conversations between hosts and guests in the digital interactions, but also in the reviews. Another important example that Airbnb does not try to use its technology to 'clean' the dialogue from offensive language and to support political correctness, but instead, focus, solely on the 'danger' of information that could, somehow (and usually, out of context), risk their dominance and allows leakage towards other platforms.

like the smells of the kitchen and I do not like cleaning the kitchen. That Korean woman I didn't get her. I told them, look at the subway, but they kept getting lost. So I had to call my son cause he speaks English but it didn't help, they kept getting lost and cook in my kitchen, I didn't know how to explain it to them. The other fool I told him not to cook. Same story. I don't understand this behavior, I tell them, and they don't care. It doesn't matter to them. And instead I came home one day I see a boiling pot as they were making the vegetables cooked with rice. But I explained it so well, even wrote it in capital letters! and in English …" (interview with M46).

Therefore, the kitchen is a dense location for SAH, in which stronger emotions emerge, for better or for worse, as interactions during the Airbnb hosting are varied with a wide spectrum. However, the living room, instead, is a place of rarer interactions but also lighter ones, in which personal conversations can occur, on a variety of topics, from the political differences between the two cultures, personal life, work, romance and sex. It was found that, the living room is the soft belly of home, and therefore it is a focus of attention for SAH when deciding if to protect it (denying the entrance to the living room, by physically preventing the entrance using features of the house, like a door, or by altering the space entirely), to expose it (by creating an environment and organizing the house to lead guests to leave their room and visit the living room, such operation is quite common in the balcony as well), or centralize it (to make it a controlled room, not to attract interaction, but to know what is going on in the house).

The centralization process is the most interesting one, because it supports different kinds of interactions. One example of such a case is the story of Rose and Gabriel (J25). The two are a couple in their 80s, who have had a long history of hosting through CouchSurfing, and then decided to switch to Airbnb. As they felt the CouchSurfing community faded, they moved to the next vivid community, of Airbnb. The two, Jewish Americans, live as near as possible to new American Embassy, and have retired long ago. Rose and Gabriel, as former active CouchSurfing members, offer a unique experience, of an enthusiastic story teller, as Gabriel can and desires to spend hours telling stories about his adventures travelling in the '70s. Alas, it is the wife, Rose, who is a more fascinating subject.

As can be seen from the design of the house (below), Rose sits throughout the day on her comfortable armchair, and from that position, she has a direct view of all the happenings in the living room, in the kitchen and the dining area, and trough the corridor, which makes it easy for her to scout the entrances and exits to all the other rooms in the house. Interaction wise, Rose and

Gabriel complete each other. Gabriel is the one who talks, as he can spend hours in front of an historical documentary, chatting about it all along.

Rose, is the other way around, she wants to know when the guest eats, sleeps, wakes up, takes a shower, goes out, how they are dressed and if it suits the weather, takes the best attractions in the city, and so forth. Rose is also the one who makes sure that Gabriel would be satisfied with his storytelling to guests, but that he would not exaggerate, so the guest would not get too annoyed. This combination, from time to time, indeed creates fatigue and a sense of discomfort from the guests, who feel that they have no privacy and expected to sustain a lively interaction with them[115]. However, it did create countless non-ritualistic interactions, that were based on a specific terminology, in this case, of parents, or grandparents, who feel responsible but also have sort of an (imagined) agency on their kids, who are actually only their guests, paying guests.

A 3D design of Rose & Gabriel's home (J25)

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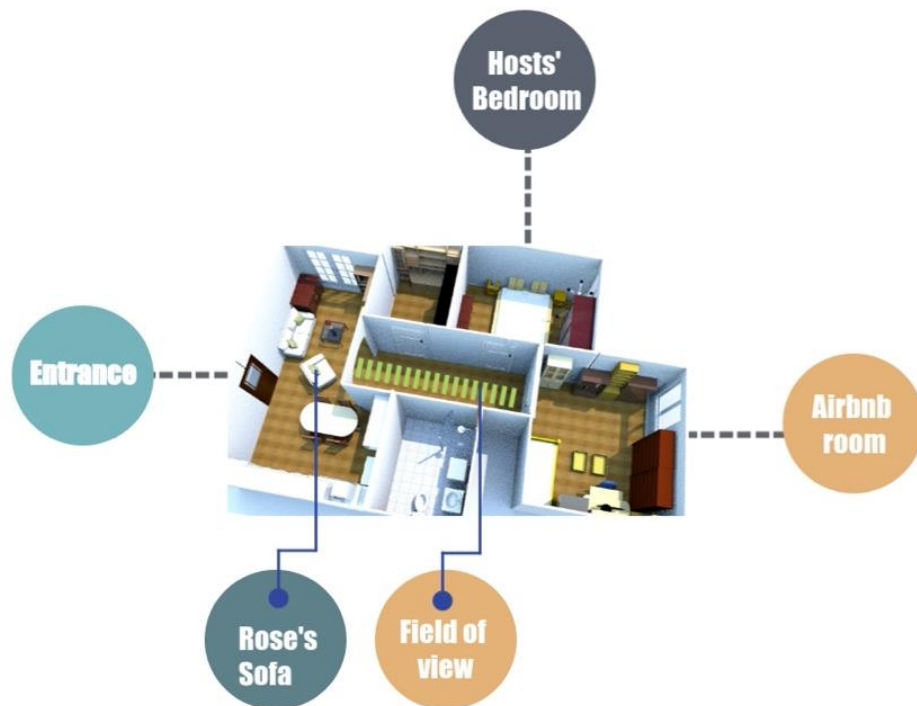
[115] For me, while I count this experience as one of the more difficult experiences I had, especially in Israel, it was, more than anything, a reconstruction of my childhood memories at my own grandparents' home. just like in the mini-case of Rose and Gabriel, I could hear them discussing my sleeping hours and wondering if I already ate something today.

But, not less importantly, it also helps creating a connection between oneself and their perception of hosting, by exploring and analyzing their home. Talking with the sweet couple, Rose and Gabriel, has taught me a lot about the gap between the practiced nature of interaction and the one each one of them envision as a good and wanted interaction. For Rose, the more inquisitive (or nosy or sensible between the two), hosting is important and is in their lives for over 20 years, as they cannot travel so much as before, because of their age and health issues. This way, they meet new people from new cultures, and learn about the world. Alas, while this motivation is very logical and surely describes her sincere thoughts, there is also other clear motivations that are not spoken yet deliver the outcome of meeting both Rose and Gabriel's needs to feel needed and important, through Rose's need to parent and to take people under her wings and responsibility, and through Gabriel's need to emphasize his long-life experiences and knowledge about different cultures and historical events to someone. Important to say, that while each is not aware of their own needs, they seem to be aware of the other's needs, and with this awareness, to limit it to reason. Rose, as mentioned, constantly stops Gabriel, and even helps guests 'escape' from a long monologue which is about to burst. But Gabriel as well, hushes Rose in her quest to know everything about the strangers in her house.

While Gabriel and Rose are still very self-sufficient, I have encountered in many cases situations in which hosting is initiated for no financial reason, but as solutions brought up by grown up children who are aware of their parents' loneliness, or even the desire to chat and share of their stories, life experiences and wisdom, and use Airbnb as such a solution. While this study would not claim any empirical results to that statement, overall, older people present a vital, healthy and energetic image, which is driven by the responsibility, if of the calendar, or for the guests themselves, the physical work, but mainly and mostly – driven by the non-ritualistic interactions with guests[116]. In addition, it is useful to notice two more important patterns found.

- **The family as an interaction generator**

One of the things that were not discussed so far but should be reminded, is that in many mini-cases, especially in Milan and Lisbon, hosting via Airbnb is not only the occupation of singles or

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[116] Once again, in this statement I refer only to retired people, who are above 60 years old, and whose primal motivation to host via Airbnb was not financial. Others, much fewer mini-cases, were elders who have entered the service as a financial undeniable solution, and their image was less vital.

couples, but also of families. Often, a motivation of a family to begin the Airbnb hosting is the extra value such interaction can add to the cultural, social, and linguistic knowledge which they already have, or they want to inherit towards their children.

One good example for such situation is the one of Rosalba (M21) and her family, her husband, their six years old child, and puppy. Rosalba's house is a three floor semi-private house, which is on one of the quiet streets just a few meters away from the toured but beautiful Navigli river and its extensions. For Rosalba, Airbnb is a new effort, a decision taken with her husband, to explore new ideas and to challenge themselves, as a family, with new experiences. The floors house, is deliberately free of doors (other than the bathrooms), which they inform each guest, warning that choosing their home, is selecting a dense and open familial experience, as in fact it was.

During my night there, I had the opportunity to have two cups of tea with the nice couple, and I also played with the kid and the energetic dog. While Rosalba and her family were new to the concept of Airbnb, and hosting strangers in general (as she looked for support towards her 'scary' meeting with two Chinese young female friends who were due to arrive after me), there was a significant difference between the formal and hesitated interactions Rosalba had with me in the first and last encounter, to the non-ritualistic ones, that got warmer and warmer, as Rosalba became visibly less worried and more trustful in my intentions, and my, then, struggling Italian.

From Rosalba's profile (M21)

Cinema teatro, viaggi, mare animali sono le passioni.
I studied abroad .
I had the chance to meet people of all the world.
I love to meet new people to seat and have a coffee .
A small breakfast together if you like!
Hope to meet yoy!

Reading Rosalba's profile, as it shows, really teaches about her desire for non-ritualistic interactions, and our conversations about her hopes to integrate those and to welcome new voices, language and atmosphere, which would serve her entire family. A desire that was also visible after my night there, as she kept inviting me to her family, via social media platforms we were linked in. While Rosalba's intentions are from the 1st stage, before arriving at a steady stream of guests (that has a good chance of changing her idea of the Airbnb service), in following stages, the picture

often becomes more problematic, as non-ritualistic interactions can cause disturbances or even insecurity of children. One such example is the mini-case of Camelia (L49), a single mother, who has decided to change her career course and start her doctoral degree when her young daughter was nine years old. This decision has led her to choose Airbnb as an income solution to part of the work she had lost.

The main theme in my conversation with Camelia, was her repeated notion of herself as exhausted. Camelia claimed that the actual work of receiving guests, cleaning after them, and 'serving' them, in the shape of interacting with them is tiring, but it is rather that she is mentally exhausted, and only indirectly because of the guests: *"...you know when she was nine, okay, it was easy, yes. Well it wasn't easy at all, because she didn't feel safe, she hated the fact we have strangers in our house, and I tried to tell her, talk with them, learn English, but she didn't mind. At one point it was better, but now it is the worst ever...she is 13, she is in some age, she hated taking a shower, now she is staying there, for hours, but the guests need the bathroom too! It is embarrassing, I don't know what to tell them, and I see her looking at guests, suddenly sitting all day in sofa wearing only panties and a bra, she tries to talk with them...so I am scared you know, I try to be all the time in the house when there are guests, cause at one point one a young guy will be there...and I don't want to think what will happen, so I am exhausted, but I am waiting to get it done, and I don't know when...so I wait..." (from interview L49)*.

As can be seen, Camelia's life, like many others with family members, often creates a distortion of the daily life, and even risky and unhealthy non-ritualistic interactions, that increase the level of exhaustion and discomfort at home.

- **The role of pets in interactions**

Surprisingly enough, of the most vivid patterns found during examining the development of interaction and types of interaction, are the immediacy of pets driven-interactions and their place in the shaping of space into and out of interaction. Firstly, pets are a matter of concern for SAH. Once, because guests tend to misread the information on their chosen home and as the host's presence is sometimes an unwelcoming surprise, so are pets. And second, as they often create odors and dirt that tends to trouble delicate guests. Many hosts are troubled by it and create many negative interactions which are based on the presence of pets at home. Often, it is because of the conflicting expectations of the two parties of the service itself. As the host sees it as social service,

at best, or poor and a low-priced service that offers a bed alone. And the guest sees it as a social service at best as well, but also the market's alternative to a hotel.

In that sense, pets and their representation, of a modern model of home consumption that has unique preferences, which are based on a unique kind of a relationship between a person and an animal, that goes beyond any logic (for reasons of entertainment, security, teaching, and other known reasons for taking a pet that are so-called rational), and has no room in a business-shaped space[117]. In that sense, pets have given very different limits from one mini-case to another, as in the majority of the homes, pets were free to wander around. Alas, in others, the limitation on the pet also describes the business 'section' of the house, the Airbnb area, and the rest of the house, in which the pet could eat and walk around freely. In the most extreme cases, pets were in homes in which their owner is only randomly at home, in such cases, pets can become the responsibility of the guests, which raise question of sociality versus service orientation.

In one such mini-case, I arrived at one of the most popular but small streets in the center of west Jerusalem. There, I found that the owners, Sara and her boyfriend, Roni (J30), are not at home, as they left for Tel-Aviv to participate in a memorial. However, their big female dog who was extremely friendly was at home. Being sick that day, I retired in the evening to lie in bed, and the dog joined me. At one point, I talked with owners, and offered to walk the dog, in order to avoid their friends who were supposed to come to do it for them. While I enjoyed taking the dog for a walk, Sara and Roni's house was one of the most expensive ethnographic cases I have done, and while their return home has led to an in-depth interaction, the balance of service and sociality is yet unclear, and is expressed again, by the pet.

[117] In addition, and as already mentioned in the methodological part, I believe that one of the main reason that I managed to reach such high numbers in doing ethnography in homes that suited the criteria, is my search form the start, for homes with pets, which have always guaranteed arriving at SAH's homes.

Roni and Sara's dog (J30)

In one other extreme mini-case, in Milan (M22), I arrived to Mia's house, a woman in her thirties, who raises four rabbits, twelve cats, two dogs (one of them was a guest) and three birds, in her quite small house. Mia is doing Airbnb, as her activism for saving endangered species does not provide a steady routine of income. Like it is possible to imagine, Mia's home and air was thick, difficult, as in every corner one could find a cat. *"… returning from my shopping for the weekend, I found most house lights turned off, but the TV was on, in a very loud voice, so I was sure I was going to meet my host soon, and left for my room, where two cats escaped quickly from the bed as soon I sat on it. I worked, dozed for a while, noticing that it had already turned dark yet no sign of the host, and the TV kept screaming a familiar movie, until, so it seems, it came to its end. At that point, the dog started weeping from the outside, and as it continued, a sound of teasing cats was heard there as well. I started to fear that this guest dog might be ambushed. I let it in, but the dog was restless, and prevented me from sleeping as night was crawling in, so I let the dog leave, fight the cats, and to withdraw to my room… until… Mia arrived… we went to sleep, and I left in the morning as she was sleeping on the sofa…"* (note from M22).

One of Mia's reviews (M22)

There are 7 cats and 2 rabbits in this one-bedroom apartment that is shared with Daria. I really like animals, but even I found this to be a bit too much. It was OK for one night, but not any more than that one night. The animals were warm and kind (some of them!) but I found ▮▮▮▮ to be a bit cold. She does not seem to enjoy interacting with guests, which is quite unfortunate as I like interacting with my Airbnb hosts. If you are only coming to Milan for a place to sleep and you do not want to speak at all with the host, then perhaps this is a good place for you.

Secondly, pets are experts in engaging in interactions, as they tend to ignore human spatial norms and rules. In many occasions, and for many guests, as I experienced myself, pets successfully fill the blank left by the apathy of the hosts and their lack of interest to interact. This directness expressed by pets, often leaves guests with a sense of home, which is driven by the quickness in which a dog or a cat creates physical contact and mutual confidence. In many cases, the cat (or the dog) itself becomes the image of the house, and the trigger of positive reviews in an absent or non-cooperative home.

Such is the example, of mini-case J18 (paragraph 2.5), of Ronen. Ronen, can be considered as one of the most popular Airbnb apartments in Jerusalem (during his prime), because of the unique and friendly experience, and not at all in an absent or non-cooperative manner of the host, but even more so, because of his cat. Leo[118], who had died since then, was free during the days to come in and out of the apartment, and to spend nights with his fellow female cats. His style, in the words of the guests themselves, was of a charismatic, but not a toady character, who made every guest fall in love with him, and 'melt' as Leo finally allowed a guest to pet him. After he was gone, former guests from all around the world, mourned his death.

Like the known cliché of a man who goes out with his new dog to catch a talk, and perhaps even get a phone number from a woman who would admire the pet, and would connect its charming character to the one of the unknown owner, so is the mini-case of Ronen, and of many others, whose pet became a bridge for both parties of the Dyad (and the pet is their triad). For the guests[119], pets are a fluffy representation of the host, who helps them accept closeness and intimacy from the host, and in a range of forms (mostly of friendship, trust, but also romantic or sexual types of relationships). The host, instead, carefully observes the guest's attitude to the pet, if in order to understand whether the animal should be restrained or limited, and to learn about the guest's nature

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[118] Names of pets that would occasionally play a part in the findings chapter would be changed as the names of the participants themselves, in order to avoid unnecessary identification.

[119] One such experience (J32) of my own, is of a cat, a rude one, who was rude in his habit to enter the room (through the window) without invitation, in his habit to compel patting him, and violently taking over my territory and space in bed, and to tear my snack packages and steal my dinner. The cat too, was an authentic reflection of his owner, who did not even check if his pet disturbs me during my stay in any way, knowing his own cat's nature and behavior. A host, that even if did not do anything in 'particular', had left me with very strong and difficult feelings in my staying.

and sensitivity. This bridge is probably one of the most effective ice breakers in the interaction between a host and a guest, which leads to a compatible interaction, if of discussing the general love towards animals, taking care of them, and sharing stories about the guests' own pets, who they now miss.

In that sense, pets are the perfect example of a non-human, or non-social factor, that per se, influences and triggers different directions of interactions and the establishment of a Dyad, which is actually a Triad. A Triad whose third actor, is indeed a non-social one, as others that would be discussed in the next parts of the findings chapter.

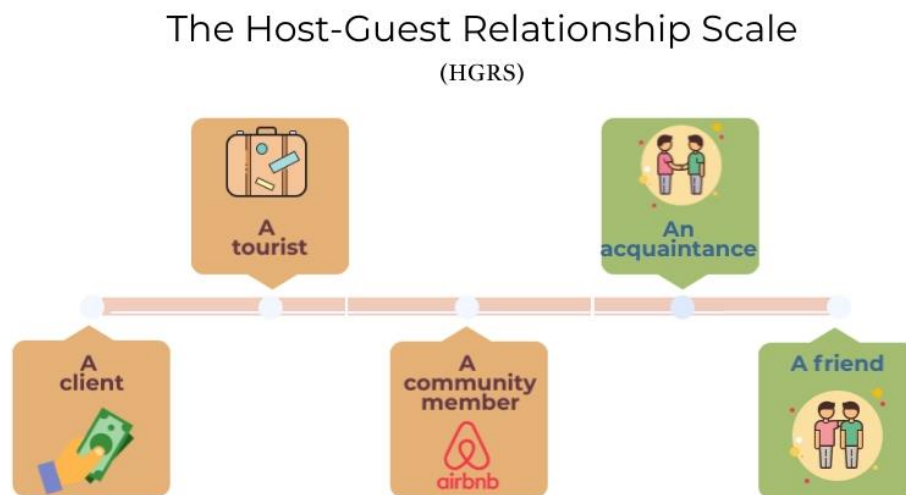## 4.4 Identifying the host-guest relationship scale

The patterns which were described above come to point at times in which an interaction is forced, creates discomfort, or other times, in which it is chosen, used, and leads to both positive and negative results, and to the Dyad, the relationship itself. Now is a good time to emphasize that the actual interaction between hosts and guests, is not very different in its basic definition, from the numerous encounters of producers and consumers in the urban space. Therefore, no actual new language is required for the parties of new Dyads who emerge on a daily basis. Alternatively, it is space that creates a confusion, but especially, an infusion of the urban market terminology with the norms, behaviors and intimacy that are the core of domestic interactions.

However, the patterns which were described so far, as possible to already see, are the result of the design of home and the character of the host. Or in other words, the interactions, their nature, and their scope, in the 2_{nd} and 3_{rd} stages, are the sum of the very basic appreciation and vision of the Airbnb service by the host. This ground is the one that determines the borders of the potential relationship, and, in the right circumstances, the mental shift from one interaction system of rules and norms to another. By collecting the nature of a significant amount of interactions, along with ideas of the hosts' interaction with their guests, it was possible to encounter five such grounds of relationships which can described as five prototypes of relationships, that do not range from hate to love or romantic love, but instead, create a range from the public to the private, from the client to the friend, or family member.

Furthermore, and according to the movement from one type of interaction to another, it is possible to also recognize the relationships between the five grounds, as they do not come to represent the

full mindset of the host and the relations with their guests. But rather, the pure prototypes are ranges which all hosts have, always in a different way, with each guest.

The host-guest relationship scale (HGRS) is composed of five prototypes, each of them signifying a direction, which can be related to the domestic values and to the domestic level of interaction and intimacy (the 'right' direction). It can also demonstrate a more urban, business-oriented, and market awareness type of interaction. Alas, as can be seen from the above scale, it is not completely balanced, and the movement from the 'orange' labels of the scale to the 'green' ones, is quite rare, and distinguishes a shift in the host's approach, one that was never recorded among the 145 cases. Nevertheless, this potential movement can and should be seen in different resolutions, as they point out different aspects, patterns, and trends.

The Host-Guest Relationship Scale (HGRS)

On the first and smallest resolution, **the interaction-scale**, the host-guest relationship scale (HGRS) can identify the nature of a single Dyad. The understanding of a single Dyad can be useful, to give a meaning and interpretation to the interactions, the ritualistic and non-ritualistic ones, and thereby, understanding the mechanism of the ritual better, and the courses in which it can go towards a positive or a negative experience. Understanding interactions by using the HGRS helps calculating the long-term effects of daily interactions and their influence on the host, the host's daily life, as well as their sense of home.

The second resolution is even more effective than the former. **The host-scale** helps understanding the patterns in which a host creates interaction, thereby, to understand the host's approach to hosting, from a social approach to a business one. The host-scale is the scientific accumulation of the sum of interaction-scales (or better yet, a sample of them), that enable a few important data

collections. (1) Of a data that would help understanding the nature of a host, predicting the host's future nature of interaction, and deducting other qualitative important information, like the host's tendency to leave the service, their levels and increasing rates of exhaustion, in a certain stage and over time, and the relationship between the ritualistic interactions, and the non-ritualistic ones. Secondly, by analyzing the host-scale interaction in two or more points of time, it is possible to notice a movement, and understand the implications and meaning of those movements for the host, their home and the service.

The host-scale resolution is the introduction and data that can be accumulated into patterns and creates an established understanding of the current situation of one city (in this research, three cities and case studies), from which, again, it is possible to witness and interpret different patterns and trends. **The city-scale** gives an overlook of the fashion in which Airbnb integrates into the urban life of a specific city, as part of a new social experience that bursts out of the domestic domain, or, as one that attracts investors and turns tourists into actors whose urban taking-over the city comes also through the domestic space and the life of the locals, inside and outside home. The city-scale is, of course, also a fruitful resource for a comparative research that would look for cultural and urban processes that inspire one type of use of a social service, or an invasive service, and not the other.

Followed by city-scale is the **service-scale**, which is the accumulation of all cities (or better yet, a sample of them), that helps examining, by observing and interpreting micro interactions, the host's interactions, and the city's interactions, the sociality of one service, and thereby, measuring its contribution to a community, a contribution that reaches beyond the economic aspects of the entrance of a new actor into an existing market, or the development of new ones. The movement between scales is productive and very informative, like many of the findings throughout the different parts of this findings chapter. A sample of such a movement from scale to scale can be taken from any of the 145 mini-cases collected and enlarged to the wider scale.

Such good example is the mini-case of Juan (L42, paragraph 2.2), who has a been mentioned previously. Juan is once again a good example because one of the main themes in the interview with him was about a man he met during one of his hosting experiences: *"... It was a guy from Austin, Texas, Mexican and Peruvian, it was in April, close to Passover, it was my mistake, not a mistake, just got mixed up with the orders, so I ended letting this guy to have the first days for free, without even talking with him…but Miguel (the guest) did not come so I was worried. So I waited*

and waited. So I dozed, and just before falling asleep, that it happened, at that very moment, he rang, but I immediately felt he was a really nice person. Thirty years ago he lived in Portugal because he learned how to ride horses, because they teach it here like it was during the war… so I told him about my event in the evening, and he was really tired of the flight, so if he'll come he'll go away pretty quickly. At that evening I had a bunch of French tourists there. Eventually he came to say hello, and I offered him a seat, and we all became friends, and he was with them at the event, and there were drinks he didn't go anywhere and everybody loved him , We stayed until the place closed, and the next day, we woke up at that time, had a day off, offered him a lunch, we got a little drunk, We went on like this until 4 in the morning. We became great friends, still in touch. I told him, now you're my friend, no matter that other guests come, you stay in my room, and we wrote to each other all day and he was just an amazing guy. Because of him I met many other friends…".

Juan is a good example of a host whose interactions with his guests on the interaction-scale, falls between the acquaintance level to the tourist one. Juan uses the ritualistic interaction, the check-in, to obtain information but mostly, 'energies', 'vibes' that would trigger his desire for social and cultural contact. In the interaction-scale, the meeting with Miguel was unique (specifically – Miguel was the only guest that became a friend, out of hundreds of guests), as it led Juan to anomality in his interaction patterns. Alas, in the host-scale, such an anomality, in different levels of movement on the scale, is found in patterns of any host, from Lisbon, trough Milan and Jerusalem. It is an anomality, because it does not reflect the Airbnb interactions in Juan's life, but it reflects Juan's desire, not a desire for romantic encounters through Airbnb, but to acquire new real friends. The host-scale of Juan's process throughout the stages also reveals that, as a single host, he has registered a movement from the second level, the acquaintance level, towards an average, a vision of the guest as a tourist.

In the city-scale, Juan is on the right side to the average, which in the city of Lisbon, is analyzed as the touristic level (the fourth level). Lisbon (as this claim would be extended soon), compared to itself, is moving leftwards on the scale, from viewing the guests as Airbnb community members, to the current situation of a touristic view, towards a vision of a business and a client in the near future. Lisbon is not very different from the other case studies, that also show a tendency towards the left side of the scale, but that tendency is weaker, and both their current situations are much closer to the third level of the Airbnb community member. At last, the service as a whole can be

seen as a service that is moving towards the left, the market-orientation side of the interaction scale[120]. At this point, I wish to extend my description and implications of each of the five pure prototypes.

- ▪ **A service provider-client type of interaction**

The urban sphere is a space which is designed to create a host-client interaction. In such an interaction, hosts see their guests as clients (and clients alone), and therefore, they would obtain a service-oriented approach, in which non-ritualistic interactions would be crafted to create an atmosphere that gives the best results, or the best experience for the guest, so the guest could leave satisfied, if in order to return in the future, or for the more likely result, would leave a good review and good grades of a review[121].

One example of this difference could be seen by observing the behavior of one such host. Paco (L08), uses space provided by Airbnb (which is interesting by itself) in which hosts can specify about the nature of interactions between them and the guests (about one third of the mini-cases use this option and most only use it to promise the guests that they will be available for any problem):

Paco's (L08) offered services, as seen in his listing

Interazione con gli ospiti

On Mondays the host offers a free lunch to all guests "baked codfish at transmontana" typical regional dish Portugal.

Às segundas feiras o anfitrião oferece gratuitamente um almoço a todos os hospedes de "bacalhau cozido à transmontana" prato típico regional de Portugal.

While I myself, was not fortunate enough to spend my night at Paco's on a Monday and enjoy his lunch, Paco's offer of a 'free lunch' should be interpreted by the notion of the offer, as such an offer could be seen as a friendly opportunity for social interactions that are limited to his schedule, as a unique and authentic method that Paco uses to represent his own cultural background, as well as the ones of Portugal and Lisbon. And finally, it can be seen as a service, one that aims to convince 'clients' to stretch their weekend further, and thereby to be 'rewarded' with a unique

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[120] The image of Airbnb as a service, and its direct role in the movement of interactions, hosts, and cities leftwards, would be discussed in the next chapters.
[121] The grading system and the review system would be discussed in the next chapter which would focus on Airbnb.

experience. Examining the 'offer' alone cannot be enough to determine which of the three aspects have led Paco to add that offer. Alas, the accumulations of my own ethnographic interactions with him, former reviews, and especially, a message he had sent me after he made sure I had left his home, leaves no doubt about Paco's point of view.

Paco's (L08) message to me after my leaving

Hello Roei, how are you? I hope you had a good time at my home.
Meantime, let me alert you to the following;
Airbnb's classification process is not completely fair, if for any reason some guests give a general rating below 4 (the maximum is 5), the guest can see their advertisement taken from the air by a few days! At this moment unfortunately I am surviving the Airbnb base and try as far as possible to provide my guests with the best comfort. Therefore I ask you the following; when giving your rating please never give less than 4 and if you have something more negative to write, do not write publicly but rather the next step, particularly, this will help me to improve the conditions of the house and the comfort to give the my guests and I do not put the advert at risk.

Sincerely,

As Paco's last message can and should be a good starting point for the discussion of Airbnb system and Airbnb's involvement in the interactions between hosts and guests, Paco's message (again, along with other evidences from other methods), clarifies Paco's state of mind, and concern towards his hosting as a business, in which every guest is a possible advancement towards his survival and a key for future guests.

Once again, it is important to note that an interaction between hosts and guests who are based on the urban and market space is common and happens on a daily basis. It is the heart of the local success and the foundation of a successful city. It is unique and implicative, as it done at home. As the understanding of Paco's fashion of interaction was experienced and deducted, it was also completed by finding similar evidence from other cases. One such important case is the one of Antonio (L39, paragraph 2.2), who was already introduced before. Antonio, as many other examples in all cities, is proud of his efforts to turn Airbnb into a profitable business, as he creates very detailed and thorough monthly slideshows that financially analyze his costs and income, with goals and visions for the future.

From that point of view, Antonio gladly talks about his extra services, like driving guests in his car to the main attractions, picking them up from the Airport or taking them back. While Antonio is a very social and open person, he admits that he does not find joy in doing such 'favors', and that he works hard to make them look like a favor, something extra, that would leave a good taste as guests leave, and leave their grades and review. *"… sometimes you get disappointed, one time a family came here, and I was here, as always, with my son… and they were shocked, they didn't expect us at all, they thought they were taking an entire house… so it was very awkward and strange at first… but eventually, it was okay! We spent nights in which my son played with their son, and we drank a wine in the living room, I really tried to make it a special experience for them, cause how it is my fault they didn't read the simple details of my listing? But what they did? They put three stars and only mentioned the fact they didn't know they are coming to a family that lives there, I was furious!".*

Antonio, therefore, does not hide the fact that the evening, or evenings they spent together did not mean much to him, he saw the guests as clients, and searched in that specific interaction, wrongfully, the reproduction of the experience that Airbnb promises their guests. Thereby, the interaction between hosts and guests are creating is monetized and in no sense spontaneous, as hosts especially, but also guests, calculate the interactions in which they would assure their own profit. In such a view, an extra blanket on a cold night is provided by calculating costs and implementing them on the price, instead of assuring the safety and comfort of those who are guests in one's home. And while such a 'game', or acting is not rare at all in the urban space, its appearance in the domestic space leads to several interesting thoughts and questions, that would be mentioned in the discussion of this part.

- **A local-tourist type of interaction**

The relationship between tourists and locals is complicated and rests theoretically on the urban theories as 'the right for the city', through co-creation of production in the urban space between locals and tourists, who have structurally different needs from the city. Alas, the movement of hosts towards a local-tourist interaction, lies on the hosts' own perception. A perception, that socially relates the Airbnb hosts to the labor force of the touristic market. As part of the touristic labor force, hosts who embrace such an approach are conscious of their terminology, the use of a

politicly-correct language, and a will to learn and use international languages (English mostly), to properly serve the incoming tourists.

Just like a hierarchy is created in the service-provider-client interaction, a relation of power, another hierarchy, is created between the locals and the tourists. The locals feel superior, and mostly entitled to the resources of their city, and display a protective behavior towards their culture, history, and language. Such an emotional state of mind does not belong to all cities in the same way but expressed differently in each case study. The difference is dependent on the process which tourism arises, the kind of crowd the city attracts, and the growing public opinion and discussion on the local and national scale. A significant part of the agency that locals asks to express or manipulate to their own favor, is the knowledge gaps between them and the tourists. Such gaps allow the locals to shape certain situations to their own benefits. One of the most common examples, is the difference in price between restaurants that are located in touristic areas and offer a menu that is much higher than the market price and restaurants that are located in areas that do not attract tourists (or at least a massive and daily clientele).

SAH who have a tendency for a local-tourist approach, tend to classify their guests much more strictly, and to use the guest cultural background more dominantly to build an image of the guest and interact with them based on that image. Depending on their cultural background, guests are often perceived as lost, out of place, incomprehensible and generally lacking a basic common sense or reason. Tourist are also criticized, and even less valued, because they are naturally seen in a very particular period in their life (even if that period is of a weekend, or a week), in which they have no, or surely less, responsibilities, or worries, as their sole purpose of the every-day is travelling, and consuming different kinds of attractions and entertainment. The locals, therefore, see the tourists as people who flatten their culture, history and language on a daily basis, so it would suit their exotic cosmopolitan needs, for the sake of a successful holiday.

Tourists are also valued based on their own touristic vision. Tourists who stay in the Airbnb room for too long of leave to travel the city too late, are disliked and judged. The image of the travel and the slow daily movement of travelling, is conflicting and tends to irritate the SAH compared to their busy routine lives, which usually includes an additional daily job, and home maintenance or children upbringing. In this sense, and while it would be further discussed in the next parts of this findings chapter, the domestic version of the 'living like a local' often turns sour in such interactions. From the guests' point of view, they often receive conditions which they are not likely

to stumble upon in a hotel. Such as street noise, odors of a house and its maintenance, as well as construction in nearby buildings, or difficult door locks, that every once in a while, leads to guests who stay stuck outside their accommodation for hours. Guests who approach the Airbnb service as a cheap alternative to hotels, tend to notice such disturbances and to grade their hosts accordingly.

For the hosts, alas, their narrow view of the guest, creates a classification in which tourists are valued by their definition, if they are business people who come for a meeting, western tourists who come for a relaxed weekend or others who come to an intensive schedule of sightseeing in and out of the city. Hikers are a consensus among Airbnb hosts of good and principled people, with respect and awareness to the place around them, and value for the land they walk on. Alas, hikers are not very frequent around urban solutions such as Airbnb, and therefore, most interactions between hosts and guests who have a touristic approach, have similar patterns. Such interactions tend to be much less personal, as hosts normally point at the most touristic attractions, and so they do not add any local information that could lead guests to alternative locations and hidden spots.

As such, Airbnb hosts (and it was found especially common in Lisbon) tend to keep certain locations private, creating a sort of separation between touristic locations and local ones, to the satisfaction of the locals and those business themselves, who prefer to preserve their local and small business and protect it from the global influence. The impersonal type of interaction (one that follows and increase in the client type of relationship), leads to an impersonal relationship. Alas, it can also lead to spontaneous clusters between hosts and guests, in the sexual or romantic platforms, as the hosts themselves become part of the playground that is the touristic city, and one of its attractions, attraction with an early and momentary expiry date.

In this sense, and whether a romantic affair does eventually evolve, or just an instant and short term friendship, for the hosts, the touristic interaction is often seen both in a touristic-market perspective, but also as an opportunity, to experience, in a way, being a tourist. Interacting in the domestic domain allows the hosts to get a better sense of being a tourist and feel like they are on a vacation themselves[122]. Many such SAH have admitted they feel this way, especially when money, time, but also age, prevents them from doing their own cultural explorations.

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[122] As would be extended in the 6th chapter of the finding *"If on a winter's night a traveler"*.

Such is the case, for example, of Batya (J24). Batya is a retired teacher, who also designs and sells small artistic crafts. As she and her daughter in law do not get along well, she rarely sees her grandchildren, and her big house is *'too big and too empty'*. In addition, after long years of involvement with a married man, which ended up quite badly a few years, she found her occupation as a host to fill up her days, and over time, give her also some financial reassurance. She said*: "...First I started this whole thing because it seemed like such a waste. As I understood that I won't ever move to the north to be with Giora, and the terrible situation Shosh, my daughter in law, I understood I must do something, and there it was. For me, more than anything it is a cultural experience, yes, they are tourists, so they are usually not very interesting for me, but it is also like taking a small trip, I am old, and alone, so it is instead of taking trips by myself...at least it used to be...".* (From note J24).

Batya relentlessly views and classifies her guests by ethnic origin, age, and motives of journey. In the evening we had a long conversation, she told me about how she had learned to raise the price when money was not an issue for her, so she could create a selection among the guests and attract more guests from specific cultural backgrounds and socio-economic situations. While my conversation with Batya reached very personal levels, as a guest, I could not be considered a tourist, with a clear and visible local appearance, attitude, and language.

And an entirely different story could be displayed in Lisbon. At one of the mini-cases, Figo (L21). There, my ethnographic and undercover mission as a guest, was almost exposed, as the owner recalled me from another case and home I stayed at a week before. The host was attentive to my weird behavior (taking rooms for single nights around the city), but eventually he dismissed his suspicion by thinking that my appearance is more of a lost and confused tourist[123]. Only by completing the dots from the small interactions we had and the reviews and his profile, I have learned that Figo is not the host's name at all, but the family cat. The host himself used to host in this apartment I stayed at, along with his family, until he saw the financial potential of it, and joined a small network of hosts and co-hosts who help each other manage their apartments. Most of the members of that network still live in those apartments, or until recently did. Figo's family moved out of the apartment, but because he still worked in Lisbon, and was making money out of

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[123] My appearance that very night indeed met his view of me, as before arriving at his apartment, while I was eating at a nearby pizzeria my phone died, which made me get lost on my way to Figo's apartment. During those three hours of wandering alone in the dark, I managed to surprise two police officers, bother three bartenders, scare two locals, and eventually, find my rusty bed by following a foreigner resident who was worried and suspicious of me the whole 20 minute walk, that ended as, luckily, the guy lived right in front of my night's ethnography.

this arrangement with the network, he still partially lived in the flat, and partially with his family in their home outside Lisbon. In his view, the guests are tourists, of different shapes and colors, that he meets, not only in his part-time home, but also as part of a system that views the guests as tourists, and themselves as part of the tourism market.

- ▪ **An 'Airbnb community members' type of interaction**

In a different type of setting of this scale, types of interaction of Airbnb community members should be seen and considered as the central and middle ground of interactions. Most Airbnb hosts learn throughout the first stages of their hosting how to speak the language of its members, a language that is well represented in the virtual and in the offline interactions between hosts and guests. In this type of interaction, hosts (but also the guests) see as a given situation that most guests join and use Airbnb, if not for the sake of culture and social ambition, at least in the name of social and cultural acceptance, in which human, social, and domestic values are appreciated by all parties, for an experience that would benefit all.

This very approach, is the core perception of many of Airbnb users, hosts and guests, and it is the ground on which trust and interaction between hosts and guests is possible. This important perception of a community, an imagined community, helps many hosts push away social or familial criticism on the concept of Airbnb, and the risks that might be unknown by allowing strangers into home. One major false perception that helps SAH specifically, and Airbnb users in general, see Airbnb as a legitimate service, is the idea that Airbnb selects and expels negative actors from the system, and prevents the continuation of illegal, immoral, or, most importantly, bad behavior, which undermine the 'principles' of the Airbnb spirit[124].

That said, for the Airbnb community members interaction type, Airbnb is not only a structure and a navigator, but also a subject for conversation, that helps hosts and guests share their stories, and thereby, share their lives and situations. A good beginning of interactions would often lead to mutual stories of bad experiences that tend to break the ice but also pass a very important message. A message in which the other party is accepted and recognized as part of the 'real' Airbnb

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[124] This idea would be extended in other relevant parts regarding Airbnb's own behavior. In short, this idea is false as Airbnb takes every legal action it can to protect itself financially and legally by collecting identification, documents, and payment and communication documents. Alas, the reputation on the website is the one that hosts need to rely on, as guests who break the rules can easily return to book nights and create new risks.

community. Such types of messages are also a common and vital part of the terminology and languages used in reviews to signify a true Airbnb experience from other and generic ones.

Such an observation and attention, of the hosts and the guests to the people who fulfill Airbnb spirit, acts as a very important role in the mechanism which allows users, especially hosts, to pursue that recognition or to follow other routes for success, by using a business approach (and following the rules of service-provider-client interaction type), or a touristic approach (and following the rules of local-tourist interaction type), in which touristic trends and technics are reproduced in the domestic sphere. Choosing to follow the Airbnb community path, will lead to more personal interactions, and to the possibility of good interactions, and even unique life experiences. Alas, it is also the path towards the dominancy of Airbnb as a navigator, who is a powerful agent in policing norms and designing the nature of the service. Therefore, the main effort in understanding the Airbnb members' interaction is to understand the practical actions in which Airbnb influences this interaction[125].

Furthermore, Airbnb as an interaction facilitator, is also responsible for another layer in the heart of the interaction between the Airbnb community members. The service, in its very basic definition, creates the movement from a virtual community to an offline encounter. Many online communities and groups over the web determine it as their goal to create encounters which would lead substance, meaning and commitment to the group itself, and between the online virtual members who know each other for weeks, months and even years via the digital platform. Such a weight is what puts more foundations within the group, making it stronger and more resilient to change. When a host and a guest who meet each other beyond the virtual platform, and inside a domestic situation, see themselves as Airbnb members, part of the imagined community, they also sense as if they contribute to this community, enrich it and add such foundations to their community. Therefore, the interaction gains a social importance, which both sides gladly (when interaction is positive) report, on the successful encounter.

However, when interaction does go sour, both host and guest begin testing each other and looking for penalties and exceptions from the Airbnb accepted norms, to accuse one another of not being a 'true' Airbnb member. The fear of such a chain of events, which leads to a sour and even intimate

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[125] As would be extended as the goal and main purpose of the next part.

risk to their virtual reputation, is the one that eventually leads hosts (but also guests) to be careful, and avoid interactions that can cause a negative impact to their profile and listing.

Such is the mini-case of Aurora (L37, paragraph 3.1), whose story has already been introduced in the previous chapter. Aurora came to the business of Airbnb, at first, in order to create a cosmopolitan environment in her house, and to share her love for her city and for her calm and green neighborhood. She feels joy by hosting and hospitalizing her guests. Alas, and towards the 3rd stage, she returned to university, to complete her Ph.D. degree in education, and the rhythm of incoming guests became stronger and more intensive. From time to time, her habit of smoking at home, and the odors of her cats, leads to intense conflicts with her guests. Aurora describes how truly obsessive she is to having long conversations with the Airbnb call center, fighting for her name and reputation, which is eventually damaged because of the exact things she had clearly noted before the guest even makes their reservation. She said: *"... I am a good host, I am a super host, and I explained to them, over and over, long emails and hours on the phone, I'm telling them, this guest didn't have the Airbnb spirit, she was rude and she thought that if she booked a room at my place, that I am her slave, her clean lady...that is not Airbnb spirit, Airbnb spirit is to come and to be a friend, a guest, to laugh and share stories... but you know, no, I'm learning not to get too worked up because of that. These guys in the call center were so nice, they told me, you must not get offended, sometimes you get a bad review, so you'll get your 'super-host' rank next time, don't worry... and they are nice... so I am trying to let it go, but to tell you the truth, I lost my ambition, my faith in people, now I try to see them less as possible, but they still driving me mad!...".*

Aurora is a good example of the possible movement from one approach to another, as at first, Aurora was a symbol of Airbnb community members type of interaction. Over time, as the community questioned her sense of belonging, she started to see other possibilities towards the left side of the scale. Finally, the story of Aurora tells much about the energy, the effectiveness and the influence that the imagine community has on SAH's perception of hosting and on the paths which hosts take along their process and development of their motivation and behavior after the daily and exhaustive experiences with the guests.

- **Acquaintances and friends' types of interactions**

The last two types of interaction have been joined together for several reasons. Among them is the very fact that such types of interaction are ultimately quite rare. Even mini-cases that have been operating for years can count the number of such interactions with not more than their two hands, since the beginning of their hosting. In every city, only very few and untypical successful mini-cases were able to count a more significant amount of such interactions, as most of them were collected outside the Airbnb service, and in other hosting platforms or situations. More importantly, they both share a very crucial aspect, as such interactions lead to situations in which Airbnb is no longer needed. When hosts become acquaintances with a guest, future hosting would not go through Airbnb anymore, as the partners know and trust each other enough to settle on a lower price which would reduce both their fees to the navigator. When a host and a guest become friends (as in the mini-case of Juan, L42), money is no longer at the table, and they invite each other to stay at their home for free and whenever they want. In such cases, Airbnb naturally becomes redundant in their relationship.

This very observation alone, on the nature of the interaction between hosts and guests, helps and sheds a new light on Airbnb's 'socialism' (as it would be extended in the next chapter), but it also sets new frames of interaction on each situation, frames of familiarity and frames that adapt and fit better to the natural setting of home.

Overall, it is possible to notice a few important differences between the two types of interaction, acquaintances, and friends. One of the important differences is the interesting fact, in which a relationship of acquaintances is focused on the service itself. In the interaction between acquaintances, what flourishes, is the mutual trust between the two parties, a trust that is not based anymore on the abstract protection of Airbnb and on Airbnb's imagined community, but instead, it is based on familiarity, that is affirmed by different gestures, that lead to a higher social moral and norms of behavior, in which respect is given and received. Furthermore, the ability of such relation to burst, is often conflicted between the norms of the community, in cases in which the community is a dominant concept for the host, and easier to those whose proportion of Airbnb is more balanced, and they see Airbnb as nothing more than a navigator, as many similar such services through the web. In fact, when the rate of met acquaintances rise, Airbnb and Airbnb's rules are taken more lightly by hosts, and therefore, their possession and agency over the host is reduced.

Friends, however, lean on the shared affection between the host and their guests, if of platonic friendships, romantic, or sexual ones. If the interaction of acquaintances symbolizes the line crossed from the Airbnb design of interaction, to a domestic setting of the service. A service that is now friendly and familial. An interaction of friends is completely disconnected, not only from the involvement of Airbnb, but from the business aspect of the interaction, and its additional aspects of the setting of the format, like check-outs, rules, spatial borders and any additional fee. And while in the acquaintances levels such compromises are made, they are first of taken as compromises, and only then they are being examined by the depth of the acquaintanceship. In the friends level, such a calculation is not taken, and eventually, the full cultural and domestic meaning of ' hospitality' is revealed, without the restrictions of the 'market' or of the 'navigator'.

In my own ethnographic settings, my limitation of being hosted by almost all of the mini-cases for a single night, made it unlikely to reach and experience many acquaintance types of interactions and naturally neither of friendships. However, such events did occur.

One such example is of Tristan (L16), a Brazilian young guy in his late 20s who has welcomed me to his home in a hot august afternoon without wearing a shirt. Tristan was nothing than lovely during my stay, as he hosted me in his living room and office, which was designed to be a big and impressive room, and which gave me much comfort after walking and touring under the flaming sun on the beautiful streets of Lisbon. *"...returning from a first (and last) date, I entered and stumbled upon Tristan, again without his shirt on, as he was having a beer with his boyfriend. The two offered me one, and I shared with them my dramatic night in one of the street parties my date took me to. Again, Lisbon gave me that feeling of a city of joy, music and color, a feeling that would sometimes fade in the every-day routine…. Earlier in the evening I received a puzzling message asking me if I have an apple in my room. I didn't understand it at the time but just before going to bed, I realized that Tristan was asking about his MacBook charger which he had forgotten in my room. I entered the room and to my surprise, the charger was still there, he hasn't entered my room to take it. I told him he should have done it… In the morning, he went to the beach with his boyfriend to surf, and announced to me that I can stay today as long as I want, and so, he spared me from my long and hot wandering around the city between this check-out and the next check-in…"*. (From note L16).

Tristan's story is a small one, of small gestures between two parties, a host and a guest, who knew how to help and trust each other. This trust is what has allowed Tristan to feel comfortable with

me staying in his house, by putting Airbnb regulation behind. Surprisingly enough, while Lisbon has the highest frequency of mini-cases with a market or touristic orientation, it is also the city in which interactions with most mini-cases have flourished quickly, and artificially, became situations of acquaintances. Another such example is the story of Branca (L09), which would be further told. Branca is retired, as her husband, and her daughter and her British husband have returned from the UK back home to Lisbon with their new baby. Airbnb was a chance for Branca to experience new adventures and practice English, and for her husband to tell his great stories of being one of Lisbon's first urban architects. My relationship with Branca started extremely well, as I responded happily to the fluffy attention seeker who is their dog. Branca took me across the enormous house right in the middle of Saldanha. After a quick rest, I was in for a surprise. *"...coming back from one of my 'going-out-to-look-normal' excursions, Branca, who was dining with her entire family who were just about to begin the drinking part, seemed to be waiting for me. She first tried to convince me to move to another room, as she thought that the bed in my room did not fit my long legs at all, and she was worried that the baby would disturb me. I reassured her that this one night isn't worth the trouble (and indeed, I slept just fine), and she encouraged me to join the table. We spent hours there, making jokes with the daughter's witty husband, chatting with the daughter, and receiving plenty of historical information about the city of Lisbon. This dear family has taught me that night about green wine, which made us all collapse in bed at the end of that long night. In the morning, as I was about to set off, I decided not to leave without saying goodbye this time, and so I waited for one of them to leave their room to inform them about my leaving. To my embarrassment, it was the daughter who got out of the shower with only a towel on her. But she did not get confused at all and started a long conversation, which included two hugs. I knew, once again, that I was trusted..."*. (From note L09).

Indeed, the frameworks which operate under the interaction types of acquaintances and friends, has precisely the potential that Airbnb promises in its advertisements. And they, in return, could be unforgettable. Alas, those very types of interactions are at the center of Airbnb's ability to strive through this social service, as it would be discussed furthermore.

4.5 Discussion – **Mice and men**

- **Pets are the best hosts**

The findings displayed in this chapter offer an intensive view of what is to be considered as the most intimate interactions and in the most hidden and shut space in the western and urban age. In such a special arena such as at home, interactions are the result of a unique type of infusion between domestic settings and norms, and the urban marketized order and image, which serves and is designed to create more productions and tracks in which consumption would grow and increase.

However, this infusion is expressed differently and has different implications when it is manufactured by the design of the Airbnb service, creating a ritual of interactions, when it sprouts from the structure of home[126], and in the fashion in which hosts and guests perceive and imagine the service and the experience. For the SAH, The ritualistic interactions are the ones that start and end the service. Those interactions, often imposed on the SAH, are the interactions that create the required 'evaluation', as a scope of the potential that this new Dyad, new relationship, could evolve into. Alas, such a potential does not imply that relationships between SAH and their guests tends to have such a scope. In practice, SAH rarely reach deep interactions with their guests, as they limit it by their approach to hosting and their intention to interact in the first place. Adaptively, SAH tend to reduce their ritualistic interactions, as Airbnb initiates solutions that would make such an interaction redundant.

In addition, the ritualistic interactions and the non-ritualistic interactions have some significant differences that occur with or without planning, they flourish according to the space they are occur in, and create a positive or negative continuation of the relationship. Those experiences, along with the SAH's own approach, lead to redesigning the house, if by shutting doors behind what used to be public domestic spaces (as the living room), or by centralizing the space so it would be a space of control and interaction. The interaction, for some, serves as a key to control and knowledge, knowledge they need from a resident of their home, under the idea of hospitalization, safety, or agency.

The complicated, multi-motivated, and hesitated interaction between the SAH and the guest, often dichotomized in the way in which pets break such rules, and thereby they transform, countless times, into the bridge to quick reassurance of one another, into 'ice breaking' moments, and

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[126] Which would be discussed thoroughly in the 6th chapter of this findings part - 'If on a Winter's Night a Traveler'.

eventually, into different forms of intimacy. Pets are able to do so because of their typical characteristics, the same characteristics that have domesticated them and turned them into 'pets' in the first place. But more importantly, because of their ability, and especially, their legitimacy to skip and move between the stages of human relationships quickly and with minor risks. This ability is also the one that leads to a possible manipulation and influence on the Dyad. Pets, are, in most cases (in the urban sphere, in which pets normally lives inside the house), part of the domestic cultural and emotional state. Because pets are always at home, they become a substantial part of the appearance of the house, its smell, its sensual warmth, and its sounds.

Furthermore, pets require our attention, because it is probably one of the few examples of a semi, emotional, and interactive relationship with a subject that is not human. The tendency of many to react and interact with pets as if they are 'intelligent beings' (and of course, in many senses they indeed are), creates a substantive emotional and even familial perspective, which leads to a relationship, with a history, experiences stages and periods[127]. When a guest encounters such a pet who is already accustomed to the visitors arriving and leaving home, the pet and the guest can quickly create a connection, which in fact creates such a manipulation on the relationship between the host and the guest. In other words, the pet is not only a possible trigger for a progress in the interaction between a host and a guest, but it can also signify something else.

- **There is beauty in this home**

*"... "What is the point of it? Get a couple of cheap thrills? Some surprises? But it's not enough. It's not about giving the **guests** what you think they want. No, that's simple. The titillation, horror, elation... They're parlor tricks. The guests don't return for the obvious things we do, the garish things. They come back because of the subtleties, the details. They come back because they discover something they imagine no one had ever noticed before... something they've fallen in love with…"[128].*

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[127] As an anecdote, it is possible to draw this sociological relationship between pets and their owners, as in the book 'Julius Winsome', of Gerard Donovan, the protagonist, a loner who lives in the woods, goes out to a killing spree as an act of revenge after a hunter kills his dog, who was his only friend. The author draws a picture of an alienated and indifferent society, while the only pure things left are the plays of Shakespeare, his fortified home, and Hobbes, his dog.

[128] From the first episode of the television series *'Westworld': 'The original'*, by HBO. Directed by Johnathan Nolan and Lisa Joy (2016).

In 2016, a revolutionary television series in the name of '*Westworld'*, came out under the television network of HBO. *Westworld* has been perceived as such, because it has created a sophisticated and thoughtful plot, which in the first and best season, focused on a 'theme park', populated with highly advanced 'androids', that possess an advanced level of AI technology, a technology that made them incredibly authentic, as when with them, the rich visitors of the park could 'play'. Or in other words, enjoy a climate of the American 'old wild west', where everything is allowed, and so the human visitors can express their greater desire to sin, by killing, raping and abusing those poor robots, that soon enough in the plot, start becoming more and more conscious, until they begin to resist, and develop their own independent ambitions.

Weirdly enough, it is possible to find some key connections between the fascinating world of *Westworld*, to the one of Airbnb. First, the main distinction in the series, is between androids, that like the Airbnb SAH, are called 'hosts', and the arriving visitors, who are called 'guests'. Secondly, The androids are manipulated and programmed to follow certain narratives, and rituals (even when no guests are around), aside from their abilities to improvise and react according to the actions of the guests, all in order to create an authentic and life-like behavior. At last, the hosts are programmed to 'forget' pervious events, and thereby, reenter as new, or for the first time, in their own experience, into their narratives, if after they die, or at the beginning of a new day (or a new, broader narrative). Therefore, the 'hosts' are trapped in a 'loop', without the ability or conscious to escape.

Throughout that sensational first season, the viewers have the chance to debate in philosophical and technological questions concerning the morality of men, that obviously, refers to different historical events in the history of humanity, if in the era of slavery or colonization, while confronting the humanity of the android, and circumstances in which they are humanized, or treated as such. Alas, more than anything, the series presents debates on the very components of the conscious mind, and its role towards 'free choice' and agency. More than anything, the series emphasizes the role of the 'memory', as a key factor towards the evolution and conscious, in which an 'entity' does not only learn to interact with others, but also to interact with its own self, under the psychological theory of the 'The Bicameral Mind', that envisioned a step in the evolution of humankind through a 'conversation' between one side of the brain and the other, which raised what we know as the elusive concept of consciousness.

The way Westworld portrays the importance of memory, under a psychological theory, can now be met with what has already been discussed in this chapter, under the sociological theory. In accordance with Simmel's (1950) description of the interaction as a constant image which is shaped by past, present and future events, and as mentioned earlier in this chapter, pets can be thought of as creatures who learn over time, through staying at an Airbnb home where strangers come and go, that visitors are similar and different, like their own different approach and tendency to be affectionate as a result of past encounters, present ones, and natural risk management towards the future. As findings show, hosts, just like pets, create patterns of interactions with their guests as individuals, but only until a certain point. In the 2nd stage, the rhythm of visitors turns (most of) the guests, in the eyes of the hosts, into semi-single interactions, in which the past experiences, present ones, and the ones that become predictable in the future, and according to which, they behave towards guests in future interactions and encounters.

Therefore, new guests are perceived by hosts in a certain way, unconsciously, due to the repetency of the hosting practice, as in a loop, which results in the SAH's categorizing of them even prior to their arrival. SAH, unlike the hosts in *'Westworld'*, can develop (as they have a human memory which obviously lasts throughout their hosting experiences and throughout their entire lives), but they still stay in the loop, by categorizing guests by age, ethnic origin, and type of traveler, and they are able to quickly predict and respond to problematic guests and to feel more casual with easier ones. By categorizing them, SAH show a limited flexibility in their interaction scale. Its movement is in response to the uniqueness of each guest and their own will and capacity to give attention to that uniqueness (a capacity which is reduced over time). Their limitation, alas, is the result of that tendency to see the guest as a constant, one that is seen in one image, one self and one role in the theatrical scene, even when an interaction is absent or when no guests are staying at home.

As a result, it is clear now how the ritualistic scenes help the SAH feel as part of a loop, in which reactions of guests are predictable, and often, as most claim, boring and unchallenging. The ritualistic interaction helps the framing of the roles of hosts and guests, and increase the sense of repetition, and of that loop that ties, in the image of the host, all visitors to the same image and self. The non-ritualistic interaction, nonetheless, by following the settings and terminology of the relationship (if of a business, tourism or community-based interaction), and the categorization of guests, leads to repeated interactions with a ritualistic fashion as well. For example, a guest who

is looking for a direction to main attractions. A business-oriented host would see this guest as a client and would look to give them professional answers which would influence their final review. A tourism-oriented host would be familiar with the city's own touristic messages and this host would act as their ambassador. A community-oriented host would try to present to them sites that have a more social or authentic image to them. Only if the host becomes a friend of a guest, they would try to help by guiding the guest to their own favorite places, and they would also try to find out what the interest of the guest themselves is.

Following the work of Goffman (1967; 1978), each type of the relationships (from business to friendship), changes the very nature of the interaction, and in all aspects. In the technical aspect, hosts with a business approach find methods to conduct the ritualistic interactions in the best possible structure, by viewing different parameters which are important for a good interaction (as service, availability for check-ins and check-outs, and the quality of the room). For hosts with other approaches, interactions are set to create a cozy feeling, a sense of home, or a touristic experience. In the political aspect, each of the different settings creates small but different changes in the balance of agency among the host and the guest. In the business approach, the client has, in a sense, superiority (as the costumer is 'always right'), but on the other hand, domestic services are often considered out of context and detached from the business-service approach. The touristic approach puts the supremacy in the hands of the SAH, who is the local, the knowledgeable one, and the one 'with the right to the city'. In the community itself (which would be discussed in the next chapter), the upper hand clearly leans towards the guest, as the implications for the guest are normally minor. Only in a friendship, the political balance is truly set equally, to serve both parties suitably.

From the findings, it is possible also to witness a significant structural difference, as SAH put a lot of focus and attention on the energy they spend (from the 2_{nd} stage). In the business approach, SAH tend to view energy, also spent on interactions, as a calculated effort, which is designed by its short- and long-term revenues. In the touristic approach, interactions are considered especially repetitive and often redundant, but they also serve as part of their participation in the touristic scene, to the will (of SAH who wish to contribute to the representation of their country or city) or the reluctance (of SAH who see that service as an unpaid contribution to the general local effort) of the SAH. On the right side of the interaction scale, it is possible to notice a significant decrease

of attention or trouble with energy loss, and also attention to energy loss which can influence their dignity or self-worth, which is usually the case in the touristic and business approaches.

Finally, in the cultural aspect, each of the very prototypes of interaction creates conflicts in the domestic and cultural norms of interaction between SAH and their guests. These conflicts, in mini-cases in which a 'looking for an exit' is not implied, create compromises, if towards global norms of negotiation and trade, towards cultural and ethnic categorizations (interactions that are often defined by slow talking, simple messages, and responses to stereotypes of behavior and cultural knowledge that the guest might possess). It is not surprising that real sharing of multi-cultural interactions and multi-cultural ideas, essentially truly happen between acquaintances and friends, as the interest of the other person is risen and leads to positive interactions of cultural sharing (Blumer, 1986).

The fashion in which those compromises lead to changes, and the nature of the relationship is creating different types of interaction, create a severe influence on the SAH's domestic sense, but also in the fashion in which the SAH establish and divide relationships that are also outside the Airbnb service. This confusion is the result of the infusion of different and numerous directions in which the domestic space becomes their new habitat.

4.6   Conclusions – **Talk it out**

This chapter focused on unlocking the most intimate nuances in the interactions of the Airbnb service, by working and finding patterns which would reflect on the meaning of the interactions, in a number of aspects. The first, on the shape in which interactions are designed and the factors leading to that change. The second, on the shape of the influence of the interactions on the daily lives of SAH, in which home is no longer a space of domestic and friendly interactions, but a cluster of cultures, agendas and different settings of negotiations.

by understanding the model in which interactions occur, in different scales, it is possible to get a wider image of the implications of interactions that are performed daily, and demand the bending of space into different structural rules, which, along with the Airbnb service itself and home changing (that were described in the previous part), create a dramatic, even if silent, distortion of the SAH's lives, that are heading for a change.

In the wider frame, the tendency towards business orientation teaches quite a lot on the manner in which a social service in performed in practice. In many occasions, it is possible to say that the 2nd stage is what drives Airbnb from a social service, an experience for both parties, to a business model, in which the infusion of (almost) all guests into one self, creates a loop, an exhaustion, whose first impact is to reduce and reject the social and cultural potential of the service. In the next part I would draw upon the last influential and interested party in the service of Airbnb. Airbnb itself.

"...Now it was not so quiet and peaceful at night.

Now the lights of the city were bright and very close,

and the street lights shone all night.

"This must be living in the city," thought the Little House,

and didn't know whether she liked it or not.

She missed the field of daisies

and the apple trees dancing in the moonlight.

Pretty soon there were trolley cars

going back and forth in front of the Little House.

They went back and forth all day

and part of the night.

Everyone seemed to be very busy

and everyone seemed to be in a hurry..."[129]

[129] Written by Virginia Lee Burton. From the book *'The Little House'*, Houghton Mifflin (1942).

5. *'The Power of The Lightning', (or),*
The social and technological role of Airbnb

5.1 Introduction

As thoroughly discussed in the theoretical part, technology, as an integral part of human development, is a key factor in the shape of social order and the practice of the daily and routine of the day (Zilberman, 1998; McLuhan, 2008; Innis, 1949). Technology, additionally, is the trigger for an outburst of a new perception, in which information is the goal and the tool for competitive advantage, and in different contexts, of agency that was previously dominated by money and arms, and is now led by the control of the message, and the unlimited knowledge of society and its actors (Castells, 1996; 1997; 2004).

Ironically, Airbnb is a fine example of the mechanism in which knowledge is gathered nowadays, but in its passive role in the situation. As learned, Airbnb itself is using other different digital services, that allow the company to offer a convenient display of the data they need on the smartphone, mapping, instant messaging, profiling identifications and easy payment methods, without which, Airbnb could not create the image they now possess, of a trusted, safe, and credible enterprise to use as an accommodation solution, or a new business, or a hobby (Dijck et al., 2018; Constantinides et al., 2018; Romero & Vernadat, 2016).

By using such an application, Airbnb grants access to the largest infrastructure enterprises, as they are referred to, such as Google, Facebook, or Apple. Those enterprises use the data they obtain from hundreds of similar applications, their own or of third parties, like Airbnb, in order to create and craft new knowledge, for business or for advertisement proposes, but also in order to use that knowledge to obtain more knowledge that would deepen their structural control on the cyber space, towards new and old ambitions, some of which are yet hidden, and others place those organizations as the new global influential actors of the future.

In this wider scenario, that aims to portrait a current and a future image of social order and the fashion in which cyberspace becomes more and more evident in real daily lives and global affairs, Airbnb is only a 'pawn' in a much bigger game. In practice, it is another tool in the toolbox, which is plausible and legitimate in the global market only because of the services provided by the infrastructure enterprises.

It is also possible to imagine, that this structure of acquiring knowledge in the effort of categorizing it and shaping value from it, for the sake of dominance and advantage, is a process that reproduces in the lower level of that imagined pyramid. Therefore, it is quite likely, and also declared, that Airbnb itself, and so do many other similar services in different markets, crafts knowledge and uses it to improve their advantage and enforce paths and trends that would increase their success (Bion, Chang & Goodman, 2018; Bratianu, 2017). Airbnb, it is important to note, is a private company, whose headquarters, the founders, set to become a public company, traded in the stock market, with declared ambitions in the accommodation market as a whole, unprofessional and also professional. Already today, Airbnb is often compared with the largest most successful hotel networks in the world, that like in the game of monopoly, compete with prices, territory, or bed counts (Ji-hai, & Qin, 2016; Gyódi, 2019) .

Alas, while Airbnb is a relatively small actor in the global knowledge race, Airbnb's uniqueness in creating and designing a service that is physically provided at home, sheds a new and fascinating light on the manner in which Airbnb uses the acquired knowledge. That is because, and as already mentioned in the theoretical part, the use of social and virtual communities in order to improve the service and give more credit to the successful producers on the expense of others, less successful, as in the famous example of TripAdvisor[130]. Airbnb's review system, for example, is nothing that was invented by Airbnb, and exhaustive work was held on the topic, regarding its commercial aspects, strategic models, and its social innovation, such as putting the users in front by giving them a voice (Bridges & Vásquez, 2018; Zervas, Proserpio & Byers, 2015).

Alas, in this chapter, I wish to put my focus of attention on the implication of such a use of data, as it is reflected in the daily lives of the hosts, and as vivid and influencer actor in what was called the Dyad in the previous chapter, and now becomes a Triad (Simmel, 1950). When viewing Airbnb as part of the imagined (past-present-future) interaction, and the ritual, the design of ritualistic and

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[130] A service that still shares a great success worldwide, despite some serious accusations towards them for preferring businesses that paid to create fake reviews and rankings, opposite to the core concept of the TripAdvisor service.

non-ritualistic interactions between a host and a guest, the imagination is of a non-social actor who is playing a social role[131]. Meaning, one whose actions have implications on the relationship between the host and the guest, and one that could be understood by having a scope of information that can turn into knowledge.

In this frame, it is important to make a distinction between the result of what Airbnb is doing, by using their technology, and Airbnb's actual intentions. The only possible clues for intention, which were drawn (in a limited way) from Airbnb's own declarations in the press, and Airbnb messages in advertisements. Both were not included, officially and scientifically, to the scope of this research, due to the very primary decision to focus on the hosts and SAH's experience alone. Therefore, the intentions of Airbnb should be taken carefully, by taking only figurative interpretations.

However, the ability to obtain data considering Airbnb's policy and actions, by using technological tools, is helpful for achieving a more complex image. First, an image of a system that is not neutral, but it was built and designed by the vision of interest parties, with declared and obvious intentions (as a wide vision of the enterprise, as a major factor in the tourism and accommodation market), that has the technological tools to enforce that vision through technology. But secondly, and more importantly, an image of a system that has a structure and characteristics to influence the social interaction and the shape of social behavior (Edquist & Riddell, 2000; Allen, Potter, Sharp & Turvey, 2012).

To establish a theoretical framework for such a claim[132], I found it extremely fruitful to use Latour's theory, the Actor-Network Theory (ANT), which is considered a critical and an alternative theory to the Social Constructionism, that views the social order as a result of social processes (Latour, 1987, 2005). Reality, according to the important and sociological basic theory, is the result of human interactions, and the meaning which people, in a given society and culture, give to certain ideas and values. This theory is the foundation of theories of mass communications, which resembles the power of the popular culture and communication platforms such as the

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[131] It is important to specify on the difference between the social actor in the image of pets, and Airbnb, as one has and obviously very short-sighted field of vision of the interaction with the guests, and no attention whatsoever to the relationship that could prosper between the SAH and the guest. In the case of Airbnb, they are in charge of that interaction, as well as responsible for it. And as I would try to demonstrate in this chapter, they also have an interest in the shaping of the interaction between the hosts and the guests.

[132] A claim which is demonstrated in the same fashion, by referring to the meaning of domestic objects, as they would be discussed in the 7th chapter of these findings – '*the de-domestication of home'*.

television, or the radio, as fundamental tools in preserving and eternalizing certain norms and values in society, over others, in favor of a certain hegemony, that has the cultural and social control over such platforms.

Latour's theory, however, views the social sphere as a network, in which all actors are presumably equal (or have the potential to be so), and each system is the result of smaller components that hold a relationship among themselves. According to Latour, no social behavior, or social action, can exist outside those networks. Latour, who was in the business of studying the effort of conducting science, and examining the relationship between the researchers and their subject, believes that sociological work cannot avoid including all actors who are part of the social action, as without of all of those actors the image would not be completed, or would not reflect reality.

Therefore, Latour puts his attention especially on the importance and the centrality of non-human actors, and their ability to shape and determine the outcome of a social interaction, as they, often, are the tools for 'translation', a term that comes to represent a single actor, one that is both a part of a network (like other small networks, non-human actors as well as individuals), and a network of itself (unless it is an individual). The 'translation' is part of the translation theory, that Callon (1984) defined by four processes. The first, the process of 'problematization', in which the entity (as a network) is built for the sake of solving a social problem (any problem is social as long as it is part of the human perception). The process of interessement, in which the actors enter the role that is expected of them for the sake of finding solutions for the problem. The process of enrolment, in which the actors are defined and recognized in their role and its social meaning. And finally, the process of mobilization, in which selected actors become the 'face' of the network, who act as their representation and representative actors. Those, eventually, are the processes that lead ideas, values, and intentions of different actors to actions which are displayed in the social space.

Understanding the reshaping of influential networks and their establishment, by taking into full account their non-human actors, who in the frame of Latour's theory, are equal actors, in a reality that is less a society, but rather the sum of its connections and networks. It is easy, therefore, to imagine how Latour's exchange of society with the connections, can be a key idea that could help completing a full image of the Airbnb service as a social action, but it is effective for two additional reasons. First, Latour has a special interest in technology and its tendency to deeply merge into the most basic and fundamental social behavior. Latour, is his work, focuses on cancelling the dichotomy between the subject and the object, by claiming, that throughout the human

development, technology and technologic advancements, have turned technology to be more visible and part of the social world, until the point in which it is no longer possible to make the distinction between non-human and human actors.

Latour's work is even more relevant to technology when it is compared to Ihde's work (1990; 2002; 2004) on the relationship between people and technology. Ihde, as well, sees the need to cancel the dichotomy between objects and subjects, but is more interested in the way the human condition 'experiences' the transformation of technology to a navigator of many social actions. Latour, however, sees a bigger system, in which people's use and experience of technology is only one aspect, that suggests the ability of different actors, and especially within the abilities of technology, to gain agency that is part of the technology itself, a part of the ones controlling it or built it in the first place.

Secondly, and lastly, Latour's ANT is relevant, as many scholars, such as Knorr-Cetina (2013), view the non-human actors, in the frame of ANT, as 'epistemic objectives', or as knowledge objects, in which any actor, or entity, has a value and influence in and of itself. Knorr-Cetina emphasizes the power of knowledge and information in our days, as the new 'capital', which is acquired in the new work-market, and the actors in the network, who most influence the social order and the behaviors of its actors.

In this frame, this fourth part of the findings would focus on the manner in which Airbnb is playing as an actor, and how small technological features play an active role, in the general design of the hosting behavior, as well as in the small and micro-interaction between SAH and their guests. While this part of the findings, as most parts, heavily leans on the ethnographic work and on the interviews taken, in this part, the virtual ethnography played a significant role, such as the insights and understandings taken from the actual methodological efforts.

5.2 General Airbnb technological actors

Technological actors in this theme, refers to technological applications that are noticeable, by the participants themselves, or by their behavior. Technological applications are ones that create or become a part of a problem[133]. Such a problem is often the result of one of three possible scenarios during the Airbnb experience (among SAH). (1) **A dilemma**. The most common problem that

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[133] Problem in the sense that Latour defined as a problem, as explained in the introduction of this part.

evolves the technological actors are of dilemmas, in the sense that the SAH have choices to take. One is of the direction in which the technological actor creates manipulations towards its (or its creators) own interest, and another, that reflects the SAH's own stand towards the problem in a better way. (2) **A negative situation**, in which an actual (one-time or steady) problem occurs, towards one or more guests, which technological actors can respond to. For example, a conflict with a guest leads to a bad review and a lower ranking. A situation that activates the review system as an actor, and other systems that create the order of listings on the website, the host's reputation as a super-host, etc. (3) **An opportunity**, in which a new technological service or application is emerged and leads to changes of micro situations or general decisions that affect the entire experience, as well as on the level of intensity of hosting and exhaustions.

More often than not, all three prototypes fit the same situation, or the same technological service at study. However, this theme would focus on the dilemmas and opportunities that SAH stumble upon throughout their hosting experience, and especially in the movement towards the 3rd stage. Or in other words, the accumulation of technological influences, along with other influences that were mentioned in last chapters of the findings (home change, guests and interactions with guests, etc.), directing the host into a turning point, in which significant changes are required.

Before the turning point, dilemmas tend to be very subtle, daily, and hardly noticeable in 'real time', while usually it is noticed only when reflecting to the past and the actual change in behavior that was caused due to those dilemmas.

▪ **Service characteristics**

SAH throughout their hosting experience, tend to make some significant changes in their technical features. They can, virtually, decide if to work on weekends, or to avoid it. They can choose if to allocate a permanent 'day off' between each hosting experience, which could allow them to rest but also to properly prepare the room(s) for the next guests. They can choose if to 'close' specific dates at any time, as long as guests did not already order those days. In addition, SAH can choose the check-in and check-out times, minimum or maximum days of stay, etc. Airbnb uses a complicated technological system to ensure that hosts do not use those tools to cheat incoming guests, by blocking the ability to change those basic terms of service too often, on the one hand. On the other, cases reveal that Airbnb uses the system to give suggestions and to give accurate speculation of possible intensity and final financial outcomes.

While in the 1st stage those suggestions are the cause of trial and error that helps the SAH understand their boundaries, in the 2nd stage those decisions turn into dilemmas, creating a conflict for the SAH, between home's needs and their success. It is important to note, that often, SAH do not necessarily evaluate this success by a certain expected income, but by other criteria, if of social or cultural influence on the domestic space, a recognition by the Airbnb community, and even the very will of placing the Airbnb service as work, with a routine that resembles work. Such is the mini-case of Graziella (M35), a Milanese woman in her late forties, who has found in Airbnb a possible atmosphere of a workplace. *"... I could work a little more, because they (Airbnb) told me I should, but I can also earn more, because anyway, at that time, and in general, the field I work in (working as an actress and then as a newspaper sales woman), at the same time it was just impossible to find a regular job ... Obviously, I love to work, but in this situation ... I had to earn something but also to get me some employment. So for example, this morning I ironed, yesterday I took care of two houses. House cleaning, in any case, is a job. It is important to have a job, even for the relationship with the people, because I love it, meeting people, it is satisfying, also doing a way ... like saying ... there's a certain flow here, you love who's coming , They love you, you become a super host, the reviews come, it is a system that works, gaining a reputation, and I love it..."* .

Graziella, is a very aware example of the commitment that the technological system creates without the need of having human actors who trigger that social behavior.

- **Price Autonomy**

Price is a key factor in the experience of hosting among Airbnb hosts. Naturally, Airbnb hosts can determine their price rates, and also reduce the rates in occasions in which a guest is interested but undecisive. Here again, Airbnb uses its crafting knowledge in order to offer the host the preferred price range[134]. While in the service's characteristics SAH can only suspect a punitive aspect in Airbnb's policy, in the price range, many cases report that sanctions have been imposed on them when choosing a different price range than it was suggested to them, which is expressed the most by manipulating the order of listings that is shown on the website. Such a punitive tool is mostly effective, as mini-cases report many incidents in which their flow vanished and then outbursts once

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[134] As mentioned in the 2nd part of the findings – *Airbnb Spirit*, Airbnb uses that system to show their guests the possible profits if they choose to become Airbnb hosts. In such cases, Airbnb knows how to calculate the average price rate in the city which the guest is coming from, and to multiply that rate by the nights they are away from home.

again within weeks. Airbnb's ability to create smart calculations is not useful, but it is dramatic, as Airbnb plays the navigator. Influencing the prices by using knowledge also means controlling the market, and thereby, they have the agency to play with supply and demand.

The ability to control the price range, also reduces the ability of SAH to target different sectors in the touristic population, or to create a useful screening of guests so they could match their expectations and needs. In addition, such control also denies the host of their own ability to attain a competitive advantage by manipulating product prices or product populations, and so Airbnb is able to deny the empowerment of one user, gaining social capital, or advancing their place in the community. The ability of Airbnb to manipulate and influence prices, creates an obvious and unfair balance between Airbnb and its hosts. As Airbnb over the last decade has been strategically building up to become a major actor in the global tourism market, while its hosts are normally unprofessional private people, who often do not have any business orientation. Such a gap in the knowledge between the two parties, does not only give the advantage to Airbnb, but it also helps hide the gap in the first place, and thereby, Airbnb avoids any resistance. In the words of Lehava (J02, paragraph 2.2; paragraph 2.4): *"..."Um, I don't know. I had a problem. I was constantly pressured by all sides telling me I am taking too little money and so I raised the price and it stopped me completely. Just stop, from the moment I raised the price, they just stopped. And I went back to the previous price, but I told Airbnb, I don't know how it works. It stays for a month. I don't know how you lower the price because you can't change that month. So in my opinion, so far, I have the effect of the price. I said too. Someone told me, too, what's going on with the prices…but I don't know, I just don't understand it…".*

The tendency of many SAH to negotiate with Airbnb, without understanding the market, its tendency to go up and down according to seasons, weeks, and occasions, is in no sense supported by Airbnb. Instead, Airbnb constantly suggests using their tools for automatic pricing, and thereby, to move the very basic agency of SAH's own financial situation and work ethics, to a third party.

5.3 SAH and social capital

Continuing the technological attribute to the general characteristics of the Airbnb service, as described in the previous paragraph, when a host becomes popular, there is actually no evidence for that popularity. Airbnb, along with their many visual reincarnations throughout the years, makes sure to never put one home, or any home, in any potential or virtual 'showcase'. Reviews,

for example, which mention an extremely special experience or extremely terrible conditions, do not receive any different attention than other reviews. Thereby, Airbnb denies any possibility for 'virality', a virality which is needed for a user to gain value as a result of their actions and social behavior. While Airbnb's policy not to give additional exposure to equal hosts can seem fair, but in practice, it pulls the rug out from under the concept of community, as a first aspect, and leaves Airbnb to be the only actor who can potentially lead to lesser or higher exposure.

Even in Airbnb's work in the social media, a work whose purpose is to spread messages of the uniqueness of every Airbnb home and every space, and the message of a community that is Airbnb, there is no actual data on the listing itself, when Airbnb shows such a unique home. Although Airbnb uses Facebook and other virtual profiling systems to create a faster profile processing on their website, that connection is useful only for Airbnb itself, and does not allow additional connections that could give substance and value to the profiles of the users, so they indeed could create such social capital and use it to their advantage.

Nonetheless, the answer as to how Airbnb hosts still sense success is still at question. From the data collected, a sense of success is tied to a sense of a steady and strong rhythm of guests, reaching the goals that Airbnb had set (to become, for example, an Airbnb super-host), the occasional visits of guests that have booked a room because of recommendations of friends (a major key to the sense), and a 'reputation' in the local community. The reputation in the local community, is only rarely the result of Airbnb hosting alone, but it arrives from the host's other activities in the city, if in the touristic sector, the social one, or even in the political sector. Surprisingly, this sense of success, was almost completely absent in the mini-cases of Milan and Lisbon, and somewhat more common in the mini-cases of Jerusalem. In this city, success stories made the Airbnb experience become one of an entire home climate, in which guests become a natural part of home.

One of the typical Airbnb Instagram posts

No digital connection between Elsa's home and the listing

Such is the case, for example, of Yulia (J05), who has quite a unique story. Yulia, a Russian born Israeli in her 30s, started working a few years ago in one of most popular institutes of Jerusalem's nightlife. Yulia and the pub owner fell in love and started running the place together. Although the pub is very popular and accepted in the city, the scene of drugs and electronic music all night long disturbed the neighbors, and it eventually led to an agreement in which the two had bought the entire old building that stands above the pub, and started living it. Because of the loud noise, they understood that they could not rent the place to permanent tenants, and decided to do Airbnb instead, in their own home, and in the other apartments in the building. Although Yulia discusses a very interesting process, in which, over time, the pub has changed its nature, and the scene of drugs and wild parties until the morning no longer exists there (but still keeps its positive reputation as one's of the most popular pubs in the holy city), the average traveler would still find it hard to have a good night sleep before another early morning of touring the city.

Therefore, Yulia has a very steady ritual in which she makes sure that guests are aware of the very particular type of old and crumbling building, and that the pub's clients usually sit on the front door stairs and roll a joint. Over time, Yulia says, Airbnb has become part of the pub, and the pub became part of Airbnb, as they offer a unique experience, one that in fact creates the arrival of guests that had former recommendation, but outside of the Airbnb 'community': "… *We live above*

our pub, there is music, very loud music, people always sit outside, the atmosphere is of a smoking house. So I am trying to explain guests that they are not coming to a sterile environment that is a five-minute walk from the Wall. It is a five-minute walk from the Wall, but it is a completely opposite world than they would find in the Jewish Quarter. For that matter, this pub is considered the hottest bar in this city for years, in all respects ... In terms of music, in terms of the people who spend time here. Now, as mentioned before, it has changed a bit and grown but it is still such a 'place', you know. Where everything can happen and always open and people have sex in the bathroom and things like that. Even though it is so repulsive that ... I don't always understand the employees of this place, it always disgusted us. But obviously, it happens, the image of this pub is of a dark hallway you walk into, you see as if full of people just dancing in such a common hallucination, and there's smoke everywhere…Airbnb is part of this, and the pub is part of the Airbnb experience now…". (From note J05).

5.4 Mechanism of booking

the lightning symbol has been shaped to be one of the more interesting Airbnb features, as in many cases, it creates severe dilemmas, and quick and visible effects on the SAH. The lightning symbol is an option, that if chosen, allows the guest to make an immediate booking, without the having to receive the host's consent first. In practice, hosts have the ability to cancel those orders, but they feel obliged not to do so, regardless of having a good reason for the cancellation. SAH know very well, and are aware of the support which Airbnb gives to instant bookings, as hosts who decide not to use that option, are put back and their chance to enjoy a good steady rhythm of guests is lower.

Alas, the instant booking feature has many implications, as guests can make a reservation for the same day, and thereby, create a mayhem in the SAH's schedule and daily plans. Pietro (M39), a Milanese father who has initially engaged with Airbnb as an additional occupation for his daughters (and to afford their expensive extracurricular activities, after his divorce), explains about the risks of using this feature, *"... I don't want to do Instant booking, because I want to talk to people, to know how they are, to know when they will come and the like. I want to know who comes into my house. I want to know how they are. It is not a hotel, it is my home! And in the end looking at their reviews ... It is not just because of my kids, it is a little more because of them, but not only,*

it is my house ... I have a little more caution because of them but that's not the point, the point is that you have an automatic check-in here, so where is my home?…".

Pietro raises an important point, which was brought up more than once, that this feature alone can cause an experience of losing control over the house, and over the flow of incoming and departing guests. Nevertheless, instant booking is only one but a key example of the nature of technological actors who influence social behavior and social order. In general, reservations are a major issue in under the Airbnb service, as they are one of the main and fundamental aspects of the service, which is under the control of Airbnb. therefore, hosts are requested and supported to choose cancelling regulations that would increase bookings, by standard methods of other online platforms that offers accommodation solutions.

However, in mini-cases in which hosts cannot host, or decide not to host a guest, Airbnb tends to impose sanctions against the host. Such as placing an automatic review in the host's profile that indicates the cancelation, and the number of days the host cancelled before the actual stay. After a number of cancelations, hosts enter an automatic detention, and lose their ranking or super host rank. Such incidents happened to many of the hosts, because of misunderstandings with the guests, mistakes with dates, or emergencies. Alas, Airbnb does not offer solutions to such mishaps, but rather, a punitive and deterring policy.

5.5 Super host and Airbnb Plus

One of Airbnb's newest initiatives, which started at a very late stage of this research, and which none of the mini-cases have used at the time, is the Airbnb 'Plus' service. It is a service that allows good hosts, super hosts, to become part of an exclusive list. Entering the list costs a significant amount of money, and members are subject to a long list of rules and standards, as Airbnb especially vouches for them. Airbnb Plus is clearly aimed at the business-oriented hosts, whose ambitions are to grow and becomes Airbnb Lords. While 'Plus' is another of Airbnb's shifts from unprofessional social hosting to a 'hotel-oriented' service, the Airbnb super host is an old and respected institute of Airbnb, which the enterprise grants once every three months, to members who manage to display a high rate, with no negative experiences, or cancelation.

For many, being an Airbnb super host is a goal. Sometimes even an obsession, that people with and without financial ambitions share equally. And indeed, the 'quest' for the super host rank, is

sometimes unexplainable, by the participants themselves, or by the contribution of this ranking to their social or financial intentions. Yotam, who was already mentioned in the first part (J15, paragraph 2.5), a social worker from Jerusalem, shares his thoughts: "… *We are currently standing at 4.7 (out of 5). It is not very high, it is not a 'super host', and because we have so many reviews, 170, it is very difficult to reach 4.8, I need like about 45 reviews of 5 perfect to get to it, it is difficult. And people think that for a five you need to get a hotel room. And the Israelis, don't get me started, there was now an Israeli couple who didn't realize I was living in the apartment, so I let him cancel everything and I gave him back the money, and he got all the money and found another place, and in the end he gave me four stars, but why, why to act like an asshole? And my friend tells me, what do you care about it, you have as many reservations as you want, you have enough reservations, what do you need the super host? What will happen? And I don't know (laughs), but I heard about the Plus now, I am very interested about it, do you have some details about it?...*".

During the evening of the interview, in his chase after the desired super host rank, Yotam tried to bribe me with two pints of Guinness so I would order a stay at his place, cancel, as he would pay me back the money, and give him five stars and a positive review.

5.6 Involvement of Airbnb's technological actors in micro situations

In the previous theme, the relationship between Airbnb and the SAH has been identified by situations that occur mainly in the virtual space, as these situations creates a chain of reactions that eventually penetrate the domestic space. In this theme, the focus would be on the influence of the cyber space on the terms of interactions, and the technologies that create an opposite result, in which situations that occur in the physical and domestic space, create meaning and value in the virtual kingdom. Such situations refer to a direct and much more specific and intimate influence of Airbnb on the every-day, and the interactions that occurs around the domestic space.

In addition, the idea that unites the services which are viewed here, is that all of them can be understood in a relation to other similar services, that create a different balance of knowledge centralization and information manipulation. Such a view is not only mine, but was noted countless times by the participants themselves, in the ethnographic work as well as in the different interviews. Such an insight about the virtual services which Airbnb provides its hosts and guests, sheds light on a very surprising truth. While Airbnb is a unique experience of home sharing in the

image of a community, they are also in charge of a very typical interface. An interface, which is, in many senses, designed to be known and become standard, so it could speak the same language and resemble many other virtual services. This gap between the non-innovative interface and the unparalleled service it provides, helps users feel in a 'familiar ground', create trust, and eventually, 'seal the deal'.

Alas, while Airbnb demands to be in charge of the operation for obvious reasons, Airbnb's own policy on its own cyber space, creates clear dissonances as interactions between hosts and guests start to engage outside the frame of Airbnb. In such cases, the perspective about Airbnb is demonstrated much clearer, and reveals the ideological and technical difficulties which Airbnb sentences their users in the name of security and information protection. Such policies are also the ones according to which the host's (and guest's) loyalty is being tested.

In this sense, choosing Airbnb is as choosing a community and a market space at once, which creates obvious comparisons between current and former rivals, and by questioning again their motives as they redesign over time135. Finally, the discussion about Airbnb's features and rules, is hardly heard, and has no significant space, in the virtual or the physical one.

- **Communication**

Airbnb is a fascinating case by itself, only because of its ability to create a very 'blocked', or confined system of communication, which is surprisingly almost a non-issue for Airbnb users, or the academy. Airbnb's system of communication is confined in several aspects. First, the instant messaging service blocks a variety of words and structures of virtual addresses, social media's names, and any possible piece of data that could help hosts and guests move their interaction somewhere else. The instant messaging service does not only block 'forbidden' information, but the service itself is also very limited. Two hosts or two guests cannot communicate together at all, while a host and a guest can only start communication by a guest's intention to book, which must be related to specific indicated dates.

From the methodological effort, it is easy to learn how this system, does not only limit and tackle communication, but also worries users, who are afraid to be sanctioned due to breaking Airbnb's

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135 The nature of changing motivations is implied throughout the scope of findings' chapters but has not been elaborated yet. It would, as the six-layer of influence over the host would be fully described, in the course of the 7th chapter – *'A Bull in a China Shop'*.

rules. In many occasions, this fear is the one that prevented further communication with potential interviewees, who were afraid of risking their job and income. In other cases, hosts learn (or are willing to learn) technics to avoid the technological system and to find ways to communicate to the point of moving to another service, usually WhatsApp or Facebook, there the communication is naturally open and limitless. Outside the system, hosts show an impressive variety of communication behaviors, which usually begins after the initial contact.

In most cases, hosts tend to exchange a very generic ritual of messages. Many admit to the importance they give to this exchange of messaging, as a reassurance of the 'normality' of a certain guest. In other cases, this exchange strongly leans on first gestures of 'good manners' and creates an agreement or sharing knowledge about the expected arrival of the guest, which is what troubles SAH the most. In other cases, SAH move (after booking the stay, Airbnb's blocking system is much less harsh, and both users receive the full name and phone number of the other party) directly to other communication platforms, usually WhatsApp or SMS texting, in order to have a more direct contact with their guest, and to be able to fix problems towards the first meeting.

In the rarest mini-cases, hosts tend to enforce or support non-Airbnb communication after the first meeting. The mini-case of Alessio & Giovanna (M36, paragraph 3.2), which has already been introduced, shows the importance of such communication, before agreeing to an order: *"... Oh yes of course we tend to screen a lot, maybe 30-40% of the time. From our perspective, there is much to learn from the way guests answer in the Airbnb chat, so we want to know before if something is not going to work ... anyway I am worried that the person will drive us crazy, that he will pay, understand the rules ... For example, there was a person who ordered 15 days for November, two months ago ... We were very worried, this is half a month, this is a lot ... We do not have a minimum and a maximum of days ... Most of them come for one night, maximum two, it is tiring but ...Look here (showing me the orders on her cellphone), there are four-day order, four-day, two-day, two-day bookings here ... no spaces between people ... and there is also an instant booking option ... so there was a 15-day order here, he writes the reason for arrival, explains that he is coming to Milan ... Okay ... Suddenly, at one point, he cancels a week ahead of time, which is his first time in Milan and so he is not decisive. Deciding what? What a dumb thing! I can't undo that ... what's wrong here? His head! He was some Indian who wanted to cook here, and I explained to him that it was not possible, and he tells me, but you did not understand, I just want to cook small things, but you do not understand, only small things, so it did not work ..."*. The ability of Alessio to create

a discussion with his guest could only be smooth because his guest had already made an order, an order that was canceled due to a poor, but important conversation between the two.

- **The review system**

the punitive side of the review system has already been discussed in the theme of this part of the findings, and would be further discussed in the next part, which would focus on the guests themselves. However, it is important to note and emphasize the importance of the review system as an actor in the interaction which is built by the host and the guest. As previously mentioned, Airbnb, as a policy, does not remove reviews of users who already have a record of conflicts with hosts, or even ones who have been proven to be telling a false story.

Therefore, interactions between hosts and guests are often colored by the potential of an escalation that would produce a negative review. The review system is extremely relevant, again, not because of its technological frame, which is not innovative, but because of the intimate situation of the interaction, which often leads to personal accusations and, or, to the exposure of intimate details which were discovered during the stay, about the host, their home and life style, which is the Airbnb version of 'shaming'. Meaning, an intentional act to spread negative and usually intimate details on another user on the web[136]. Because the host and the guest cannot technically see each other's review before posting their own reviews, the review system turns, every once in a while, into a small model of the 'game theory', in which each of the parties, and again, mainly the host, tries to imagine the other's review, so they would not be caught sending a good review while the other is seriously damaging their reputation.

As in many other review systems, Airbnb allows the host to comment once to each review, in which hosts need to decide how to respond to a bad comment. (1) SAH would usually respond with an explanation, which would help them create the image that what happened was a single episode. Returning comments on the same issue would limit the efficacy of such a comment. (2) SAH would not respond at all to a negative review, to reduce the attention to this review (Airbnb does not support any kind of sorting of reviews, as it is common in other similar services). (3) SAH would respond in an offensive manner, if by calling the guest's review a lie, rejecting the

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[136] Normally, the host can publish a similar type of 'shaming' on the guest. Alas, the effect is very different, as only future hosts would make the effort to check a guest's profile and view such accusations, while the host's profile has much more views and, unlike the guest, their profile is crucial for their ability to succeed.

complaints of the guest, or attacking the guest personally as a counter 'shaming' response about the guest's behavior or character. As in similar applications, the SAH's response would usually tell much more about the host than about the specific situation, if of the SAH's will to provide good service, their indifference, or inappropriate behavior.

More often than not, hosts who are technologically challenged, do not distinguish between the guest's review and the guest's personal message which guests is encouraged to leave along with the public review. In such situations, the host would be the one bringing up the conflicts that occurred during the service, while responding to 'accusations' which were not included in the public review in any way. Such a phenomenon was visible especially in Lisbon, and a mini-case from there could be useful for capturing some of the extreme situations which the review system leads to.

At one of my ethnographic efforts in the city, I had to drag my suitcase up and down the hills, arriving at Mano's (L04) small but comfortable home. For Mano, as for the many divorced men whom I encountered, especially in Milan and Lisbon, Airbnb helps cover the expenses of an extra room for their visiting child or children. Mano presents, along with his quiet dog, a 'rugged' image of a very sympathetic host, who is not service oriented at all. While there were no problems with the stay itself, looking at Mano's reviews justifies my own sense.

One of Mano's (L04) reviews and response

s is a friendly and responsive host.the location of the house is great very central to everything ..but the toilet was dirty full of dog fur even on toilet seat and the room was cold with a thin blanket without cover !!! it was too late to wake him up to ask for more blanket!

the only advice i can give it to you... is to drink less...talking about the toilet,hehehe well the other guests saw the way you left the floor of the bathroom and about the blanket that you are talking about actually it was the cover for the not one but guess ...two blankets/edredons that you had in the closet that i mention to you
vou the room....anyway besides those well ridiculous
vations...really,you should drink less...Best regards...

It is most likely, that Mano's review did not do much more than hurt his guest, whose social reputation stayed intact. Mano, however, showed a very negative side of his personality, a side that is now exposed 'forever' in the Airbnb community.

- **Competition**

While Airbnb declares and manages to effectively distinguish between their service and other accommodation solutions, and in light of those differences between Airbnb and others similar services, occasionally hosts work with other such services in order to manage and enjoy the flow of bookings. Some of the hosts have previously used older and smaller versions of hospitality services, which may have been with or without payment but still, community-based services. Alas, the most common service is CouchSurfing. The use of CouchSurfing is never in parallel, but it still raises a few points of reference, which mainly demonstrate the higher level of awareness that such SAH demonstrate. Such SAH, are indeed aware of big differences in the dynamic of interaction via Airbnb compared to CouchSurfing, as in CouchSurfing, in many senses, the responsibility is of the guest, to act friendly and socially, as the other party, the host, has already given something of their own, their home and a bed.

This responsibility and balance changes dramatically, as the guests are now the ones who contribute to the interaction, and now expect a certain kind of service in return, in which its social aspects are usually less important or desired. Instead, SAH are expected to 'behave', and to give 'respect' to the incoming guest and client, who is testing the service which was offered and paid for. SAH who used to host via CouchSurfing, during the application's heyday, normally believe that monetizing the process of hosting as Airbnb does, removes any social aspect, or a sense of solidarity which was so embraced by the dying CouchSurfing application.

The interesting case of Omer (J09), A woman in her late 20s, who has started working with CouchSurfing, but quickly switched to Airbnb, only so she and roommate could afford the increasing bills through hosting. Therefore, and although Omer lives in the most central street of west Jerusalem, one that is central yet conflicted with a social and national weight, right next to the famous market of Mahane Yehuda, she still offers accommodation that are priced only to cover their costs. Omer's mini-case is also unique, as unlike other mini-cases of movement from CouchSurfing to Airbnb, she did not change her home, and her visitors still sleep on the opening couch in the living room.

Alas, Omer is very aware of the differences between the current service of Airbnb and the older one of CouchSurfing: *"...There's not much of a difference, I still charge like 50 shekels a night (about 12 Euros), and they're still sleeping on the couch, but they (Airbnb) did demanded from us to prepare the house in another level. That was the difference, it is not that bad, moving a rug,*

changing bedding between every guest. At first, we also made breakfast, but we stopped it because we didn't have the energy ... After we had some old people problems that started. The stairs are very problematic in this old building, and there's no light in the building. The building also looks horrible, it is not really suitable for the elderly, and we hate it too ... so because of Airbnb's system, I always find an excuse, or I say that because of the stairs it does not fit some, I say we are not at home in those dates or something like that ... The website doesn't like that we refuse people ... the website doesn't like that we say no ... They are hard employers. We need to answer within 24 hours, or they go crazy, the website really are our employers, And they're really tough employers, they have many ways to get you to do what they want, if with the list or the reviews, cancelling is a disaster, really ... and I there are really legitimate reasons to cancel if I must ... if I'm sick, if I need to leave ... something happens, there is a leak, sometimes you have to cancel, and they are really taking it hard that I cancel. It always appears in your profile. This host canceled 15 days in advance ... something like that ... there was a time I refused to like 5 or 10 requests, so they froze my account ... so they're really tough with us ...".

While CouchSurfing is not a valid option to any of the mini-cases in this research, it is possible to say that a decent scope of SAH are aware of, have experienced, or still use some other services. Mainly, the popular service of Booking.com, but also applications such as HomeAway, or Uniplaces. Those applications give different levels of control on the reservation, between the host and the guest. For example, in Booking.com, every reservation is an 'instant booking', and no social aspects, or even the existence of a host, is expected. In Uniplaces, a service that aims on giving solutions to students, Erasmus students, and vising researchers, specializing in finding mid-term accommodation solutions for foreign visitors who cannot engage in a standard contract (as they stay for less than a year, usually one semester), but also wish to enjoy rates that would express their longer stay. In this application, the host has a relatively long period of time to decide whether to accept a reservation or not, while the communication between hosts and guests are limited until an order is finally placed and approved. Such a comparison, and SAH's stance to those different kinds of features and technological ordering processes, tend to find clear differences between the services, which on top of everything else, is the guests themselves. According to such findings, clients from other services tend not to know that the host actually stays at the house and tend to cancel orders much closer to the arrival date.

Alas, SAH who use the Airbnb service and initiate or start developing a business out of Airbnb, normally start checking the market and even start working with an additional service permanently.

5.7 Discussion **– Racing to change**

One night, in one of my moments of escapism from work, I decided to open a brand-new Gran Turismo Sport game that had been sitting on my shelf for three months accumulating dust and still in its wrap. Gran Turismo is a car race game that provides the most accurate experience and simulator of a real race, while using and operating real cars, on real racetracks around the world. While exploring the new features of the reincarnation of this game which I did not play since I was teenager, I noticed an interesting feature I do not recall from past playing. The feature obliges the gamer to participate in a three-course 'tutorship', in which the players learn about the foundation of sportsmanship. Without taking the course, the gamer cannot join the online tournaments (meaning, the gamer cannot play with others online).

The course does not discuss the rules of the game, the options, keys, or gives any preparation for the simple procedure of joining an online game. Instead, it serves the goal of educating the players to 'legal' driving. Norms of passing other cars safely, not blocking others who wish to pass the player, and the fundamental but sometimes not obvious prohibition to avoid 'physical' contact with other cars. While the game allows doing all of those things, on the online game, the system 'knows' how to locate such offenses and punish the player.

Gran Turismo in its latest version, is surprisingly quite similar to Airbnb's cyber platform. Like Airbnb, Gran Turismo maintains a community of players, most of whom invest much more time and attention than I do in this community. This community is based on a specific service, a unique one. In the case of Gran Turismo, this service is in the image of a realistic simulator that allows players experience and challenge their skills against other real players, while they are at home. A service that can potentially let them enjoy social prestige, social and cultural connections, along with sporting ambitions, and even significant financial benefits. Airbnb, in return, gives an alternative solution for accommodation, which is combined with social and cultural experiences.

While Gran Turismo uses its knowledge and technological abilities to preserve and maintain the quality of its declared service, the findings which were represented in this part of the findings, claim to prove that Airbnb is doing the opposite. Recalling the second part of the findings, 'Airbnb

Spirit' is such an elusive term, as those norms that 'Airbnb Spirit' comes to symbolize, are firstly, often generic, often vague, but secondly, and more importantly, Airbnb does not use their policy or technological abilities to enforce those norms in order to promise its hosts and guests the service they declare to offer (Dijck et al., 2018; Constantinides et al., 2018; Romero & Vernadat, 2016).

It is quite understandable why Gran Turismo is able to ensure the agenda, or the unique 'ideology' behind their service, and Airbnb seems to fail in doing exactly so. Gran Turismo's competitive advantage against other race games is their ability to offer not only a visually realistic simulator, but also the realistic norms of real races. Even if playing in a non-sportsmanship way could cause no physical harm, Gran Turismo wishes to represent itself, like many other games, as an actual modern new sport, which must be complied with certain rules. The case of Airbnb is much different. Airbnb competes against other accommodation solutions, which do not 'educate' their guests in any way. Airbnb's ability and desire to grow and become a major actor in the tourism market, cannot afford to focus on a niche community of hosts and guests. As a result, 'Airbnb Spirit' remains a common and useable concept, but one that has no solid written rules, norms, or a punitive system of its own.

On the contrary, findings show, that Airbnb supports and in fact, uses its technological abilities to limit and make it harder for host-guest interactions, in the effort of making them evermore technical and automatic. In fact, and as it has been demonstrated, evidences suggest, that Airbnb is aiming at cancelling interactions all together, as in a 'perfect' market, Airbnb guests and hosts would have exchanged houses regularly, and homes would become Airbnb homes, with no real SAH to enable those experiences upon which Airbnb was built and the Airbnb Spirit emerged.

And while Airbnb's future intentions are, perhaps, leading to a point of no-return in which its reputation as a real social business could be indeed at risk, the main goal of this part of the finding was to demonstrate the massive implications of technological systems on the course of social relationships, and on SAH's every-day lives, from the very specific micro-interaction to their accumulation into a possible trend, in which so-called social services lose their initial drive and turn into another capitalistic market system (Bion, Chang & Goodman, 2018; Bratianu, 2017).

As displayed in this part of the findings, and from what has already been learned in the theoretical part, the implications of Airbnb on interactions, and the tendency of the organization to escalate the natural conflict of interaction in the domestic space (as demonstrated in the previous chapters of the findings), could be a useful comparison to other similar platforms, such as CouchSurfing.

Such a comparison serves as a much better reference than Gran Turismo. Like Airbnb, CouchSurfing started as a social service, which focused on connecting different cultures by increasing the level of solidarity, through hosting strangers at home, but in CouchSurfing's case, for free (Slee, 2017; Wang & Nicolau, 2017).

Like Airbnb, CouchSurfing suffers from two very similar problems. The first, with the success of the service, it began 'absorbing' new users who have found or understood the different 'cracks' in the system and in its unwritten norms, and use it to explore romantic and sexual opportunities. This development made it more and more difficult for certain populations to enjoy the service, while other populations discovered experiences that did not comply with the CouchSurfing 'spirit' (Oskam, der Rest & Telkamp, 2018). The second, the capitalistic ambitions of its headquarters, that led the service to be viewed by its core members, the ones who have helped develop the 'spirit' of the service, as undermining the very principles of the community, and has increased the trend of non-communal use of the service (Molz, 2013; Geiger & Germelmann, 2015).

Airbnb, however, by viewing the findings, manages so far to legitimize much of its actions, as some see those actions as a necessary precaution, and others as 'part of the game', as Airbnb is looking for its own interests. Alas, the design of Airbnb's technological system does not only keep Airbnb whole, but it also gives Airbnb a footstep in the domestic space of SAH, a footstep which is as an expression of agency, as over time, the Airbnb technological system designs choices that SAH take, which over time gives a different perspective to the image of home and the sense of domestic comfort.

It is important to emphasize, that Airbnb's tendency to generate certain policies using their technological abilities, which eventually lead to a more business-oriented service, is only one type of a process among a few others, whose accumulation is the one leading to such a scenario. Alas, more importantly, it is, in my opinion, one of the strongest sociological examples of a phenomenon that can be defined as incomplete without considering the meaning of the technological system to the manner in which interaction and social behavior are not only designed, but also developed over time according to the accumulation of events that reshape interactions and relationships. Focusing on those influences, in the framework of Latour's theory, might raise the very question about the dominancy, or agency, each one of the actors of the network of the Airbnb service. It is easier to answer such a question, but focusing on the 'translation' process which ignites each one of the micro-situations in which interaction is influenced (Callon, 1984).

Doing so, gives some insights about the network which was built and design by Latour. First, the process of 'problematization', can suggest that all three parties, the host, the guest, or the Airbnb system can be the actors who initiate a definition of problem. Alas, learning from the finding, it is possible to say that regularly, problems occur in two situations. (1) in situations in which Airbnb challenges the hosts and their terms of hosting, and the fashion in which Airbnb presents the problem and gives the host a spectrum of options, which creates a dilemma. In this sense, Airbnb uses its technology to set some ground rules and to choose the level of freedom inside Airbnb's spectrum of interest. (2) In situations in which guest challenge the host on services or conditions that do not fit to the guest's expectations. In such cases, Airbnb becomes a responsive actor, who solves such problems by adapting the host to their interest.

Furthermore, the virtual space, as organized by Airbnb and Airbnb's policy, allows Airbnb to create processes of interessement, in which the other actors learn about their role and the expectations of their behavior in the virtual and domestic space, and thereby, Airbnb leads to certain rituals of interaction. Airbnb users learn their role and recognize it already in the enrolment process, in which they adapt an emotional, cognitive, and social identity of a host. This process adjusts the state of mind of the SAH, who learns to act and react in the new identity, that naturally shapes the interactions between them and the guests. Finally, the process of mobilization is not less important. In fact, it is the one that helps the understanding of the automation of Airbnb's system, as most of the time, the system itself is enough to lead to problem solving and interaction initiating, without the actual involvement of any of Airbnb's parties of interest and creators. In somewhat extreme situations, those representatives of the technological actors are the customer service personnel. Those rare conversations in which SAH engage with human contact that represents Airbnb, often gives in the true agenda of Airbnb, and its tendency to focus on an environment of market and reservations, and less on the experience itself.

In one of my last interviews in the research itself, I had a meeting with an old lady, in her late 80s. She welcomed me with a glass of tea in her private and impressive home in the heart of Jerusalem and told me about some of the stories of her long life. Ahava, who was already introduced in the previous parts of this findings (J14, paragraph 3.1), embarrassed me as she was more eloquent than I could ever be, about my understanding of the data collected, at that point. Ahava exploits, on a daily basis, her very far away daughter who lives with her family in the US, as the Airbnb website

and application gives her much trouble. Ahava is not confused, but knows that this technology is Airbnb's strength, and advantage over her.

"... I have the instant booking option, and I think it is a mistake, what do you think about it? It was my daughter's choice, because I told her, I don't want it, so she told me, so there will be a lot less reservations ... I don't want it ... I'm an untidy and unorganized person and I don't want that reservations would be approved if I am unaware of and have no control over them. Then they started threatening me, you won't be a Super host ... so I wasn't, and I don't want to be!!! I already have a boss, that's the website, and the bosses, are the guests, but I want to feel free, I want to set the rules! That's my problem with Airbnb, they control me, all kinds of new things new options and new services, and all the things they ask me to learn, learn more, in a complex and complicated site, it is an unknown land, and it has no end, so I have no power over them ... And there are rules and regulations, and Super host... don't want it! They, tacitly, they bend me to their discipline, they are my bosses, and I do not want them to be my bosses. We have a deal, you get a percentage of my income, and that's it, nothing more. And that's a part of capitalism, because they know how to persuade and motivate the people, and they tell them, be the best you can be ... we will value that 'best', so do the best you can. And they tell me about the social economy, what a laugh! Whatever, I am out!...".

5.8 Conclusions **– It does not take three to tango**

In this part of the findings, I wished to continue the in-depth exploration of the Airbnb triangle, between the hosts, guests and Airbnb itself, as in this text, the I have placed my focus on the Airbnb system, as a technological and non-human actor. The view over this triangle, in the frame of the work of Latour, allows the full understanding of Airbnb's influence on the happenings in the domestic space. Therefore, on the emotional and mental state of SAH, and their development of interaction drives and settings.

Continuing the work of the previous parts of the findings, this text was also helpful to view the two frames in which SAH experience the host-guest-Airbnb triangle, as one that is never constant, but has the tendency to keep changing over time and space. Time, as the on-going relationship of the Triad leads, from a sense of comfort and control, in the 1_{st} stage, to a sense of an unconscious compromise, which slowly changes home and the interaction with guests, as well as the relationship with Airbnb itself, to the verge of consciousness and a turning point (the 3_{rd} stage).

Over space, as the domestic space itself is changing and learning to adapt to different images of domestic interactions and domestic senses. Airbnb, as learned in this chapter of the findings, is a key factor in the blurring of the domestic features of the house, especially regarding the host's own vital contribution to those features and climate. Therefore, it was possible to determine with decent confidence, that Airbnb indeed plays a major role in creating a movement on the HGRS, towards the left side, and into a non-domestic and business culture of interaction, and hospitalization[137].

Nevertheless, it is defiantly important to be careful and not to attribute to the Airbnb system a direct intention for the results of the connections between the host, the guest and Airbnb itself. The declarations of Airbnb on capitalistic or organizational ambitions, along with those demonstrated in these findings, are not enough to claim a scientific link between the two. Instead, it would be better to perceive a larger image, that tells a richer story on the relationship and the future of relationships between the new individual, the user, and technology, and its massive capacity to continue redesigning human interactions.

[137] Hospitalization is another important aspect which has not been explored yet, as it would be in the 8th part of the findings chapter – *'The de-domestication of home'*.

"I hope all my days will be lit by your face

I hope all the years will hold tight our promises

I don't want to be old and sleep alone

An empty house is not a home

I don't want to be old and feel afraid

I don't want to be old and sleep alone

An empty house is not a home

I don't want to be old and feel afraid

And if I need anything at all

I need a place that's hidden in the deep

Where lonely angels sing you to your sleep

The modern world is broken

I need a place where I can make my bed
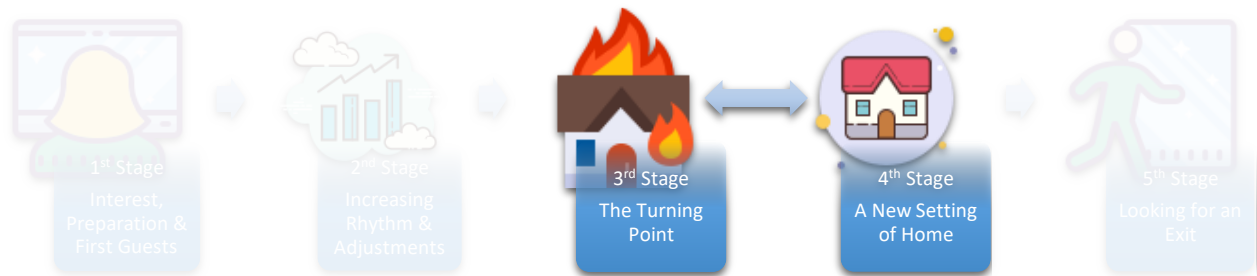
A lover's lap where I can lay my head

'Cause now the room is spinning

The day's beginning"[138]

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[138] Written by Tim Rice-Oxley. Performed by 'Keane'. From the song: *'Atlantic'*. From the album*: 'Under the Iron sea'* (2006).

6. 'If on a Winter's Night a Traveler', (or), Guests in the Image of the Turning Point

6.1 Introduction

As already well presented in the theoretical part, guests are considered a fruitful source of academic research, that can be seen as a work to understand a new kind of rising consumption, whether this consumption is understood in the scope of the 'sharing economy', the tourism market, or the global and technological innovation. In such academic work, as discussed, Airbnb is perceived as a 'sharing economy' service, whose success is derived by creating an attractive and aesthetic community, that manages to lure curious guests, as well as tourists who pursuit the 'living like a local' experience[139] (Cui et al., 2019; Srnicek, 2017).

In the previous parts, the Dyad, or the Triad of the host-guest relationship, focused on the presence of a guest, the interaction with the guest, and Airbnb's part in designing that experience (Simmel, 1974). In this text, I wish to present another angle of the image and behavior of the guest, as it is perceived by the hosts themselves. If until now, the guests were viewed as a somewhat homogenic population, but more importantly, as a passive and consuming part of the Airbnb service, in this part of the findings, I will try to demonstrate the spectrum of the guests, and their own perception of the experience, while engaging in between a social judgment of the Airbnb experience and a critical view of the Airbnb accommodation solution as exactly that, and as such, it should be valued by the standards which are accepted in the hotel industry.

Therefore, just as the SAH, guests come with an approach to the hosting experience, and a motivation for the trip, which may be contradictory to the expectations of the host, that could influence the balance between the nature of hospitality and a terminology of a service (Munoz, 2018). Certain fields of study in tourism and in anthropology do address this exact topic by creating

[139] An approach and a concept that would be further discussed in the 9th part of the findings,

interesting connections between the 'sharing economy' of accommodation solutions (which was discussed previously), and an entirely different, but rather new, urban phenomenon of Hosting Friends and Relatives (HFR), or on the other side of the coin, the phenomenon of Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR) (AlSaleh & Moufakkir, 2019).

Research on the subject has led to interesting though logical conclusions, on the negative and positive impacts of such type of hosting experience. On the bright side, HFR or VFR stands for a dual and unique experience, in which the host spends quality time with their loved ones in their most intimate and comforting space, home (Shani & Uriely, 2012). Such an experience often leads to a new feeling towards home and towards the host's hometown, which receives a perspective and a point of view of a tourist (a point of view that is naturally inspired by the guests). On the darker side, however, the nature of the close relationship between the host and the guests makes the hosting feel expensive, and mostly exhaustive, as the host is responsible for both the well-being and the enjoyment of the guests, and in addition to that, the nature of the HFR or VFR as a time-limited experience creates an emotional weight as well as a significant disruption of the routine, sense of privacy, and ability to cope with the duties of the daily lives.

Alas, the study on the subject had been quite numb until the mid-'90s, as it started being recognized as a possible significant segment of an economic-touristic potential, and as global trends have led to the dramatic increase in such types of vacations. Therefore, and as it regularly is with the concept of Airbnb, research tends to focus on the economic implications of the HFR or VFR phenomenon, by analyzing the routes and spending that such type of tourists consumes during their travel (Arslan Ayazlar, 2019; Griffin, 2013; Ramachandran, 2006).

By placing the glance on the hosts, themselves, it was found, that they significantly contribute themselves to the local economy, but by a consumption which is not necessarily touristic (such as shopping for extra food or filling gas tank for a trip with the guests). In addition, hosts of VFR are common to develop over time a different model of decision making regarding their consumption routines. Such a model is developed, it was found, as these hosts acquire a slow understanding of the importance of their knowledge and view as 'informants' for the visiting friends and relatives, and wish to represent their city and their hometown in the best way possible (especially when the city is less known). As it is already possible to observe some of the connections between hospitality and the 'sharing economy' perception of accommodation solutions, including Airbnb, such a

connection is deepening in the frame of the few works that have been done about the relationship between hosts and guests inside the VFR phenomenon (Shani & Uriely, 2012).

Aramberri (2001), who has searched the nature of such relationships, found three core fundamentals that affect host's experience and their 'mindset'. First, the visiting guests, once they have entered the host's home (or town, naturally, depending on technical circumstances), they are under the host's responsibility and protection, as part of the family. Second, the host expects some kind of reciprocity from the guest, who should find a way to 'give back' something in return for the hospitality. And third, the awareness to duties by both sides. Of the host, to keep the guests satisfied and welcomed, and of the guest, to be attentive to the house rules and norms.

Shani & Uriely (2012) however, in a similar mindsets or approach delivered by the HGRS, have found four particular approaches to hosting, in the frame of HFR or VFR. Such hosting could (1) devour an attitude of home hospitality, in which hosts turn guests to be part of their home. (2) Lead to over-time processes in which the host makes an effort to allow the visitation to take place without it disturbing their daily ordinary routine. (3) Lead to an adaptation of a new identity, in which the host becomes an informant, with expertise and knowledge to guide the guests around the city. Or, finally, (4) experience the city and home as a tourist, by entirely committing to the visitation.

In this part of the findings, I wish to create that connection between the Airbnb experience and the one of the HFR or VFR, by understanding and profiling the guests, and thereby, exploring the connection points of the SAH with their guests, and their ability to use those points as a differentiation and movement in the HGRS. As mentioned, such an exploration is increasing the last years, by viewing the VFR, meaning, from the guests' point of view. In this part of the findings, the HFR would be the point of focus, and by observing a few important notes.

First, there is an initial and definitional difference between the HFR and the Airbnb experience. The important additional actor who monetizes the hosting experience, which turns the experience into a service. The nature of the strangeness of the guests themselves, which is in the heart of the understanding of the economic success of the 'sharing economy' (as a whole and particularly in the accommodation sector), focuses on the importance of trust. Last but not least, the solving of the former problems, in the image of the navigator, in this case, Airbnb (Celata, Hendrickson & Sanna, 2017; Oskam, J., & Boswijk, 2016; Mittendorf, 2016).

As hinted before, in past works, it has already been established that the increasing rate of visitors, and the accumulations of events, shape, over time, the host's experience, the host's approach, and more importantly, the host's behavior (Shani & Uriely, 2012; Aramberri, 2001). While such a theory was demonstrated when viewing the differences between the 1st and 2nd stages, this part of the finding would focus on the period which is after the 3rd stage, the turning point. The turning point, as described in the 1st chapter of the findings, is a stage that describes a significant change in home or in the hosting routine, triggered by the increasing awareness of home and the sense of home modifications.

The decision to tackle the concept of HFR in the 3rd and 4th stages, in which SAH adjust the hosting experience and life at home after the change, was taken for a number of reasons. In those stages, the infusion between the domestic routine, the mental state and the Airbnb experience, is virtually complete, the knowledge of the hosts themselves about the system, the incoming guests, and the conflicts which may arise, is much richer. Therefore, the 'domestic' identity of the SAH reaches a much more solid and constant state, in which their motivations are reshaped, and their HGRS approach to the service and to hosting, has sharpened. For that reason, the lines that distinguish between the hospitality and domestic gestures, and the touristic or business-oriented ones, in the 3rd and 4th stages, are much clearer.

Furthermore, it is with importance to create a connection between the domestic approach of the HFR, and the one leading a host-guest relationship to a friendship. In such cases, and especially as these situations come in the 3rd and 4th stages, they show a great conflict, that can mark the meaning of the differences between the HFR experience and the Airbnb one, while deducting the contribution of the navigation and the monetization processes.

6.2 Profiling the Airbnb guests

Airbnb guests may be seen by the SAH as a homogenic group, but in practice, hosts experience very different kinds of guests who arrive for very different reasons. Such a reality is interesting as well as important, as different types of guests have expectations for different kinds of services. As previously mentioned, in the 3rd and 4th stages, the ability of the host to distinguish between types of guests helps the SAH create an image of how the hosting experience should look like, and thereby, they adapt their own expectations to the ones of the guests.

While the guests can be divided by different and important aspects, such a division of the guests is only clear and reacted upon after the 3rd stage, as this 3rd stage does not only create a significant change inside the home and in the routine of host, but it also creates clearer boundaries of the service that the host is willing to offer, with better tools and regulations which would ensure the host that those boundaries are indeed met in the daily practice..

It is with importance to recall that a classic 3rd stage is caused by two major situations. (1) In cases in which the steady stream of guests causes an increase in the awareness of the hosts to the distortion of their daily life, and home. In such situations, and according to the experiences the host had collected over time, a compromise is initiated, between the domestic needs of the host and the prosperity of the service. (2) In cases in which hosts experience external events that 'force' them into a change, if in order to increase their profit, or to adjust to the arrival of a new resident (a newborn baby, an old parent who joins the family because they cannot live alone anymore, etc.). In each of these cases, the financial situation of the host has an obvious and enormous impact on the compromise, and on the willingness to take the extra mile which is needed to improve the service and the desired profit.

Due to that reason, it is important to note a visible difference between SAH's actions and their actual desires and wishes towards the image of the service and their own preferable balance between 'work' and 'compensation' (which would be extended in the next theme, paragraph 6.3). The more this balance is indeed set, and the gap between SAH's desires and their actual practice of the daily life along a new Airbnb routine is reduced, so it would become one of the main variables for an effective projection of a host's tendency to sustain a long duration of the 4th stage (until a new significant change occurs, or looking for an exit is initiated).

This being said, it is also important to remember that Airbnb during its extensive growth, has suffered and 'enjoyed' a problematic reputation because of the efforts of hosts to actuate profiling of guests and to screen them (mostly on a racial background).

Motivational profile – SAH tend to be most interested in the motivations that lead guests to book a room in their house. On the superficial angle, hosts use that data to try and make sure that the guest is in a 'stable' condition, that the guest has no 'foul intentions', and that the guest is responding in-context which assures their 'normality'. The idea of 'normality', and its relation to 'foul intentions' and 'stability', has already been introduced in the previous part of the findings, and should be more closely understood at this point. SAH, according to their HRGS view on hosting,

rarely concern themselves with their guest's own perception of the service (which can be seen as a scale between social and cultural experience and an economic solution for accommodation). Instead, they view their guests as ones who can, or cannot, cope with unwritten norms which are hidden and the vague concept of 'Airbnb Spirit'.

Creating a motivational profile helps the SAH imagine and presume that their guests are aware of that spirit and follow it, by fitting one of a few profiles. (1) Of the ordinary tourist, who books the room because of its price, location, or even for the full experience of 'living like a local'[140]. Therefore, the SAH is hardly attentive to the important nuance between a guest who pursues the social experience, or the one of hotels, but their motivational profile helps the SAH frame them in such a profile. (2) Of the business traveler, who books the room according to their travel budget, the location of the room in relation to the Airport or the meeting place, or as a chance to get a deeper look into a city that they often travel to for work. The image of business travelers is often better than the one of tourists, as such guests are normally very ordinary, very professional in their behavior, and therefore much more predictable[141]. (3) The wonderer, who books the room in a spontaneous move and a current decision to travel to the city or extend a visit in the city by a few extra days. Such a motivational profile usually scares SAH, as they tend to be unpredictable, undecisive, and often in an unstable mental state. Such a profile is also a strong indication for SAH about the tendency of that guest to stay longer hours in the house, to be more dependent on the house service, or to request services the SAH is not willing to provide (such as cooking or using the washing machine). (4) The traveler, who books the room as part of a planned route, or because of a problem or a change in their planned route. The travelers are the most appreciated group in the Airbnb community, as they tend to be quite familiar with the small and the big nuances and structure of the city which they arrived in.

Therefore, travelers are known to be independent, yet interesting and full of stories, organized, and carry light weight. As much as the travelers are welcomed, they tend to be a rarer type of guests, in all cities. We can see how SAH, in the 3rd and 4th stages, are more adaptable to profiling by viewing the mini-case of Igal (J11, paragraph 2.4). The mini-case of Igal has already been

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[140] Would be discussed in the 10th chapter of the findings – *'When in Rome'*

[141] Another motivational profile can fit this category, of the 'familial visitor', who books the room because of a family related reason. A son who is getting married and lives in the city, or a sick brother or child. Although such guests tend to have an anchor in the city, which reduces the need and evolvement of the host as the familial reason for arrival keeps them out of the house for most of the day, they tend to be less organized or predictable than the standard business traveler.

discussed in the second chapter of the findings as one who had suffered from the worst experiences in the beginning of his hosting. Igal told me during our interview how the first excitement of hosting has turned over time to an increasing sense of 'homelessness', as he could not recognize him home anymore. He would stay at his girlfriend's place but that was not home to him either. Therefore, Igal made a dramatic change, in which he eventually adapted his home for guests and the accumulation of guests, while spending much more time at his girlfriend's (who soon enough became his wife). With the passing of time, Igal admits that he has a better eye for guests, as he can understand and track guests who would not be profitable, in the economic and emotional senses. *"... As they look for my reviews, I look for theirs, but it is harder to get. If I see good reviews than it is easier, but sometimes people do it for the first or second time, so I want to know that he understands the platform. I want to know that if I tell him, please be careful with the boiler, with the air conditioner, half an hour is enough. A guest needs to realize they don't come to a hotel, dude. So this guy, Tod, he might be a college boy who thinks to himself that hey, I found an apartment with a yard here and I can do whatever I want. The funny thing is, that he ordered so I didn't want to be punished by Airbnb again, so I am talking with him and I ask for his phone, and we even meet, he explains to me that he works here and so far was living at his friend, it sounded like he has no idea what he wants...so I tried to blew him off, it worked!...".* Igal's example, shows that practically, Tod was not really a threat to Igal and his home, but the inability of Tod to fit any of the acceptable profiles of Airbnb guests, has turned him into a risk.

Race – The concept of ethnic attention by the hosts came up as an important one. While most SAH believe that business travelers from any ethnic origin should behave in a similar way, tourists are judged differently, and hosts tend to attribute a reputation and a distinguished profile to different origins. (1) Same origin guests are guests who go on a vacation in their own country or need the room for a business meeting or a family event. In rarer occasions, same origin guests can be also wonderers or travelers. Interestingly, same origin guests have the worst reputation among all guests in all cities and case studies. They are described as rude and with high and demanding expectations. While they are less dependent, they are also less predictable, and tend to acquire a strange routine (if at all). (2) The Asian market segment is the most mentioned one among SAH, due to their linguistic difficulty, but also in light of unique features which at times are considered 'weird' by the SAH (in all three cities and case studies).

The Asian ethnic features are also interesting, because they tend to be a source of many different patterns, which turns to a matter of concern. For example, one habit which SAH noted of Asian guests is the tendency to be extremely frugal, in their chosen accommodation selection, in their transportation option (tend to walk long distances to save money), and in food consumption (tend to buy food to cook at the Airbnb residence), etc., in order to afford and spend their money on spa resorts. The Asian segment is considered lost and lacking orientation (difficulties to handle doors, to find locations, ask for help from strangers on the street, etc.). On the other hand, they are often perceived as technological, as they use smart applications to communicate and to be oriented around the city.

It is possible to understand the cultural distance and the concerns which the Asian segment raises, by understanding the story of Matan (J12), a secular rabbi in his 40s, who hosts via Airbnb along with his roommate, Dov, so he could enjoy different cultures and also spread his own semi-religious ideology of connection and sharing between people: *"... Even if they are not in my responsibility, I still live at home, I do look at what's going on, and I saw very quickly who I was dealing with... They made us feel uncomfortable, but we couldn't put our finger on it, we both felt it wasn't ... It wasn't fun, they were wondering around here ... and it wasn't the language difficulty, as they are Chinese, it felt like they have a really very different lifestyle. They were a couple, mother, and daughter. So, what happened was that the daughter, as it seems, had her period. So she really suffered, and the mother was helpless, so we brought her pills, and they stayed home all day, did not go to their activities, and we helped them, Dov was there then and he really helped them ... People who are less pleasant ... also because they had that period, so I don't know if it is really because they were Chinese, but it was a really unique situation. But later I wondered how much I want to host Chinese people, it is not that ... I'm not a racist ... I understand that with the Chinese the cultural differences were very significant. In China, for example, it is considered appropriate to clear the throat or clean your nose also in public, here you can't do that. It is a different perception of order and cleanliness, what's acceptable and what's not ...".*

(3) Other ethnic origins can have a similar image in the minds of SAH, if of Americans, Russians, south Americans, or Middle Eastern people. Normally, it does not take more than one or two such guests with bad habits or manners, to create such a profile on an entire ethnic origin. Nonetheless, while hosts indeed prefer to use ethnic screening, Airbnb's booking policy prevents them from doing so, as Ishbel (L30, paragraph 3.3) describes the dilemma: *"... The next guests are Indians,*

and I've had a bad experience with Indians already. Indians, Chinese, Koreans ... That's not nice to say but they are not very clean, they have a different concept of cleanliness. So I have two more weeks until they come and I already feel like I will have to clean things up and get ready for things, and I am already planning how I will clean everything, so I am already stressed about it. But with Italians I don't have that fear at all. I once had a Colombian and it was awful. Now I also have a problem saying no, because it affects my reputation on the site, where they put me on their lists ... so you can't make enough money, it is unfair and unequal pressure in front of guests, so they play in your mind, take your freedom, like such an aggressive passive behavior of the website against the hosts…".

Age – Ageism is considered a minor issue of the guest's profile, and it usually becomes one when there is a technical issue in the building or the apartment. A long, unstable, or narrow staircase, noise, or a room that is felt inappropriate for older guests. In other cases, some SAH prefer to avoid older people because of the possible environment of the house, which would not fit the lifestyle of older people. Alas, ageism also exists towards younger people (as it was noticeable in the mini-case of Igal (J11, paragraph 2.4,) In both cases, of older and younger guests, the fear is usually connected to the same concern, of guests who would not keep the manners of the 'Airbnb Spirit', and therefore could be, unpredictable.

Such as in the case of race, the tendency to avoid guests because of age is usually due to past experiences, such as in the mini-case of Brigida, whose story was already told (L32, paragraph 3.1): "*… I've had two real problems in six years. The first was an American couple, when I saw them I realized they were too old to do Airbnb, but the problem was another - I think - he was living around Europe, he was trying to avoid going back to America, because his wife had Alzheimer's, and he was very upset when he understood that I understand. He was in denial of what was normal. I warned him all the time not to take his things like his passport when he is travelling around. But he didn't listen and got robbed. He was really moody after that. At night I heard he was talking ... and he explains to her that he's not coming back in the meantime and the woman was completely out of focus. Later on, we had a silly argument about the fact that he claimed that the internet was free (because of the name of the Wi-Fi network) and I explained that it was not free. The day after he realized I know she is sick and the day after he left, and left a bad message. The second problem I had was with an old Bulgarian couple again, he said he understood English, but he didn't really understand. Do you know how you are asking something and the*

answer you get is completely wrong? As if not at all close to what you asked? So it was hard to talk to him. I'm trying to be nice. Whenever I want privacy, I close the door and that's it. On the second night of their stay, they came back home late, he yelled at me, he was rude, drunk, and I told him I would not accept people yelling at me in my own home, so he grabbed my hand painfully. At that moment, I called the police and they took them out. They tried to stay, said they had a contract, so I am obliged to let them stay, but it didn't bother me, they left very bad criticism…".

As Brigida herself claims, the bad experiences did not only stay with her and carve the image she has of, in this case, Americans and Bulgarians, and of old people, who were violent and, in a sense, dark. But also, because the experience itself harms SAH's own profile, for reasons out of their control. Therefore, predictability is not only an issue of the physical service, but also its implications on their own profile and reputation on the website, which is a key variable in the imagined (and sometimes less imagined) cost-benefit analyses SAH do before accepting a new guest.

6.3 Expectations of guests and coping of SAH

Staying at almost 90 Airbnb homes throughout the research, as I have demonstrated in the methodologic chapter, created a difficulty in settling between my hat as a researcher, and my hat as a guest, who for a day, needed a restful atmosphere and a comfortable bed. This conflict was often solved by creating a true image of a guest, as I intentionally tried to make the reservation much before the stay, and to know, or to remember as little as possible about the host and the expected home. Such a methodological technic has led to daily surprises about the nature of my hosts and their house. For example, arriving at the house of animals (M22, paragraph 4.3), I was in for a complete surprise to see a huge number of animals in such a small house. The surprise grew even bigger when I realized that for the only time during the research work, I accidently booked a room at the home of a mini-case who I was already in contact with for an interview.

However, my daily state of not being prepared for the next experience was not the only benefit which this method reveals. In addition, it has also given me the ability to create authentic, personal, and objective observations of a place, and to compare them with the knowledge by reading and examining the host's profile and reviews. Through reading the reviews, I found an interesting phenomenon, in which often, some very basic and significant problems were almost completely overlooked, as it was expressed in the reviews. This phenomenon has led me to the understanding,

that the guest's expectations of the service, are not as obvious as thought (by reading research on the matter), and more importantly, they have significant implications on the natural course and the progression in stages through the ASEP of the SAH.

As mentioned in the motivational theme, the guest's motivations are a tool, and never a source of concern, that SAH wished to adapt to. Alas, those expectations are finally met, by conflicting interactions (as described in the 4th part of the findings), and by the mechanism of the reviews (which was already introduced in the 5th part, and would now be further extended). This phenomenon can be described in three points:

The terminology of expectation – Interestingly enough, the guests' expectations are very varied among the guests, and can be divided into two major groups. (1) The Airbnb group, in which guests make sure to use words such as 'super host' to describe a good host, and to recommend in case of a good experience. Such a group has a very ordinary fashion to value an experience, by reflecting on the gap between the listing and its photos and the room and house themselves, and valuing its location, its services, and the sociality of the host. The Airbnb group is defined by a terminology of politicly correctness, in which guests and often also hosts, tend to avoid bad comments, and instead, create a neutral comment.

Yehuda and Ron (J10, paragraph 3.1) discussed that phenomenon, and the fashion in which it has shaped their experience in the 4th stage: *"... first thing about reviews, is that there is an unwritten code, you don't leave a bad comment... the idea is that no one wants to have any negative energy or vibe on their "wall", or that something bad you wrote be on someone's else. Cause someone will see and think that I'm terrible or evil or something ... He'll be scared, oh so maybe he'll leave me a bad review too, I don't want that... You see such a beautiful apartment ... And you don't want to mess it up, you want everything to stay clean right? So, how can you trust the website because nobody leaves bad reviews because it makes you look really bad ... So people say unless the person is really, really bad, then don't leave bad reviews, leave neutral reviews ... for example, thank you for staying with us, have a nice trip ... over time we started to look better and read blogs about not to leave bad reviews if it was something really bad ... Then we read the reviews and realized it was neither good nor bad ... and we started to understand the reviews better...".*

(2) the hotel group. This group, contrary to the first one, does not have a following guide or terminology that helps them evaluate one Airbnb service over another. Instead, they rely on their own expectation, which usually falls into the standards of hotel, and the service expected there. In

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such reviews, there is no politicly correctness, and when they stumble upon a similar host, it could escalate to harsh offences, such as in the mini-case of Livia (M19), who reacts directly towards people of that group.

One of Livia's (M19) reviews and response

Nothing special

Yes. My house is a normal house without special effects. Bye

The subjective manner of expectations – As found, different houses are often judged by different standards, not only between the groups, but also inside them. This subjectivity is identified by a dual value system, which is not much affected by the approach of the guest to the service (between a social experience and an accommodation solution), but rather, by the nature of the house as they perceive it. For example, rather poor and dull houses, would not be judged by their level of maintenance, if the host were kind and positive. Meaning, even if the house would have poor utilities, and there would be no social experience with the host, such a host could still enjoy a good review on their profile. Alas, if the Airbnb guest is more 'upper class', the host would be judged more harshly, and their positivity and service, or, sociality would be taken as a serious factor by the arriving guests.

The interesting thing about this, is that part of the phenomenon remained correct in comparison to mini-cases with similar prices and locations (the two main variables which were collected only for the sake of this theme), that represent very different scenes of houses, sharp differences in quality (of the bed, of the shower, etc.), and total service and utilities. Such findings can tell a lot about the expectations of the vast majority of the guests. Airbnb guests, in a similar manner to the hosts, are all moving along a scale of possibilities and approaches, starting from a social view of the Airbnb service and their expectations, to service or commercial point of view, that put Airbnb as another option, that is compared fully to the hotel industry (and other similar options, like guests houses, hostels, etc.).

However, in this spectrum, there is a direct and noticeable expectation to receive a kind of symbolic gesture, which could be seen through two approaches. (1) A client-oriented approach, according to which, part of the service is the domestic and home hospitalization, which is part of the natural

cost-benefit analysis seen in every consumption process. (2) An ideological approach, according to which, using this service is part of a contribution to a more social and a solid world, as part of the idea of the 'sharing economy', and 'Airbnb Spirit'. Therefore, for the guests, the interaction itself is a possibility (when they desire it), but even if they expect or wand that possibility, they still wish to enjoy a ritual in which they are being acknowledged, or, alternatively, that their consumption decision has proven itself. Such a ritual is well expressed during the experience, or service itself (especially in the communication and interaction between the SAH and the guest), and it is 'published' during the ritual of the review. The number of examples for that very important nuance in understanding the guests' expectations and the way they express those expectations, is outstanding, and in principal, could be applied on any review that was and would be represented in this finding chapter.

Therefore, for now I wish to use one extreme example, about the house of Guido (M02), a man in his 50s who lives in a good location close the Navigli river in Milan, which is a very old, yet big house that serves as a home for him, and for his children who live with their mother and visit him from time to time. Guido's house is full of contradictions. On the one hand, Guido is very nice and very friendly, and in fact, he made me feel like I am really staying at a 'home'. Guido's house was full of records, classic toys, books, and comics, which turned the room I was sleeping in, into a real playground. On the other hand, the house was extremely old, dark, and dusty. Going to the kitchen involved bumping into filthy tables and dishes, looking at the shower put an end to that need for the night, the bed was had small mattress suitable for teenagers and it did not fit two people or my long body. Alas, above all, there was a terrible stench of mold all over the apartment, including the room. In the morning, according to schedule, I counted the minutes before leaving it, and in the meanwhile I could hardly breath. Therefore, I was amazed to find out that among the hundreds of reviews which Guido received, only two reviews mentioned the smell as a problem, and most of the reviews were lining between neutral to extremely positive. It was even more fruitful to focus on the very few reviews that were negative.

One of Guido's (M02) reviews

Sconsiglio assolutamente questo alloggio. Abbiamo trovato la casa in condizioni disastrose: il bagno era completamente sporco (ci è voluto non poco prima di far ammettere all'host di non averlo pulito), il frigo conteneva alimenti marci di precedenti ospiti, l'armadio conteneva abiti vecchi pieni di pomvere, il soffione della doccia è completamente rotto (l'acqua usciva da tutte le direzioni fuorchè dalla parte centrale), i bicchieri di vetro presenti nella casa erano inutilizzabili perchè nel bordo di essi rimaneva incollato l'intonaco del mobile nel quale erano stati conservati, la casa in generale era piena di oggetti da buttare (come candele e incenso consumati o saponi dei precedenti inquilini pieni di peli) e con una ingente quantità di polvere che regnava in ogni angolo di essa. Inoltre è presente un odore insopportabile di un misto tra antico e umido, presente anche nelle tende e nel copriletto. Infine, forse questa è stata la cosa peggiore, la prima notte l'abbiamo passata al freddo perchè l'unica vera coperta a nostra disposizione era ricca di peli e capelli. Siamo arrivati prima del previsto, e questa sarebbe potuta essere una scusante per non essere riuscito a pulire a fondo. Appena arrivati, però, siamo usciti per permettere all'host di farlo, quindi in teoria ha avuto tutto il tempo. L'abbiamo dovuto richiamare per risistemare la casa, ma è rimasto tutto invariato.

The example of Guido, as can be learned from the review, clearly demonstrates the necessity and the expression of many of the themes that were brought up in this part of the findings. The guest is a young Italian man who came with his friend on a trip to Milan. By following the themes which have already been introduced, as a young man, this guest has a bigger tendency to be in the hotel group, and thereby, to break the rules of neutrality, and not to appreciate the concept of 'Airbnb spirit'. As an Italian guy who consumes from the local tourism, he has a higher tendency to have higher demands and expectation.

This young guest also expresses a high level of hotel approach to the service. Because the young men did not get along with Guido, their review, in contrary to many other reviews, judges the house by its 'true' features, and by creating a terminology of 'real', instead of constructed. Once the guest broke the code of the Airbnb terminology, Guido was on symbolic test of his nature as part of the Airbnb system or outside of it. And although Guido indeed reacted in an offended manner, he managed to respond in the Airbnb terminology, and keep his reputation:

Guido's (M02) response to the review (above)

Cari ragazzi, mi spiace che abbiate avuto una così drammatica esperienza, in quattro anni che affitto questa casa ho avuto quattro o cinque lamentele per la pulizia non impeccabile (anche se è la prima così dettagliata e raccapricciante). Il mio annuncio ha quattro stelle su cinque alla voce pulizia, che possono essere interpretate come una casa pulita ma non perfetta, questo, e le altre recensioni, mi fa pensare che forse il problema sia un pochino anche nella vostra percezione, senza offesa. Se vi posso dare un consiglio, cercatevi annunci con cinque stelle di pulizia e andate sul sicuro, io non mi offendo a leggere queste critiche caricaturali, ma mi dà un po' fastidio che diate indirettamente degli zozzoni a tutti quelli che invece ci si sono trovati bene, come potete vedere dalle altre recensioni. Dopo di che mi resta un dubbio, lo schifo che avete lasciato a casa (spazzatura ovunque, pavimento del bagno inguardabile) è una specie di ripicca o è il vostro modo di lasciare le case? forse l'odore degli avanzi di cibo vi serviva a coprire l'odore "misto tra antico e umido"? ah, per essere precisi, non ho mai ammesso di non aver pulito il bagno, l'ho pulito eccome. ho detto che sarei venuto a controllare e a pulirlo nuovamente, e così ho fatto, così come, contro ogni ragionevolezza, vi ho cambiato le lenzuola (pulite), perché se i miei ospiti hanno delle richieste che posso esaudire lo faccio, senza giudicarle, e vi ho offerto di rimborsarvi i soldi dell'alloggio se volevate andare da qualche altra parte, perché non mi piace che i miei ospiti, a prescindere da quanto sono educati, non si trovino bene a casa mia, e quindi ero disposto a perdere i soldi del weekend di capodanno pur di evitarvi questo disagio. Detto questo vi auguro un buon anno e spero che troverete situazioni più soddisfacenti di questa in futuro, su airbnb e nella vita :)

As we can witness from Guido's response, another common pattern of SAH in the terminology of expectations, is to reject bad and negative comments by demonstrating their good ranking and the many other good comments. By doing so, SAH (in the 3rd and 4th stages) use the system itself in order to discard bad reviews and eventually, also the actual truth about their house (as Guido's home, from a first-person experience, was indeed very filthy and with a terrible stench), by maneuvering the expectations of guests towards their core ambitions (successful and worthy consuming, or social recognition). Therefore, and while it would be discussed further on, SAH are shaping and crafting the same process which Airbnb is implementing on them and on the guests, by using the 'spirit' of Airbnb to improve their success, without the need for an actual desire for social behavior, or experience.

The influence of expectations – Completing the full image of the guests' expectations, requires not only the image of the transformation process of the idea of the Airbnb experience from the service itself to the hosts, and from the hosts to the guests, but also on the counter side, as guests themselves create tremendous changes in SAH's homes and their daily routine. A change which is caused by the accumulation of the entire scope of aspects that was presented along this findings chapter. The initial mental state of the SAH, the movement of the SAH's motivations, the construction of a community, the appearance of the changing home, the implications of strangers at home, the interaction of such strangers in a space that is moving towards the service-oriented interactions. And finally, Airbnb's technological tools for becoming an actor in the service and in the interactions of hosts and guests. The expectations of the guests are an additional 'brick' in the shape of the service, or a layer, that influences the fashion in which hosts envision their work with Airbnb, as SAH have the need to make their service successful, and create a compromise in order to make it possible in the frame of their domestic needs.

This influence is expressed well in the first stages, in which many SAH admit that for a long time, they were hosting to experience the service, but also mainly, to create reviews for their new listing. Over time, each review becomes statistically less important[142], and so, the host adapts and calculates the expectations of the service, and the approach towards interactions and sociality. Can be seen that affect by addressing the story of Antonio (L39, paragraph 2.2; paragraph 4.4,), whose

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[142] Statistically, as the host's ranking is calculated from the first review, until the last. Therefore, the value of each review when there are only two reviews, is 50% of the ranking, while with 10 reviews, each review takes only 10% of the ranking. Naturally, the accumulations of hundreds of reviews keep the value of a single review extremely low. This problem makes Airbnb sanction hosts who reach a number of bad reviews in a single period, to avoid a severe reduction of the service by senior hosts.

curiosity towards the experience of hosting has led him to create a strategic and calculated plan to increase his income and profit over time.

Antonio, as many others, admits that he had offered his rooms almost for free at first, and that he did not care about money, but only about producing new reviews which would help him bring more guests. Over time, as the importance of the reviews reduced, he made bigger plans, and found other ways in which his societal service would not come from a shared experience, but from a very friendly, or even domestic service. The reviews, and the way Antonio regularly answers those reviews, clarifies the fashion in which Antonio crafted his work according to the ideals of the 'Airbnb Spirit', and by searching for the expectations of the guests, not for a good social experience, but for the theatrical and symbolic display of those concepts.

One of Antonio's (M39) reviews and response

So you found ████ s Air BnB. You don't need to search for others, you should just book with him right now and this is why: He is a very helpful and nice host. He has many tips and recommondations. The apartment has a nice atmosphere with some art elements, many books and good music (if you want it to be quiet just close your door). The rooms are pretty and with character - not like in a hotel. There are local restaurants 5 minutes walk away. The metro station is 2 minutes away. The area is nice, calm and quiet. The breakfast is really good with a local touch. Eduardo will show you around when he has time. Also, he drove me to the airport. Very nice!

Thank you so much for your wonderful comment. It means a lot to me! Knowing that my guests felt that way, means that I am doing a great job and you leave with good memories and feelings :-) Thanks again and you'll always be welcome.

6.4 Discussion **– A simulacrum of the social**

In this part of the findings chapter, I wished to focus on the most hidden aspect of this work so far, which is the image of the Airbnb guests, as active consumers, with certain patterned profiles, and evolving expectations, that stand on their own, of the Airbnb service. By understanding the fashion in which those expectations and profiles move inside their scales and present a coherent image of the guests and a set of expectations, that has its effect on the service and on the progress of the SAH along their ASEP, into a point of change, a turning point. A point they leave after making a

compromise, but also with more knowledge, and more awareness to the stereotypes and assumptions they have collected along their own unique Airbnb experiences, and their unique path.

Furthermore, the understanding of the role that the guests take in the establishment of a mutual language between collaborative hosts and guests as their communication is already limited and unsearched, unsupported, teaches plenty on Airbnb's own desire of resistance. Nevertheless, the existence of such a significant group (significant but visibly not a majority) of people who do not follow the Airbnb terminology, adds an additional weight to the image of the 'Airbnb Spirit' itself, as a value, an idea which needs to be defended and defined, by creating that separation between the Airbnb followers and the 'others', who do not have the will or the knowledge to follow the rules, and are learning it by observing and judging their behavior.

However, the tendency of guests to make a judgment or criticize a specific service, combined with the 'code' of the 'Airbnb Spirit', has showed in this part of the findings, how it eventually creates false expressions of quality and image of the service (Bridges & Vásquez, 2018; Zervas, Proserpio & Byers, 2015). Such an image seems to do wrong with 'the better' and with those who wish to provide a higher level of service or even social experience. In a wider respect, it implies, perhaps, on an unsolvable conflict on the merge between the domestic and family values and between the urban and economic ones. A conflict whose expression is of a distortion of reality itself, to an alternative reality, a simulacrum, in a sense, of the actual nature and core meaning of social behavior and a solidarity.

Because, instead, such values are replaced by the nature of a social agreement, to socialize out of monetized interests, and to present that socialization in the best way that, in the current situation, would benefit them and their desired reputation, self. The creation of 'us' and 'them', has helped sharpen the borders, but also, to significantly narrow the expectations of guests, and their expression in the ritual of the service itself, and in their valuation of the service after it. The repeated reproduction of the vocabulary and point of reference to value and experience an Airbnb experience creates the opposite effect, of reproducing of the same messages and lessons about past experiences. Lessons, that are the keys for the evolving and the constant reshaping of the norms.

Therefore, exploring the very nuances of a specific mechanism of the review system, does not shed light on an important aspect of the phenomenon by itself. Instead, it exposes a nerve that reveal its mechanism, and thereby, its implications on the service itself, the establishment of the imagined community, and the direction in which hosts and guests are leaning onto. A direction towards a

simulacrum of the concepts of solidarity and domestic values. Values that were a significant part of home itself and are now replaced by a flat presentation.

This narrow presentation is also the one that should be put in the spotlight in front of the VFR phenomenon, in order to find points of connections and differences. One of the most important points of the understanding of the VFR experience, is the growing tendency of hosts to get tired or to adjust from hosting friends and relatives, to a point of a new identity, that creates observations between the efforts taken outside or inside of home, if as a will, meaning, desire of other productions of value, or duty, as part of a financial and commercial norms and rules (Shani & Uriely, 2012). Airbnb SAH, however, are taking an advance step, in which, after the turning point, they are more adapted and more established in the full meaning of hosting strangers. That step is the greatest difference between the VFR, which lacks the economic structure behind the service, and Airbnb, which offers a financial angle for both hosts and guests. That financial angle, create a reconstruction of the balance between hosts and guests, who in the name of the service, and the price, have the legitimacy of reduce hospitality services, and replace them with an alternative and more practical representation, according to the changes that occur in the 3rd stage.

Finally, such a replacement, is also the tool that in many senses, serves the VFR's hosts. In their case, according to previous research, there is a tendency of hosts to acquire supportive identities and to take decisions that are less domestic oriented. Through this data, it is possible to learn, that as Airbnb SAH practice, the VFR hosts create a distance between themselves and their guests, to allow a less domestic or social behavior, and in the name of the needed privacy and domestic emotions, that often, and over time, get lost (Aramberri, 2001). Airbnb SAH, instead, receive that legitimacy through the concept of the service, its monetization, and its hotel standard that guests, as Airbnb itself are supporting.

Throughout the different scales that were presented in this chapter, it is possible to find a visible dichotomy between the domestic and the urban and public, in which the borders are blurred, and redefined the hosts' and guests' orientation towards trade and commercial conscious, instead of intimacy and solidarity. Those standards, of the impersonal and service-oriented, were also visible in the comparison of a much less monetized accommodation solution, as the HFR and the VFR. In both similar situations, the economy and development know and are still learning, how to convert social phenomena, such as Airbnb or VFR, to economic implications or aspects.

By such a conversion, it is possible to understand the diversity of the VFR phenomenon in bringing new types of consumptions and growth to the city, and the similarity, of two accommodation solutions that eventually create a presentative figure that makes the city more accessible for the tourists, so they could consume more (Arslan Ayazlar, 2019; Griffin, 2013; Ramachandran, 2006). Here again, a conflict emerges between the domestic needs of the host, that confronts the needs of Airbnb as a company for profit, and the city, that enjoys an increasing and diverse flow of tourists, and even more, tourists with a clear intention towards a hotel standard view. At this point, it is important to emphasize, that also the Airbnb group is moving sharply and variously in the dichotomic scale between home and hotel orientation and standards. Alas, their social ambitions are expressed by a new and flat presentation of social values.

That being said, and with the orientation of the 'hotel group', a mix of settings and expectations are created, all of which are moving forward towards a hotel point of view, which naturally decreases those little features and uniqueness of each and every home, as it would be discussed in the next part of this findings.

6.5 Conclusions – **Another brick in the wall**

In this part of the findings chapter, I have taken a step closer towards completing the full experience of the Airbnb hosting service, and an image would be completed in the next part of the findings, which would focus on the significant and dramatic change of home during the 3rd stage. Observing and profiling the guests in this research, it is important to remember, does not derive from a direct research on the guests themselves[143]. Instead, the image of the guest is a result of the idea of the host about them, and the reflected outcome in the form of interaction in the virtual and domestic spaces.

Guests are an active and diverse population, who could eventually be divided into two groups, as one forms a language and norms, and the other forms their 'right hand', that helps sharpen the lines between the legitimate and appropriate norms and terminology, and enabling a sense of a struggle and justification, which keeps the torch of the 'Airbnb Spirit' lit, despite the sensible movement of

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[143] Originally, four interviews with guests of participants were initiated, but the scope of the research and the amount of data compared to time consideration has terminated that aspect of the collected data. The interviews were not used in any part of the findings.

the service, in the micro aspect, in the host's level and their experience, and in the macro aspect, in the image of the ambitions of the Airbnb's organization.

The 'others', who do not know or share the same ideological, but flat expectations of Airbnb, together with the new representations of social values by the Airbnb group, lead to a reproduced terminology of sharing, of solidarity, towards a hotel-service orientation, whose implications, on the physical place which is home, would be learned in the next part of this findings.

"Just to love the clock again.

Just to love the chair

that rocks a little

when you rock a little

sitting in the living room

you're living in

alone again.

Just to love your share

of channels that stay up all night:

the Dream Away plan, the news

that hasn't changed

since yesterday,

the late late show

in which the dead arise

and walk and die again,

the forecast high in Gila Bend.

Just to love the telephone

for how it hunkers down

and doesn't ring

or dial or hope or fret

about itself.

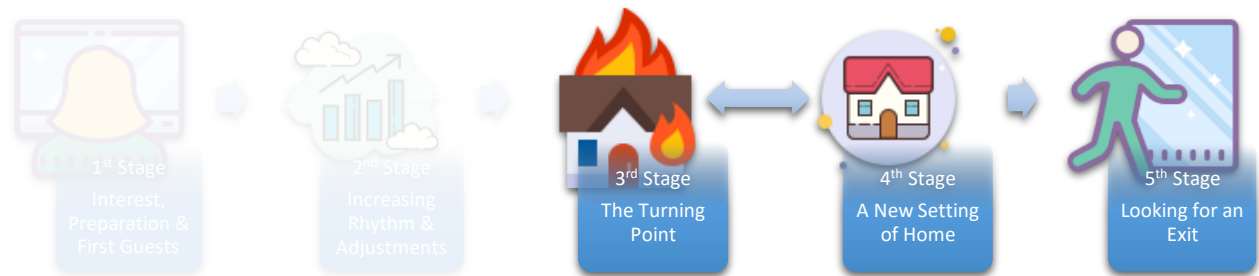*Just to love the dog again"*

the tongue that licks

the hand, the paw

that s

hakes, the ears

that prick like someone's

coming back."[144]

[144] Written by Jim Simmerman. From the poem ' Just to Love the Dog (1988).

7. 'A Bull in a China Shop', (or),
Spatial and structural Change After the Turning Point

7.1 Introduction

The nature of home, can be seen, and understood, under the umbrellas of sociology or anthropology, psychology and geography, philosophy, and of course, architecture, a field that is focused of understanding the fashion in which homes are designed and perceived as a spatial space. Therefore, and as already discussed in the introduction chapter, home is considered as a particular place in the life and in the emergence of any society, and one that has enormous effects on issues such as gender and gender roles, identity and the self, and of course, the concepts of shelter, and family (Clapham, 2005; Remotti, 2015; Somerville, 1992).

In this part of the findings, I wish to complete the final aspect of the multi-process that the SAH goes through, along the chronological path (ASEP). If the former processes and patterns which were previously presented, focused on the host, the guest, the interactions with the guest, and Airbnb as a technological actor, this part would focus on the spatial aspect, as Airbnb homes tend to change gradually during the first stages, and often reach a necessity of a bigger, and more dramatic spatial and domestic compromise, which could solve current problems, while creating new ones.

Historical research over the last hundred years, already knows and accepts the surprising consensus of home around the world, as a space that usually expresses territory, privacy, and family protection. Alas, entering deeper into the architectural understanding of home, displays a variety of meanings and values which can be found among the different cultures. Meanings that are shaped by the 'domestic dwelling' of design, home consumption, and spatial organization. Accordingly, research has already demonstrated, how spatial organization and consumption, along with home and technology, are always historically and culturally contextual, and have crucial implications on

the connection of home to society, and the image of home and familial intimate interactions (Mallett, 2004; Cieraad, 2006; Chapman, 1999).

As an example, Rybczynski (1986), in his important work on the progress of different home values, draws a chronological line, that in his claims, started among the bourgeois class in the Netherlands, as ideas such as privacy, domesticity, comfort and intimacy, and became the key values that around them, home was designed. Ideas, that were later spread across Europe, and virtually accelerated and centralized after the first industrial revolution. The urban home, alas, is defined by the fashion in which home has indeed turned into a space of consumption and development, a status, that was an integral part of class belongness, and the search for the 'ideal house', that was framed well in the western society, with the image of the private house, with the white fence, the family dog and the open field that gives space for the children. That image has gradually sharpened and adjusted to different cultural and historical contexts, as to trends of class and employment, along with a process of reduction and reproduction of the image of the urban home, which narrows the choice and diversity offered to consumers (Walker, 2002; Rice, 2006; Gram-Hanssen & Bech-Danielsen, 2004).

By following holistic views, models or theories of the nature of home, home as a shelter and a spatial and physical necessity, is only one layer amongst many, in which home is an emotional place, and in which interactions are designed to become intimate and of high intensity (Clapham, 2005; Remotti, 2015; Somerville, 1992). Giddens (1990), for example, argues on the importance of home design as a key factor in the way society shapes and reproduces institutional meaning, in the domestic and public space. Thereby, terms of size, location of home, and its actual design, creates limitation in social activities, and thereby, it also limits social behavior, that does not reach only the borders of home, but eventually it defines that dichotomy between the urban and the homey.

In other models, home is seen as an economic unit, and probably the smallest such system in society, in which design determines the importance of certain values and the marginality of others, by referring to traditional, historical and cultural ideas. Such models suggest and refer to the importance and the strong connection between home and family, which are tested and argued. As some view home as the physical birth of the family, in the social and emotional sense, but also as a physical starting point in which a baby is born into, and from which the grown child embarks on their journey, and to which they return (Allan & Crow, 1991).

The research of home, in its spatial and architectural forms, is considered limited, yet fruitful, in the understanding of the different dimensions of home in the practical, emotional and sentimental layers, and in creating connections between architectural intentions and the changes which society is often, and more than ever, in the last decades, is quicker to impose in the frame of the consumption of home, what leads to new interpretations of current structures and reshaping them. Research has found, that qualitative research, accompanied with visual study of the dwelling of home, could lead to significant new understandings on the reshaping of home, and thereby, gives it new settings of social interaction, and a new perception of the meaning of home[145] (Pink, 2004; 2013; 2014).

In this part of the findings, I wish to add to the qualitative knowledge of the practical use of home, or the 'dwelling of home', by referring to a specific, yet mainstream and central, segment of the western society, and by focusing on the decisions and dilemmas that are hatching in the merge of the Airbnb experience and service. Putting an emphasis on the nature of the 3rd and 4th stages, enables the exploration of a delicate and crucial moment in SAHs' ASEP, as they need to settle structural and functional problems that risks, or has already severely damaged their sense of home and the values which they have grown to learn as the ones they need and desire in the domestic space.

In order to demonstrate that point of conflict, and thereby, to learn more on the current urban reincarnation of home dwellings, I will use a visual understanding as a point of reference in this part of the findings, to create imagined yet well-defined characteristics of the functional and structural Airbnb home, as its significant implications on the practice of dwelling, and the daily lives of SAH, as their family, who is often greatly affected by the Airbnb experience and its fingerprints throughout the house and its perception as home.

7.2 Physical types of Airbnb homes

Airbnb homes can in fact, and should, be seen as a mix of types of accommodations, which represent much of the scope and variety of the living situation in the urban life. Starting from apartments in every possible size and number of rooms, to private houses, studios and eventually spaces which were rearranged into Airbnb homes, that in times, include a kitchen, and others, that

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[145] As it would be discussed in the next part of the findings, *'the de-domestication of home'*.

does not have one, but only a small lobby, and a number of close numbered doors. Every home could be seen as a process of change and development towards an idea, a problem, or a need. Nevertheless, Airbnb homes, or SAH's home, after the turning point, can be seen as a mix of those needs, manipulated by the needs of the guests, their expectations, past conflicts, and the influence of Airbnb. Thereby, Airbnb homes, especially for the researcher and ethnographer, turn into a visual and a live museum, which includes, in one space, evidence for on-going changes, conflicts, and compromises.

The home of Thais (L14)

Such is the example of Thais (L14), a mother from Brazil and a hospital worker in her 40s, who had been living in Lisbon with her family, a husband, three children and a small dog, in one of the entrances to beating heart of the touristic yet charming neighborhood of Alfama. Thais, after a few years of hosting guests in her home, had finally understood that their family life cannot co-exist with the service of Airbnb, and took a decision to move outside the center of the city, to Benfica, a grey neighborhood which is quite famous for its soccer club. In Thais' house, there are some interesting contradictions, which emphasize the movement of the house from a home, to an Airbnb house. On the one hand, Thais works with the Airbnb system, which is collaborated with a digital lock, that changes password every day. This technology allows Thais to determine specific check-in and check-out hours, without any interaction with her guests. As we can see in the above image,

the bedrooms are numbered, as each room has its own key, a rare concept in SAH's home, while the open kitchen is not available to use, and neither is the living room. On the other hand, although they are not available to use, both are filled with very homey features. The kitchen is filled with all necessary utilities, utilities that leave a strange vibe as their lack of use is sensible. The small living room, leaves even stronger feelings, as it is equipped as if yesterday it was still occupied by the family, with family pictures, a big flat television, along with large and well-preserved furniture. The inviting living room presents the best example of a home that was neglected, while the numbered rooms around, could create a vivid picture of a home that has become less domestic, and less suitable for children.

While this part of the findings would focus on all three cities, Lisbon, as in the mini-case of Thais, is exceptional in both points. The tendency of homes to change and distort into Airbnb apartment, while the host moves out, or stays with the family in a hotel type of arrangement, and the tendency of children to be part of an Airbnb situation as residents[146]. Both were found very common in Lisbon, less in Milan, and rarely in Jerusalem.

It is possible to notice a few important points of the profiles of Airbnb SAH's homes.

- **Borders of home**

It is possible to conclude, that the majority of Airbnb homes, as the majority of urban types of homes, are made up of two to five rooms, while one room apartments and bigger houses are less, but common as well. Normally, apartments of two rooms or less, are apartments in which Airbnb hosts is in a financial need, which is triggered by a very problematic personal state. In addition, there is a relatively low percentage of private houses, between 5% to 10% in each city. One of the most important identification of houses, after the 3rd stage, is the tendency to create borders between parts of the house that belongs to its residents, and the other parts that are meant to serve the guests[147].

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[146] Another children-related phenomenon is of divorced parents, of which, it is often the men who hold an Airbnb service while the children are only visitors, a phenomenon that was found common in all three cities, and was already discussed in different contexts. This part of the findings would add to this phenomenon from the other side, of mothers or families whose children live in the Airbnb house as permanent residents.

[147] To add to the chronological order, it is important to note that there is a significant minority, in which the hosting experience, meaning the 1st stage, with a major adaptation of the house. Alas, with that minority, soon (in the following stages) face the actual meaning of hosting at home, and arrive, like the rest of the SAH, to a turning point, and then to another substantive change, a change, that as noted, can repeat itself a number of times before looking for an exit.

And so, Airbnb homes are indeed divided between houses that are entirely designed to serve the guests, and by neglecting different features for the SAH's domestic needs, and between houses that create that separation by splitting the house and perceiving part of it as a working space, rather than part of home. While both options may seem far from being optimal, in most cases, the structure of the house and its size are major factors in the ability of SAH to make one of the options work, and for a steady period. In private houses, the separation is usually possible by dividing the floors between the residents and the guests. In apartments, such a confining order often appears superficial, unwelcoming, and problematic for both sides.

One such example, is the mini-case of Milana (M01), my first ever ethnographic work in Milan and in this research as a whole. Milana is a woman in her 70s, who splits her life between her apartment very close to the Navigli river, and her boyfriend's home. A matter of freedom, as Milana herself noted. Alas, Milana's home is quite small, and consists of a small living room and a bigger bedroom, that is already in a visible process of 'impersonalization', as some of her clothes are still hanging in the closet, but pictures have been moved to the living room over time. As can be seen from the structure of the house, Milana's ambitions for freedom, as of many other SAH, were completed with a beaded curtain, separating the living room from the small hall, which leads both to the shared bathroom, and to her bedroom, that has become an accommodation solution for Airbnb guests.

Milana, as she noted herself, often needs the guests to be out of the house, in order for her to find a specific outfit she needs. It is also possible to imagine, that the small sofa, which she often chooses to sleep on, becomes a cost-benefit analysis, as she needs to decide between the 'alone' time she needs, but in discomfort, or the restful but non-private bed of her boyfriend. Such a decision, taken by both men and women who are in similar situations, tremendously affects the relationships themselves, that often become a part of the compromise after the turning point.
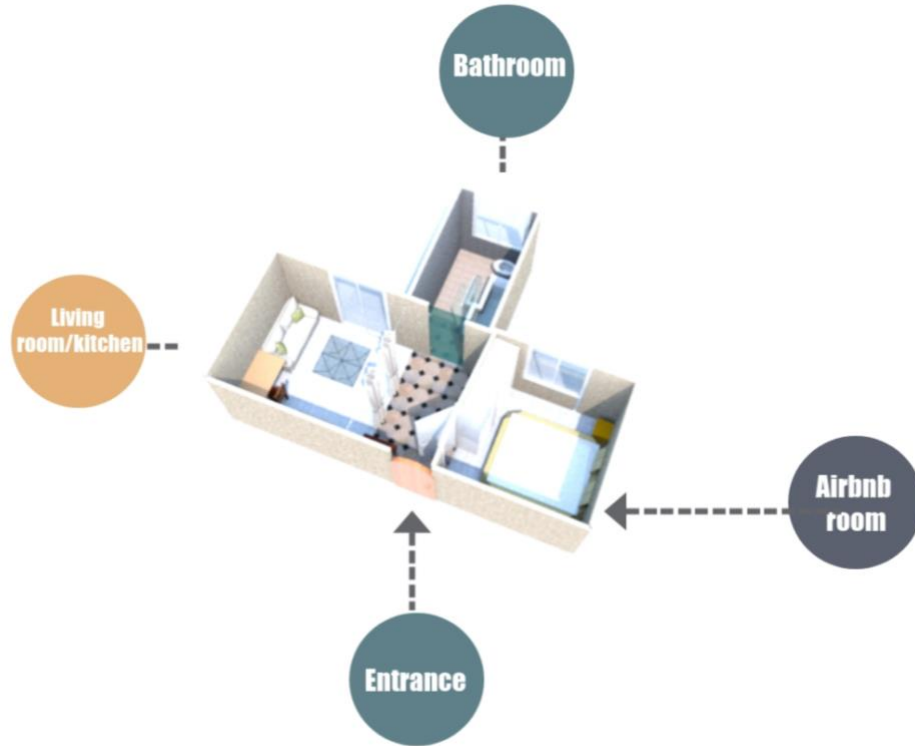
In addition, the turning point can also be very visible, by viewing the mini-case of Jocabina (L27), a woman in her 40s, who lives very near the beautiful and green neighborhood of Belem. Jocabina was one of many interesting mini-cases in which my effort to explore the story behind the host and the home, has led me to a direction that could sometimes seem more of a detective rather than a researcher. Jacobina has changed three names during her work for Airbnb, as an effort to disguise her real name, out of fear from the tax authorities or problems with the apartment owner.

Alas, other than the mysterious nature of Jacobina, another layer lies, which tells the story of Jacobina's home. when I arrived at her home, Jacobina gave me a very quick tour, of a long hallway in which two closed and numbered doors were found. One of them was mine. In the end of the corridor, she showed me the bathroom, and mentioned a few of her rules, that were already written on notes all over the bathroom, all the switches, and in the room itself. At this point, it is possible to focus on two major points that arise while exploring the mini-case.

The first, the room has a window to the outside, where many tourists are wandering around, and give it the Belem atmosphere. The room itself, however, shows many signs of a children room that

had been silenced, as closets with children's board games and toys were sloppily arranged facing each other. Neglected naked dolls were kept in closets that were seemingly set for the guests. Going to the bathroom, I indeed heard a child, and could see that the entire second part of the apartment, probably of a kitchen and a living room, were borders and forbidden, as the child and his mother live there. Secondly, and surprisingly enough, collecting data on Jacobina's listings, shows that not only this was not the case in the past, but on the contrary, the living room and the kitchen were integral parts of the service. From the visible changes which were noticed in the house, the home of the mother and child, because of financial needs, had been readapted, leaving them a small space of domesticity, and, as it seems, takes away the privacy and protective nest of the young child.

Jacobina's kitchen (L27)
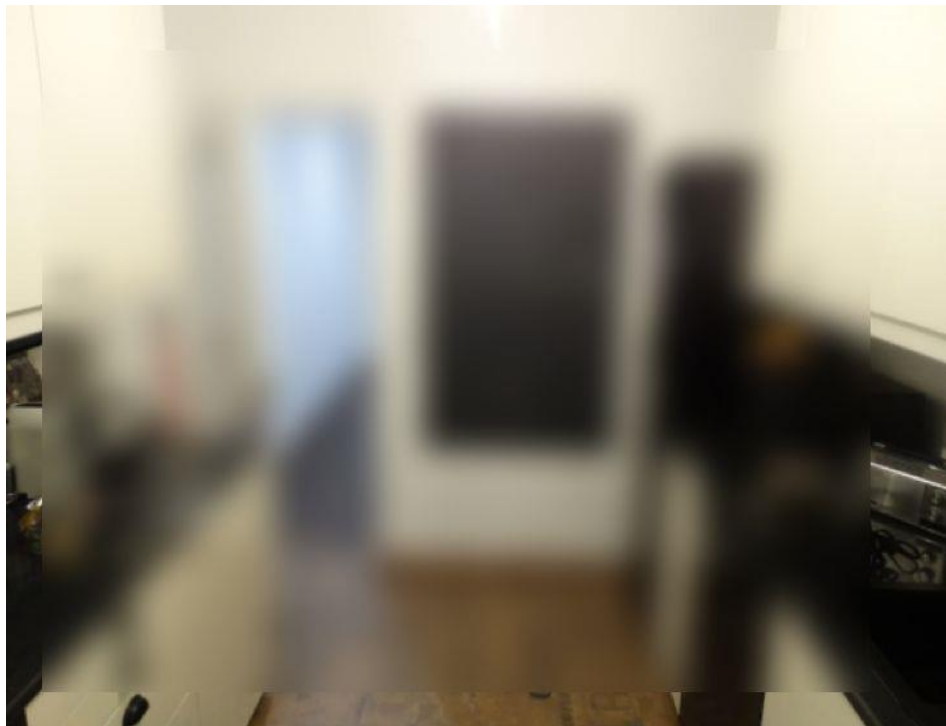
- **Corridor apartments**

Along with the importance of size and structure, in my ethnographic work, I have stumbled upon an interesting phenomenon, in which I recognized two main types of Airbnb homes[148]. The first type is with a centered living room. In such a house, the entrance door usually leads to a small hallway or directly to a big living room, which serves as the social center of the house or the apartment. In addition, another hallway, that normally connected to the living room, leads to other utilities of the house (bedrooms, bathroom, etc.). The other type, which began to be more and more visible to me along the wat, as Airbnb homes tend to blossom in such houses, is the 'corridor house'. Such a house begins from the entrance door with a long corridor, which leads to all the other rooms (including the bedrooms).

In such houses, normally, the social center of the house is still the living room, though living rooms are often absent, and so the social space moves towards the kitchen, if it allows it, space wise (normally, a space for a table and chairs). The corridor house is not unique or made for Airbnb services, but it is quite popular in roommates' arrangements, in which the relationship between the roommates is less important or personal (or that is what their mutual budget could afford). However, such a structure is indeed quite common in Airbnb homes of SAH, as it allows the creation of borders more naturally.

To understand this point, it is useful to take Luiza's home (M03) as a good example. Luiza hosted me in her apartment, but I hardly ever saw her. Luiza, in her 40s, is both a teacher and a private tutor, who works at a school in the mornings, while in the afternoon she conducts her private lessons at home. As can be seen from the design below, her living room is not the center of the house, and it actually has an identical door to the doors of the other rooms, in which guests are accommodated and uses utilities, while she, and her young daughter who was the one to greet me when I arrived, stay in that room, sleep and eat there, and come out only to help guests and take care of the apartment. For them, the house is only that closed room (which also has beds and a kitchen). Thereby, Luiza manages to create borders to her domestic space (that is also set up daily for her work as a private tutor), while leaving the apartment itself as a typical Airbnb apartment, that has no space for interactions, and in which her many guests are strangers to each other.

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[148] This research acknowledged its limitation, which was discussed in the limitation section of the methodological part (paragraph 3.2.6, page 112). The limitation is discussing the importance of architecture and the history of home architecture, for a deeper understanding of the physical structure of home. A research that reaches beyond the scope of this text.
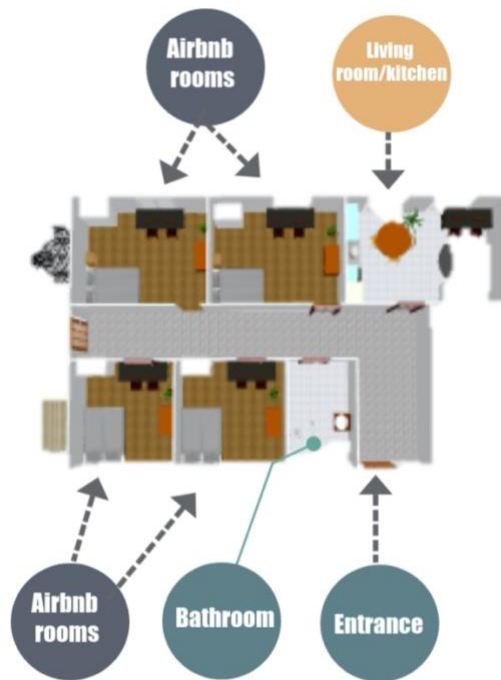
A similar mini-case, in the heart of Lisbon, in the neighborhood of Alfama, is of a woman in her 60s, Farah (L17), who understood the potential of her location, and in using her long corridor house as an Airbnb 'guest house'. Just as Luiza, Farah could, as well, use the rooms of her grown children and turn them an into Airbnb rooms, by leaving two doors private. The one of the kitchen and living room, and the one of her and her husband's bedroom (where they also keep their big dog). Farah's home is a conflicted home, in which tourists fight over their turn in the bathroom, and the house suffers from extensive problems as it is in an old building. Farah, however, presented herself as homey and welcoming, as she amused me while I was changing my own room's light bulb, which seemed to have burnt until I got there. Therefore, those contradictions together, often create a bizarre image that expresses a discomfort from time to time. More importantly, though required a romantic mind, it can and should be seen as a mirror view of the urban situation, in which both hosts and guests are fighting over the same conflicted services, as they do in the public and urban space.

This was what I paid for I suppose. The street the house I located in is very loud and the room is very small. I was there for 2 nights and unable to use the restroom at any point because there was always someone in the one shower. It appears as if many people live there and there is only one restroom. It wasn't a bad stay but I can't say that I would go back. Fatima was very kind and helpful however!

No anuncio diz que a casa de banho e partilhada, alem disso toda a gente se tem servido do banho sem qualquer problema Quanto a rua , a minha rua nao e a subir ,a minha rua e a direito ,a rua a subir e a rua que vem da estacao

7.3 The structural dilemma

The centered-living-room apartments, along with the corridor apartments, can be seen as the most typical houses of SAH. Alas, it is in no sense rare, that a structure of a house creates severe dilemmas relating the comfort and ability to use the different types of utilities. Such dilemmas are often the core motive that leads to the turning point, as a dilemma by definition, cannot be resolved without taking a serious act of change. Therefore, structural changes, such as other changes that were found and described in previous chapters, are one that lies in a domestic need, and often, demands compromises. Therefore, the resolve of one or more needs is likely to create further dissatisfaction, a new cycle of change, or looking for an exit, such is the case in the patterns of change of the structural home.

The difference is that those changes could be much more basic, causing a fundamental discomfort for the SAH. Such is the mini-case, for example, of Maya (M06), a young Milanese student in her 20s, who lives in one of the magical old residences along the Navigli river. Maya's house, that could be defined as a centered living room home, as seen in the design presented below, has a small and minimal kitchen on the right side of the living room, which leads to the bedroom, while the only bathroom is located inside the bedroom.

When I arrived to meet Maya, I realized that I had woken her up, while her boyfriend was still asleep and naked in the living room. It immediately became clear to me, that Maya desperately wants me out of the house, so she and her boyfriend could use the bathroom and start the day. A similar story had happened when she needed the bathroom before going out. Examining the chronological history of Maya's Airbnb hosting, reveals that before the turning point the situation was the opposite. She used to sleep in the bedroom, while the guests occupied the entire living

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[149] Farah's response in English: In the ad it says that the bathroom is shared, besides that everyone has been using the bath without any problem As for the street, my street is not going up, my street is straight, the street is going up and the street that comes from the station to my street.

room and in order to reach the bathroom, they had to penetrate Maya's only space. At the turning point, Maya has made that change, but the dilemma clearly still remains, and creates an enormous distortion to her domestic life.

Maya's Dilemma (M06)
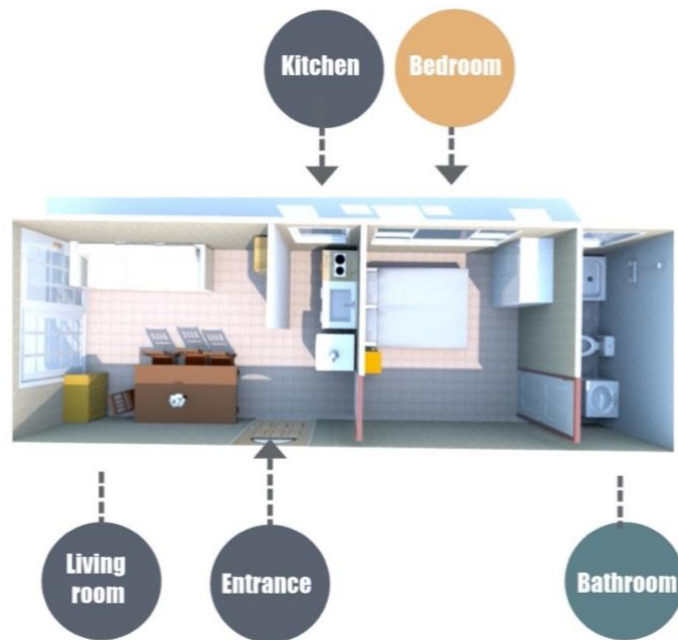
A similar mini-case, also in Milan, is Daria (M25), a woman in her 30s, who works as a saleswoman and hosts in her apartment which is in the colorful and hectic street of Viale Monza. Her case is very relevant, because it shows how a similar dilemma has started at the exact opposite starting point, reaching the opposite solution at the turning point. Maya started hosting people in the living room, and eventually moved them to the bedroom. Daria, however, hosted guests in her bedroom, and eventually moved them to the living room. Although they have each solved the problem, differently, both of their situations were and are still absurd. In Daria's case, as it can be seen in the below 3D design, the living room and the kitchen, which is not shared with the guest, are in the same space. In such a scenario, Daria's control, and her ability to prepare food is with great discomfort, and distortion, while naturally, the guests themselves are exposed and lack any privacy, as Daria needs to walk through 'their' going in and out of the apartment. In both situations there is a clear similarity that derives from a financial need, which turns into an unsolvable dilemma. More importantly, in both cases, can be seen a change whose purpose is to solve problems of the host, and not of the guests, however it creates other problems.
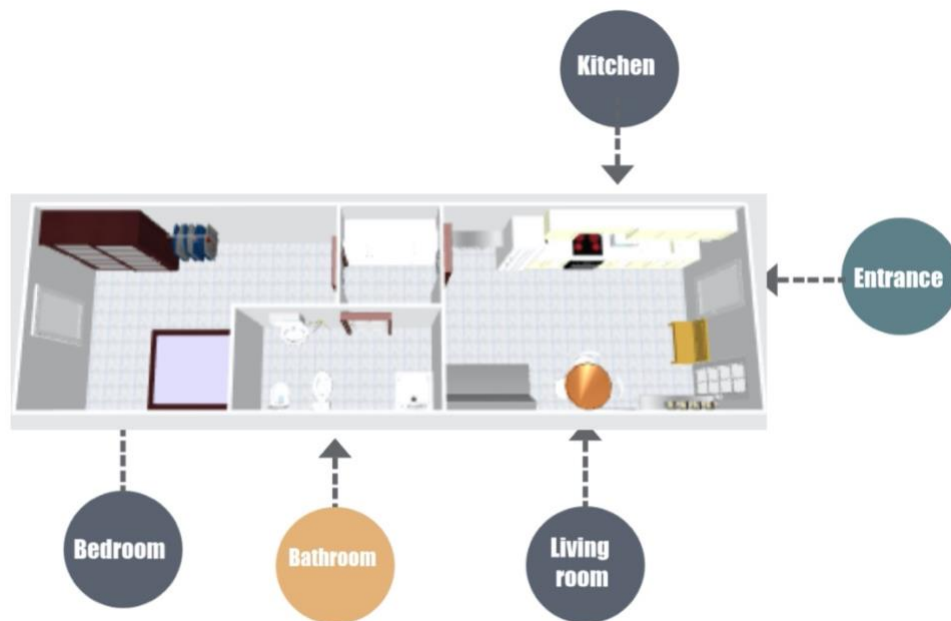
7.4 Functional and structural changes of home after the turning point

The turning point, as previously introduced, is a dramatic moment in every Airbnb SAH's experience, as the host comes to a full realization of the depth of their problem, a realization that as it is now recognized, leads to problem-solving ideas and decision making. While there are many such problems, that demand the attention of the host themselves, the host's lifestyle, or their balance between home and solutions outside of it, it was found that it is not at all rare, that hosts find that the potential of their Airbnb initiative is not yet fulfilled, and in order to allow it to reach its potential, changes should be made.

Alas, a vivid and crucial issue, which would now be presented, is that such dramatic changes are finally made after they are triggered by the host's inability to settle conflicts in the domestic space, conflicts that disrupt the host's ability to create a routine that would satisfy them, mentally, practically, and emotionally. Therefore, a turning point is almost never the result of a capitalistic expansion or of an ambition to improve the guests' experience (and thereby, to increase the rhythm of guests, reduce bad reviews and improve their ranking). Instead, it is an expression of an effort to improve domestic needs, by reorganizing the house in a better way so it would fit the routine of incoming guest and the ordinary fashion of living at home. To demonstrate this claim, it is possible to begin with the interesting mini-case of Gio (M07), a Milanese man in his 70s, who lives with

his boyfriend and their very small dog, in the rich and inviting area of the Buenos Aires street in Milan. Gio's apartment was, in many senses, a place to recharge oneself and relax, as the rooms, along with the utilities, were of the highest level I have experienced during my work, accompanied by a quite atmosphere, welcoming hosts, and quick accesses to my own favorite restaurants and also other new and affordable options. At Gio's place, his boyfriend had expected my arrival, with a well thought-of instructions are recommendations folder, which has led to an amusing and familiar discussion on the best pizza place around.

Gio's (M07) home after the 3rd stage

As can be seen in the first image, Gio's home is a corridor apartment, that had been separated into two parts. On the right side of the apartment there is the Airbnb room, and a beautiful garden, that could be a great place to relax, if I had not arrived during wintertime, while at the end of corridor, a private bathroom was designed with all that is necessary for the guests. On the left side, there is the couple's space, where they, along with the dog, live their domestic lives. Gio's home hinted on the hosts' point of view, as issues of noise were regulated and warned about, in the previously mentioned folder and in notes which were spread around the room (slamming doors, showers hours, etc.).

Alas, by viewing and analyzing the photos of the listing itself, photos that clearly represent the former structure of the apartment, it is possible to learn a lot on the change which was taken at the turning point, a change that clarifies the difference between the capitalistic ambition and the domestic needs of the two, as can be seen in the former design of Gio's Airbnb's home:

Gio's (M07) home before the 3rd stage
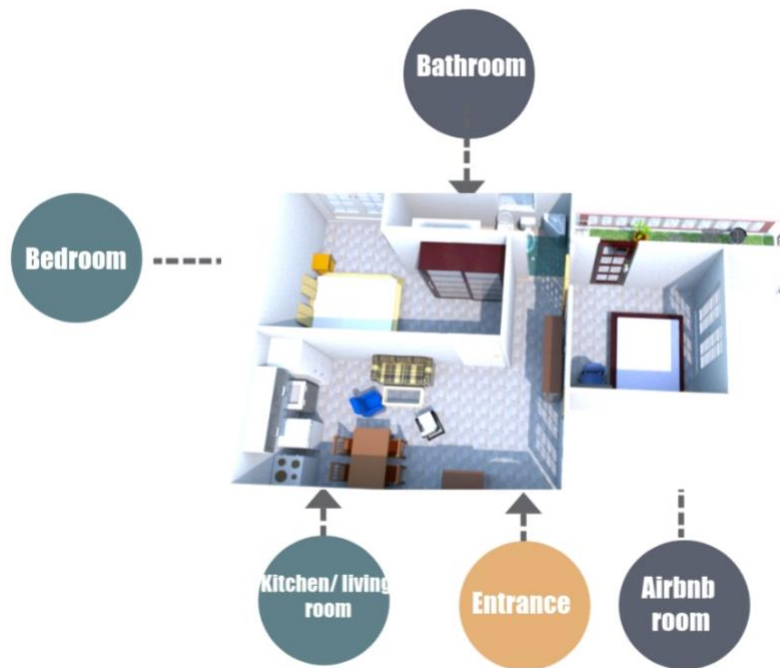
As can be seen from the former illustration of Gio's home, the two have changed a critical aspect of the structure of the apartment, by turning it from a centered living room apartment, to a corridor apartment. By understanding the two's difficulties in handling noise and disturbance, it is easy to see why Gio decided, with his boyfriend, to create such a change, a change that has led to a significant reduction of host-guest interactions, by cancelling, bordering, and separating between the domestic space and the one that 'belongs' to the guests. This creation of borders does not only reduce interaction, but it is also the most effective way to prevent conflicts and discussions on the possible, but forbidden, use of the kitchen, or the living room. Finally, it also prevents, as in the mini-case of Farah (L17, paragraph 7.2), the interaction of the pets with the guests, that as already learned, can and usually are a key bridge to intimate interactions between SAH and their guests.

The mini-case of Gio, is one of many, that showed a significant structural change, for the better situation of the host or the host living at home. A change that has the potential to significantly reduce the social aspects of the Airbnb service. In addition, such structural changes could be defined with a few more points, which could be seen as a final closer, of the six-layer influence map that was represented in the in chapters 2-7.

- **Changing the emotional state spatially**

As demonstrated in the previous chapters of the findings, the emotional state of the SAH has enormous implications on the fashion in which SAH choose to do Airbnb, as they strive to ensure a plausible daily domestic routine. Unlike public spaces, which are often considered limited, dynamic and time constrained, the domestic space is a place of comfort, and with low rates and movement. Therefore, while people can 'blunt' their social difficulties, or reduce them, it is a much harder task to do at home, in which people tend and need to behave according their true self, and in their 'comfort zone'.

That is the main reason which makes the Airbnb service so challenging, and often requires momentous changes. As a good though extreme mini-case that demonstrates this claim, it is useful to go back to Giacomo, who was already introduced (M12, paragraph 4.2). To recall, Giacomo has created an image of a 'socially impaired' character due to our encounter, as well former experiences of guests. If the first introduction with Giacomo focused of exploring the meaning of the emotional state of the hosts, in this part, I wish to focus on the spatial implications of this emotional state. Giacomo, who lives in an old apartment very close to the central station, has a special arrangement, in which his apartment has two entrances that allow him to avoid any contact with the guests. As can be seen from the first design, the border of the guests' space with the host's one, is of a bathroom and a shower, as each party (the host, the guest), has their own utilities.
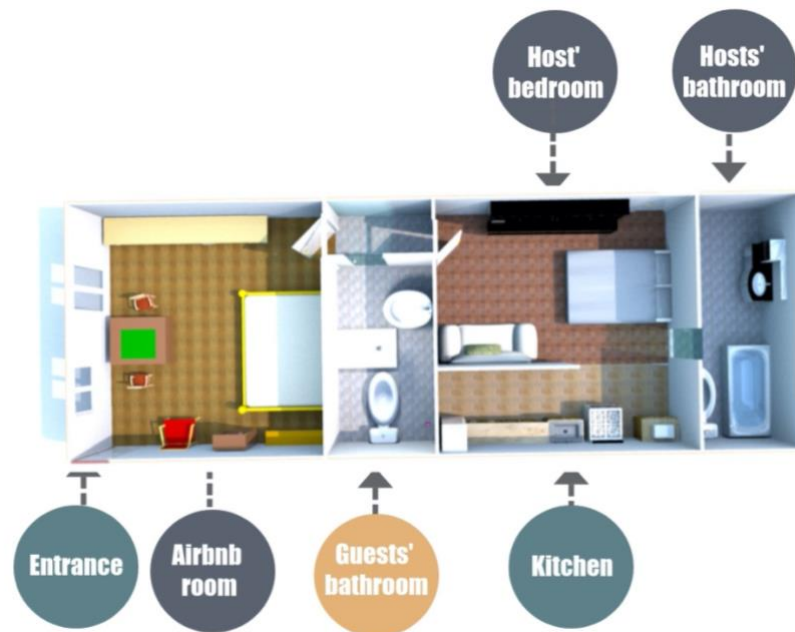
Alas, from analyzing former reviews and other useful data, it is easy to learn that was not always the case. As can be seen from the second illustration, it appears that in the past, there was no shower in the bordering bathroom. For that reason, the bathroom was in no sense a border, and the guests who had to use it had to go through the toilet and into Giacomo's bedroom, in order to enter the bathroom, for the shower. While such an arrangement could be problematic in any house, Giacomo character turned this arrangement into a big discomfort and embarrassment for both sides, as Giacomo was griming at the guests, choosing, for them, their shower time. While it seems reasonable that Giacomo chose to create that change for the guests and their satisfaction, evidences show that it is much more likely that this decision was taken to avoid the needed interactions to schedule showers and the actual movement in and out of his bedroom[151].

[150] It is important to note a limitation in this illustration, as in this mini-case (and also in the mini-case of Gio's, M12), my own understanding of the structure of the house, beyond the borders of the bathroom, was taken from other evidences, and not from first sight (as I, a guest, was not allowed in this space). For that reason, the location of Giacomo's entrance door remained unclear.

[151] One such example of evidence, in this specific case, is for example, the high frequency of complaints on the comfort of the matrass offered to the guests, complaints that were noted much before and after the turning point. A complaint which was not resolved or addressed until my own arrival and experience.
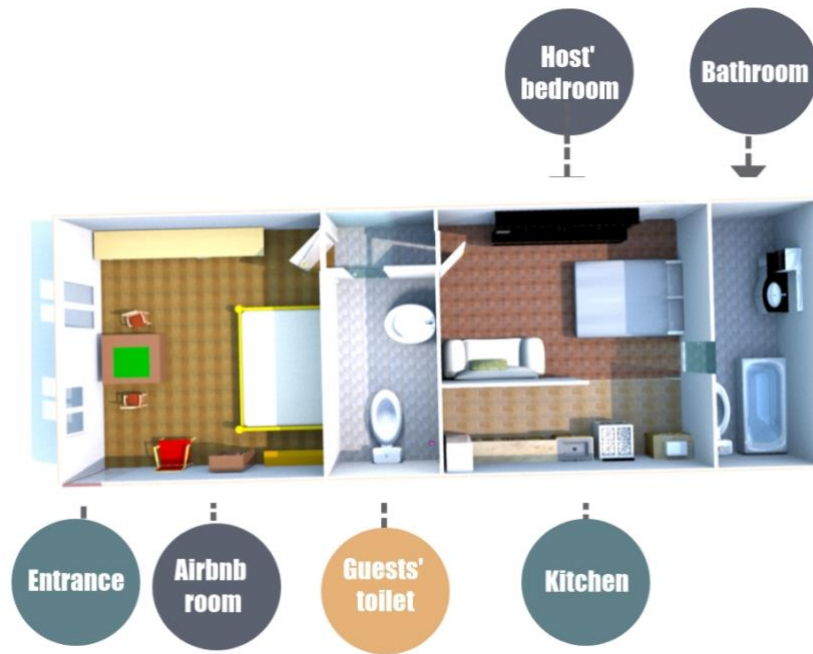
- **The impersonal movement of house structure**

As demonstrated with the cases of Giacomo and Gio, structural changes are often the result of emotional disturbance that seeks to find a compromise between the SAHs' domestic needs and their necessity or desire to continue hosting. That conflict, which is often the result of over-interaction and of an exhaustive sense of working and hosting under the service of Airbnb, reaches an outcome in the image of the 3rd stage, with structural and functional implications. Alas, more often than not, the desire to create borders and to limit interaction, causes a distortion of the house, which becomes hardly suitable, neither for the guest nor the host.

In addition to the mini-cases that were already presented in this part of the findings, and other similar mini-cases throughout the findings chapter, another important example is the one of Menashe (J21), a man in his 40s, an American Jewish religious flight attendant, but also an activist and a representative of the gay community in Jerusalem, who lives in the outskirts of the old and poor neighborhood, yet full of history and charm, Nachlaot.

Menashe's home (J21), a unique merge between American, Jewish, national, LGTBQ and even IKEA cultural expressions
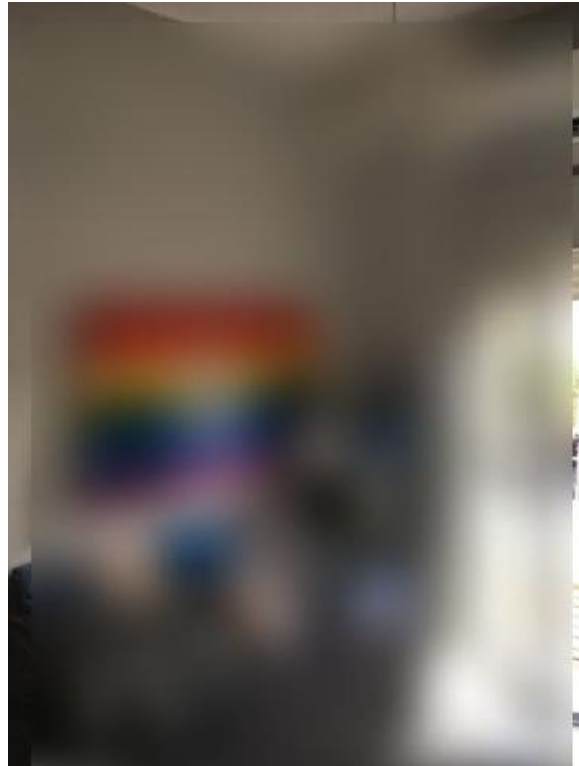
Menashe is another fine example of the fashion in which different values and ideas are mixed and combined together for the creation of new movements and living styles. Menashe's apartment in is in a very old structure in row of dense buildings. He redesigned his one-bedroom apartment to make it plausible for guests to stay in. To do so, he used cheap and light plastic materials to create a small cube, which takes some space from the small corridor, from the bathroom, and from the living room and kitchen. A cube, as the ceiling of that new room reaches only halfway, and above that fake ceiling lies his own bed, which can be reached with a ladder from living room. Therefore, the guest and the host, have to coexist in a sensual intimate situation, with a host who does not wish to interact. In addition, Menashe is also a good representation of the influence of the 'Ikea culture', which stands for the habit of Airbnb hosts to design rooms, and in this case, a cube, solely by using Ikea, the Swedish furniture enterprise. It was visible in all three cities, but was contradicting, especially, to the representation of the spirit and religion in Jerusalem[152].

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[152] The contextual urban issues such as the Ikea culture would be presented and discussed in the 10th and last part of this findings.

- **A functional disorder**

While focusing on the tremendous change of structure, that is often found after the 3rd stage, it is important to also specify on the possible implications of functional changes that occur during that stage. Functional changes are normally the result of on-going and subtle processes in which new norms become normalized and legitimized, despite their possible negative impact. Alas, it is not rare, that bigger functional developments would emerge during the 3rd stage and would eventually create a change in the daily domestic life. Such changes are especially dramatic when children are involved. Such is the case, for example, of Fatima (L36, paragraph 2.2). Fatima was born in a Portuguese colony (Mozambique), which she describes as a multi-cultural and rich experience, mainly influenced by the British and Indian culture. When she was four years old, her family had to return back to (south) Portugal.

Later on, she got married and had three children. When her third child was still a baby (six months old), the couple broke up, and she decided to move to Lisbon and find a job. During that time, she stayed with her parents who live in Lisbon. After finding a job as a journalist she was able to afford a home in Alvalade. Several years later, she began looking for a way to educate her children to her cosmopolitan world view. In addition, her dream was to take the kids to visit their relatives in Los Angeles. That was the point in which she found out about Airbnb. At first, Fatima did Airbnb only during the summer, when the kids are mostly away from home (as they visit their father who still lives in the south). Significant changes have led Fatima to change her view and allow her children to be present even when there are guests at home, help their mother with the hosting and interact with the guests. Nevertheless, Due the structure of the house, Airbnb creates for them three different settings of living that change daily.

Before the family started hosting with Airbnb, each of the women in the house have their own room while sharing the bathroom. The boys share another bedroom, and another bathroom.

After the family stars using Airbnb, they usually hosting while the children are not home, but at their father, down south (of Portugal). Therefore, The daughter is not home. The mother takes over her room, so the guests would sleep in Fatima's own room, and have the bathroom of the women. The mother not only penetrates her daughter's room, but also the boys' one, as now the bathroom in their room becomes her bathroom. It is important to note that when the children stay at their father's home, the oldest boy sleeps with his sister, and the younger sleeps alone (due a close relationship between the two).

Fatima's home (L36) – before Airbnb (her own sketch)
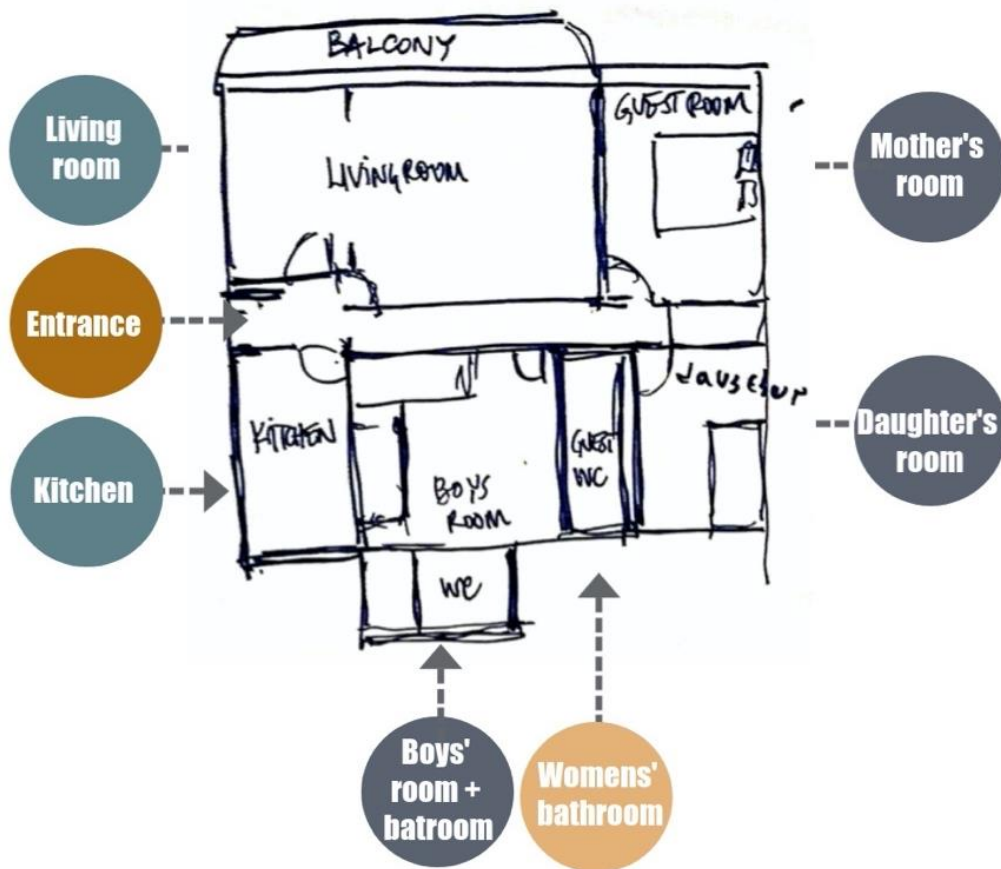
After the turning point, as the mother starts reporting an increasing dependency on the income from Airbnb, the mother takes over her daughter's room, but this time the daughter is at home, and they both sleep together on a single bed. The mother reports that since the divorce, her daughter prefers sleeping with her mother (10 years old), a known phenomenon of children after a divorce process, and so Airbnb encourages this habit. In this setting, both the mother and the daughter constantly penetrate the boys' room (15, 17 years old) in order to go to the bathroom, which leads to a situation of no-privacy for them as well.

Fatima's home (L36) – before the 3rd stage
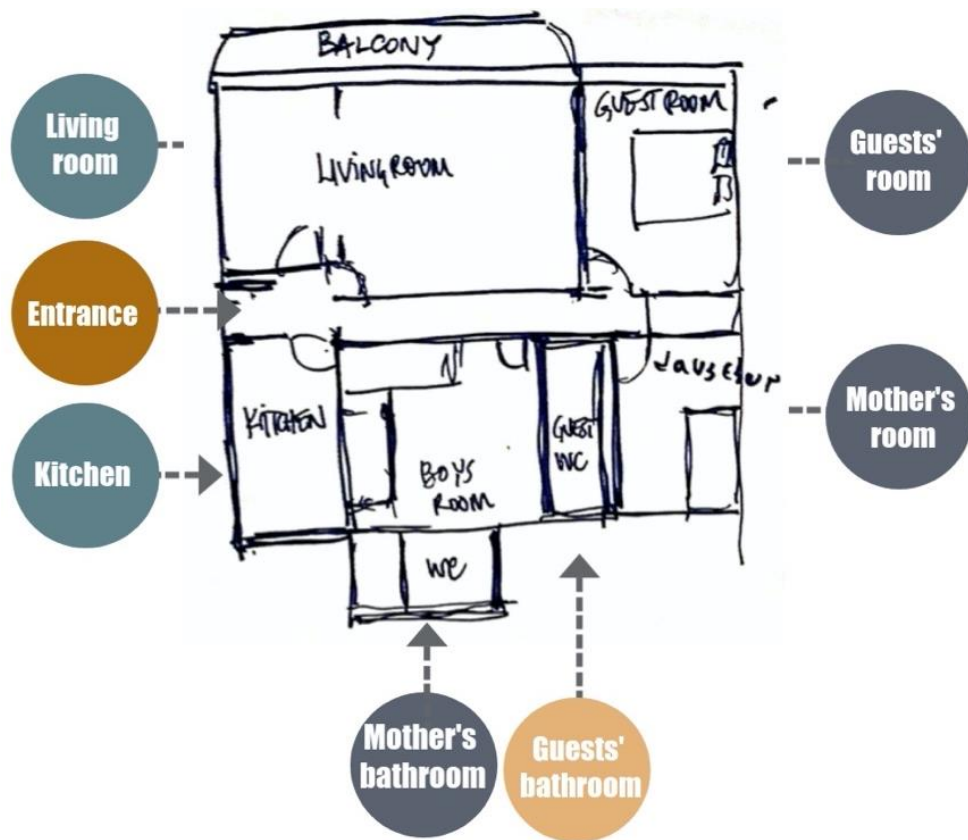
As the boys' door is always open because of the bathroom, they also encounter numerous interactions with the guests, making their room "public", not only to the family members, but to strangers as well. Finally, Fatima's home is an example of an unsteady home. Although Fatima started using Airbnb in order to afford travelling with her children, and teach them about different cultures, with time Airbnb is becoming a more serious financial resource, she also describes a home whose settings and functions are in constant change, and in which her children could encounter challenges and develop habits that are not considered very healthy, and could assimilate a dysfunctional home.

Fatima's home (L36) – after the 3rd stage
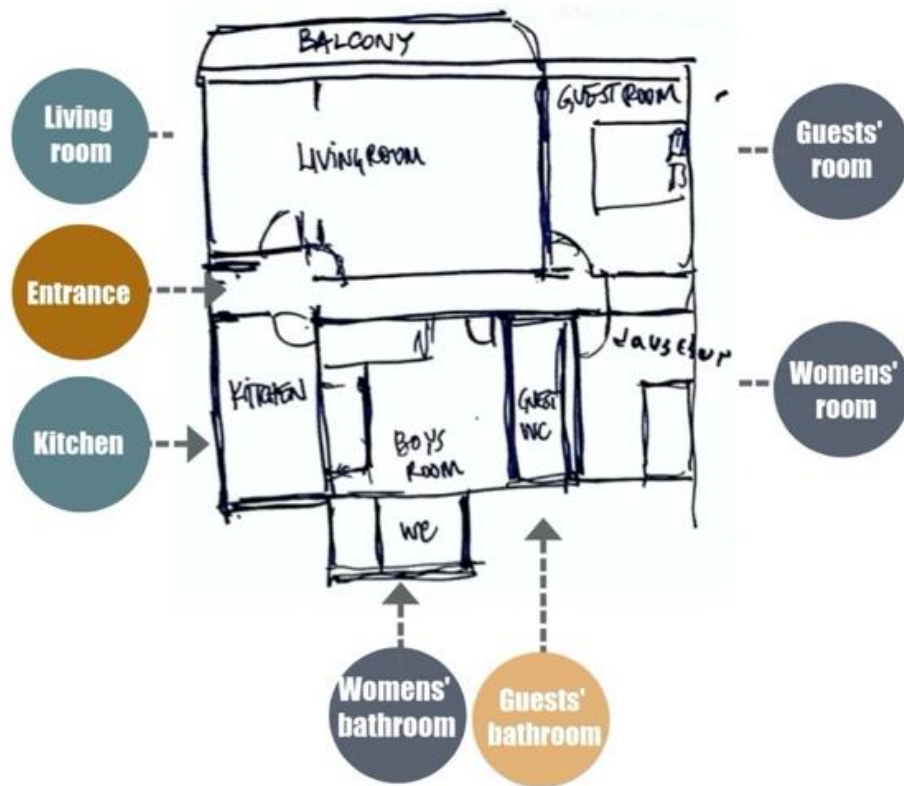
■ **A motivational movement**

The case of Fatima, is a crucial one, in the fashion in which Airbnb, and the Airbnb service is shaped into the lives of singles, couples and families, as it is becomes as part of the domestic reality, and finally home dwelling. It is, as well, the closing of a circle, that started in the second chapter, with the host biographical state, that in many senses, 'sets the tone', for the entire course of the Airbnb venture, or in other words, the ASEP. Fatima's, as many others mini-cases, displays a complicated change in the very motivational purpose to begin with hosting via Airbnb, as displayed in the second chapter (paragraph 2.3).

That movement, I consider complicated, because, as we can see, throughout the research's findings' chapters, it is not only a result of a financial dependency, as many mini-cases started hosting with Airbnb without an economic need, and such need did not burst also, over time. Therefore, and especially in cases when a financial dependency is not erupted, it can be quite puzzling, why, despite the nature of the six-layers of influence, SAH continue to host, and to allow Airbnb to disrupt their lives.

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Following the date collected, especially among hosts that are already after the turning point and the 3rd stage, in fact discovers often, an irrational image, which could be refer to two main patterns. The first, of in fact, that financial evolution of dependency, among many SAH that did not started Airbnb for no economic reason, and the second, and the more surprising one, of SAH that continue hosting via Airbnb, as of the 'power inertia'.

Graph No. 8: Changing Spectrum of Motivations after the Turning Point
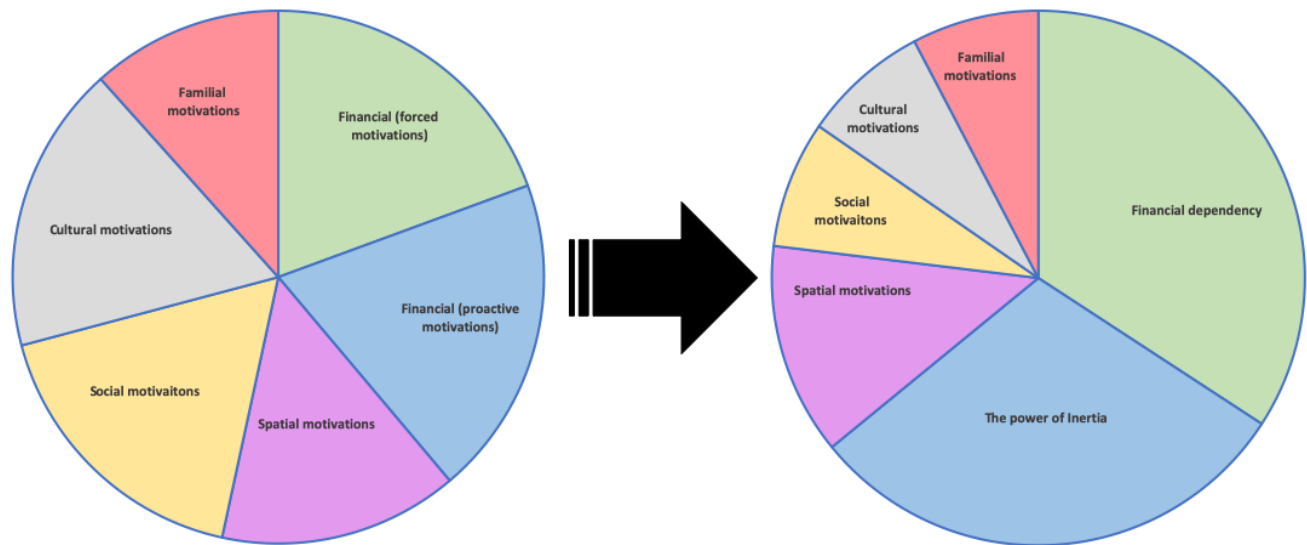
From the illustration provided in the 8th graph, it is possible to learn how indeed, for many mini-cases, over time, the financial factor became more and more important, as social, cultural, and even familial motivations are becoming less relevant, forgotten. However, another, new inexplicable factor and motivation turns to be vital, yet unexplained. The power of inertia, is another term whose main purpose is to point on situations, in which hosts do not really know why they continue to host with Airbnb, as it does not serves as a real and crucial economic need, nor serves, in their eyes, as a positive and desired purpose. In such cases, hosts find it difficult to explain why they continue hosting, or do explain that decision, by using reasons that in their own perspective, are not sufficient as a motivation that is 'good enough', or make-sense.

To describe that interesting phenomenon, it could be useful of using the case of Katelin (L38), as a good example. Katelin is a woman in her early 40s, that started using Airbnb, as a source of income, after she decided to leave her father business of a big network of Portuguese-styled café's around what was the colonized Angola, where Katelin was born. Katelin owns a big apartment in

the very center of Lisbon, that serves, for periods, herself, her mother (that more than once, left her abusing boyfriend to live with Katelin), and her daughter, that from time to time, return from her overseas educational periods.

However, in one point, Katelin had found a good job, yet untypical one, in which for three months, she is 'trapped' in a drillship next to Angola, in which she works at an office job working and controlling over safety protocols. Therefore, the family of Katelin is using home as a train station, in which sometimes they are all living at home, and sometimes, only one, two, or none of them are. The new job, made Airbnb hardly necessary, in Katelin own perspective, as often, she, or one of the other family members finds himself sleeping in the living room, as the big apartment is getting full of guests.

Katelin's (L38) own sketch of the house

(3 bedrooms, 1 bathroom and the big living room)
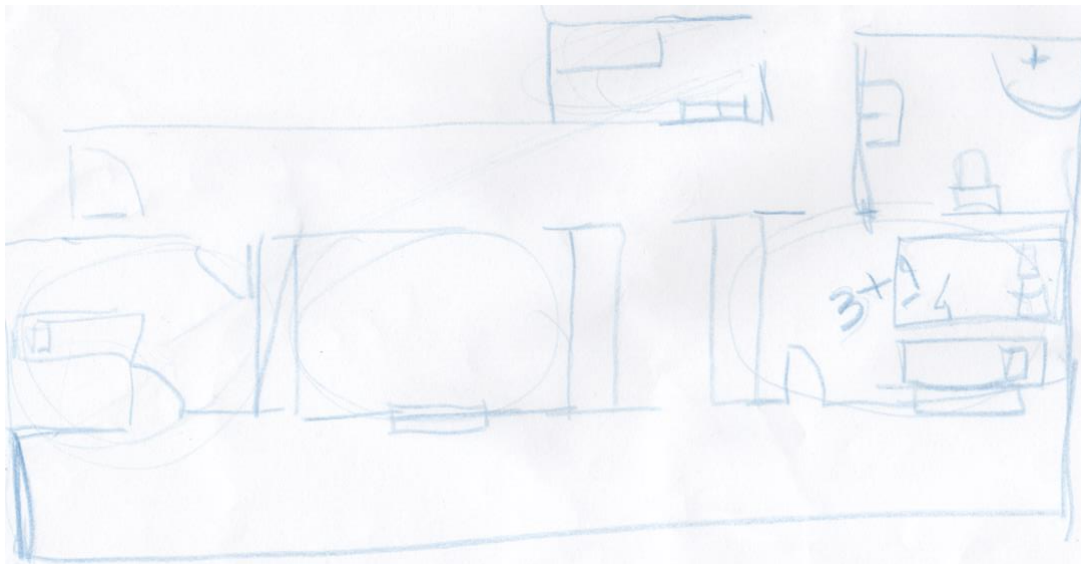
 Katelin is describing an absurd situation, in which often, it is her mom, the Angolan side of the family (her father is Portuguese), that need to welcome guests, with no knowledge of the English language (but, with a *'big heart!'*), which causes often difficulties and troubles. Katelin explained lengthily of how the old apartment is slowly breaking down, as she uses the money from Airbnb, to improve it, for the guests. In other words, Katelin's own perspective, is of a house that is being fixed and improved only for the guests, and their expectations, while she herself, intend to leave it, and therefore, a circle of hosting guests and using the income for the apartment itself, emerged,

unnecessarily, or for no purpose. After all, the hosting via Airbnb disrupts the normal order of her home, and it serves no social, nor financial purpose.

Alas, one of best mini-cases of this 'fuzziness' of the actual purpose of hosting with Airbnb, after the turning point, is of Ishbel (L30, paragraph 3.3; paragraph 6.2). The case of Ishbel is important, and a crucial part of the entire findings' exploration, as it display an extreme yet typical case of unclarity and senseless decision-making after the turning point. Ishbel, started Airbnb with no financial ambition, as she inherited a big and impressive apartment in the center of Lisbon, after both of her parents Died from illness when she was young. For Ishbel, starting working with Airbnb, was a cultural exploration of a global phenomenon, along with a desire of testing her own boundaries, as she defines herself as an anti-social person, that can stay by herself for days and weeks without interacting or going out.

And indeed, Ishbel enjoyed in her time hosting some special experiences. Alas, with every visit, and especially the ones in which she is giving away her entire house, she is reporting of deep depressions, concerns, and fears, that last until the host is finally leaving. As that being said, Ishbel cannot really specify why she is still hosting with Airbnb, as she tells it can be a good use for a vacation, but on the same note, claim that could not be a reason, and that the money she is earning, does not really serve for any good use.

The case of Ishbel, or Katelin, are numerous, and imply plenty, on the nature of the Airbnb service to become, over time, an inseparable part of their every day and their home dwelling. One that imagine the ending of it, even if such a result would ease their life, is almost unthinkable, and requires a process, to turn it, into an actual possibility.

7.5 Discussion – **Set in concrete**

Homes, in many senses, are the result of contextual history and culture, that emerges over the years into practical solutions that seeks to resolve the tension between density and the rising of individualism, which leads to more attention to space and its design, in the urban and in the domestic sphere (Ley-Cervantes & Duyvendak, 2015; Hochschild, 1999). In the findings demonstrated in this part, it was possible to get a perception of the development of the domestic imagination, that unsurprisingly, looks quite similar in all three cities. This can only indicate on

global trends throughout the urban era, trends that have shaped and made the urban space not only similar, but mainly adaptable to the international market and trade norms.

In that sense, Airbnb has entered an arena which was economically and socially ready, but also architecturally capable. Two major adaptations can be identified, neither were driven by the Airbnb service, but made Airbnb much more plausible, according to the findings. The first, is the very common and vivid phenomenon of the roommate arrangement. The roommate arrangement could and was considered odd and revolutionary in its very beginning, especially as roommates are often strangers to each other, who have no intimate relationship with each other (Heath, Davies, Edwards, & Scicluna, 2017; Beer, 1989). The second, in the image of growing reduction in the importance of the living room, and its tendency to become less and less essential to the image of home and to the fulfillment of domestic needs (Beillan & Douzou, 2018).

Interestingly, both are, perhaps, fundamental, unique and the first expressions of an imaginable and legitimized separation between the meaning of home and the meaning of family. Both are also clear expressions of bigger urban and western trends, in which the biographical path changes, in a quick pace, as milestones such as education, career, or leaving the parents' home, building a new home, and starting a new family, are delayed and their normative order distorts entirely (Micheli, 2006). Such sociological phenomena are the ones that pave the way in which a new image of home is created, an image of a home of 'in between', between the childhood home and the future family home, in which domestic values are much more fluid, and domestic needs can be seen and adapted to situations that are often sensed as in a state of 'temporary permanent'. A sense that even increases the legitimacy of particular and uncomfortable housing arrangements.

The architectural findings that have been demonstrated in this part, strongly suggest, that Airbnb is indeed so plausible today, because of such trends that allow less social interaction at home, and the dwelling at home with strangers. In addition, Airbnb homes can easily be divided into homes that are exactly in that middle point, in which domestic needs are to be bended and compromised, to 'real' family homes, in which domesticity is nurtured.

The division between the two homes has more than a perceptual value, but it also has, as findings prove, direct and obvious implications, not only on the ability of SAH to create changes in their home, but on the result of these changes, on the entire family and their ability to create intimacy in a ready-for-service kind of home. In that frame, it is easier to see why the case study of Jerusalem showed the lowest numbers of SAH that host with their children. The Israeli academy perceives

the Israeli (secular) family as unique in its traditional perception of the importance of family, a perception that has over time been reduced in other western countries. Such an expression is well documented as both religious and national interests, which lie in the imagined demographic war in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Alas, while the values of the family are still central in the Israeli society, past evidences, and current findings, show that global trends such as Airbnb, are not only vivid in the urban sphere, but they are normally more intense and influential in Israel (Lavee & Katz, 2003; Kulik, 2004). In that sense, Jerusalem is an exception that proves the rule, signaling those contradiction between familial values and the emergence of new values, that compromise intimacy for comfort, and domesticity for urban ambitions. Airbnb, in its integration in the city, it is not a pioneer of the urban order. Instead, in the urban level, it is one in many technological and non-technological driven processes, that are affecting the city and leading it to a specific direction, a global direction, as each city moves in a different pace and from a different starting point.

In the micro and domestic level, however, Airbnb shows abilities of playing a much bigger role, a role the enterprise has already demonstrated well by turning home hosting into a mainstream global phenomenon, and a significant actor in the tourism market. In this part of the findings, it is possible to get a good idea of another crucial layer in Airbnb's success, as an enterprise that manages to lead two contradicting ideologies and to support both of them at the same time. On one side, of a social service that offers a social and a cultural experience, and on other, in which the system supports and encourage dramatic architectural changes of the domestic space.

As can be learned from the findings, such changes are rarely the result of an ambition to expand of the service, but first and foremost, the desire and the necessity to settle between a domestic life and the on-going possibility of a hosting routine. Therefore, the influence of Airbnb, in this case, is normally indirect, as the shaping of a daily routine of Airbnb hosting becomes almost intolerable. On the same note, the tendency of Airbnb to prosper in 'corridor houses', is another important sign of that development, in which SAH seek to reduce interaction, and often, put a substantive effort in the organization of the house to apply that desire. The home of the Airbnb stay-at-home hosts, is, as demonstrated, a live museum. But it is also, an archeological site, in which it is only necessary to carve the first layer of home dwelling, to discover past routines and recent developments in the historical design of home.

This historical design of home, as demonstrated in this part of the findings, often links directly to the SAHs' ASEP, as Airbnb homes, in the beginning, display multiple evidence of past events. As in the old saying of rules that were written in blood, as rules that were symbolically created from past events of people who have died. Such is the Airbnb home, which is full of limits and restrictions caused by past events, events that damaged the sense of home, and therefore, were set in concrete, which symbolizes the scars of change, and of domestic values that were defended, and others that were neglected for the sake of other ones.

Finally, it would be risky to claim, that Airbnb homes of SAH, are patterns of architectural change towards the loss of the appearance and structure of the domestic sense. In fact, in this research, I have accumulated many mini-cases, in all cities, which stimulates both. The growing tendency of changing home for the sake of salvaging some domestic needs over others, and the abilities of others to avoid such dramatic changes, as they manage to find subtler solutions which would last for a longer time, or bigger turning points, that have no impact on the structural or functional aspects of home.

Therefore, and just like the other categorical implications which were presented throughout this findings chapter, while it is possible to empirically claim different patterns of the Airbnb phenomenon, it is important not to label any of them as 'negative', or 'positive', but as one that has an affect over SAH, that the nature of this influence, depended on the very particular situation of a host, an urban context, and the very nature of the service itself all together, as many similar and different services, that create change to space and key places in the life of the new emergent of consumers and producers, under the new global economic realm. The SAH, in that sense, are not very different from other producers, for example, Instagram users who post photos on the popular online social media. Just like the Airbnb hosts, they practice a type of production that has a particular effect on their lives, the fashion they do their activities and even, in the long term, design their home. Like the Airbnb hosts, they too, could eventually choose to increase their investment in the online community, and turn their posts from 'only' a production of themselves as a source of consumption, but also as a financial potential, that could, as the Airbnb hosts, lead to ideological and cultural values, that would need to undergo a transformation, which would settle between conflicts of space and lifestyle.

Airbnb users, and mostly the hosts, are going through a very similar process, with a few exceptions. Unlike the Instagram users, entering the realm of hosting (or guesting), starts in a different starting

point of investment, in which producing and consuming are initially monetized, and therefore create physical implications on the socio-economic situation of its users. And, unlike Instagram, Airbnb is not based on 'likes', but rather on physical and domestic interaction, as well as on the existence of consumers at home, a difference that triggers the potential of Airbnb as more influential and creates much more visible and significant domestic implications.

7.6 Conclusions – **A window outside**

In this 7th part of this findings chapter, I have taken the challenge of exploring the fascinating relationship of the Airbnb service towards the architectural preferences of home, and home design. Dwelling in about 145 homes across Jerusalem, Milan, and Lisbon, has created a surprising image of the similarity of the domestic conditions in such three different urban cultures. A similarity, which was found and patterned also in the fashion in which the Airbnb service support subtle, and then more significant changes in the design, structure, and functional image of home. A change, which is the accumulations of their past events and their initial and developed stands on the nature of hosting, until it reaches a turning point, of a bigger and significant change.

The primary limitation of this part of the findings, is the strategic decision to avoid creating an architectural and historical background on the selected case studies, and instead, taking a different approach. An urban approach, which assimilates and presumed global and urban processes as the key models to understanding the city and to predict the direction in which the cities are heading to. Therefore, while that limitation is yet significant, the semi-comparison between the cities proves to be fruitful, by finding patterns that overall apply to all cities, while the pace in each city could differ.

Cities can be, and are often considered, hectic, dense and of a high pace, because this is the exact mechanism that helps creating a growing, constant, and countless interaction of production and consumption. However, cities could be seen also differently, as of construction sites where the work is never done, and the locals are in a steady and habituated sense of disturbance, and difficulty to enjoy the benefits of the big city. Jerusalem, for example, is the symbol of this image, and of endless disruptions that occupy the entire city every single day.

Airbnb homes, in this sense, are not very different. It seems, that by understanding the architectural changes which the Airbnb homes undergo, the urban dichotomy of the private and the public is

nearly shattered, as the home, too, becomes a place of constructions and development, of change that seeks growth. This way, it is possible, that Airbnb is only one expression, in which the borders between home and the outside would be broken, and home will be too, a mirror, a micro cosmos, or a window, to the outside.

"Maria ti amo. Maria ho bisogno di te. Poi la stringo e la bacio, infagottato d'amore e di vestiti. E anche lei si muove, felice della sua apparenza e del nostro amore. E la cosa continua bellissima per giorni e giorni. Una nave, con una rotta precisa che ci porta dritti verso una casa, una casa con noi due soli, una gran tenerezza e una porta che si chiude.

Nelle case

non c'è niente di buono

appena una porta si chiude

dietro un uomo

Succede qualcosa di strano

non c'è niente da fare

è fatale quell'uomo

incomincia a ammuffire

Ma basta una chiave

che chiuda la porta d'ingresso

che non sei già più come prima

e ti senti depresso.

La chiave è tremenda

appena si gira la chiave

siamo dentro una stanza

si mangia si dorme si beve…"[153]

[153] Written by Giorgio Gaber. From the song: *'C'è Solo La Strada'*. Album: *'Anche Per Oggi Non Si Vola'* (1974).

8. *'The De-Domestication of Home', (or),*
Studying the 'Meaning of Home'

1st Stage	2nd Stage	3rd Stage	4th Stage	5th Stage
Interest, Preparation & First Guests	Increasing Rhythm & Adjustments	The Turning Point	A New Setting of Home	Looking for an Exit
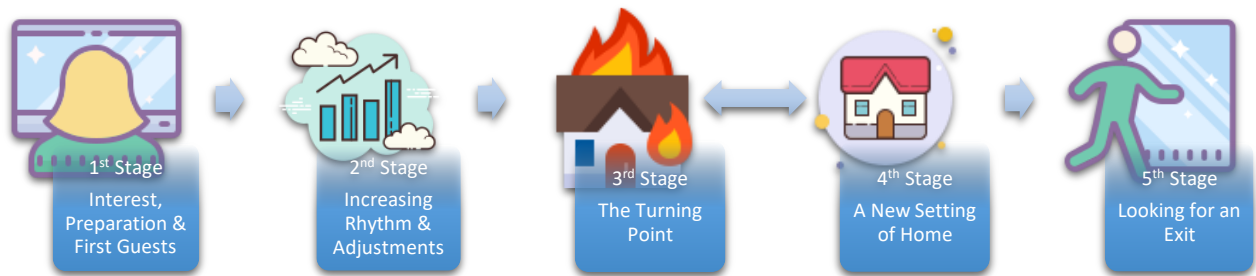
8.1 Introduction

In the last six parts of this findings chapter, I have tried to demonstrate and discuss six different and separate dimensions. By combining them with the chronological standard path of the SAH (ASEP), those dimensions also become processes, in which the hosts and their homes undergo changes and move towards a specific direction. The community and its imagined yet influential mechanism, the atmosphere at home which is caused by the presence of guests who lead to the remodeling of home, the interactions with guests and their implications on the balance between home and work, Airbnb itself and its technological ability to maneuver and manipulate the outcome of a service and of the behavior of its hosts, the profile of the guests themselves and the meaning of the guests' expectations and behavior, and finally, the structural and functional meaning of home modification, as they come to a climax in and after the turning point.

The accumulation of all of these dimensions, or processes, are the ones that eventually create a new turning point, in which they are again bound to decide between taking the road towards the exit, or making again, some substantial modifications, if to the service, their home, or their lifestyle.

Over the course of the human race, and as it has already been displayed in the introductive chapter of this thesis, home has played and still plays a significant role in forming the image of the family (Somerville, 1992; Allan & Crow, 1991; Devine, Britton, Halfpenny & Mellor, 2003), of the development of the identity (Hecht, 2001; Clarke, 2001), and especially, of a space that holds unique settings that is their aim is of providing domestic needs to be fulfilled. Alas, home, as well as society and the individuals who are part of it, have never been static, but rather, they are in a constant change, due to urban, market-oriented, personal and domestic developments, in which the

relationship between people and their home is challenged, and revised (Clapham, 2005; Brindley, 1999; Duyvendak, 2011).

If there is one aspect that seems unharmed by those modification of social order and the urban life, at least as it is perceived since the urban revolution, it is the value of home and the role which home plays in human lives, especially as it has been, again, seemingly, fixed into a constant state since that time. The 'meaning of home' is a complex concept, exactly because of the gap that exists between the practical and daily changes of what home is, and how it, potentially and in practice, turns into something else, and of the image of home, as an idea, or a representation (Somerville, 1992; Miller, 1992).

Understanding the representation of home, as thoroughly studied under the umbrella of the field of humanities, by examining the image of home in popular culture, such as in books, films, paintings or modern or classic poems and lyrics, creates a noticeable diversity in the images of home, in which the gap between the ideal home, which represents the true social view of the meaning of home, and the 'feeling at home', constructs and reproduces those values, by cancelling and erasing other possible and positive representations of home (Horta & Martins, 2020; Photiou, 2015; Augustyns, 2019). often, in such presentations, the meaning of home is well connected to an important part of the ideas behind the 'American dream'. The American dream in itself, is a representation of specific values, as 'a goal' in which ideas such as home, career and family are integrated together, while none of them are complete without the others (Després, 1991; Hubka & Kenny, 2006). In many senses, the American representation of home and the meaning of home, is one of the most productive images that has managed to spread around the world, and thereby to represent capitalistic ideas in which contain certain consumed items. Ideas that are repeated, on their view of what home looks like (Tueth, 2005; Haralovich, 1989; Jones, 1993).

Adaptively, sociological research addresses the issue of the meaning of home as well, while focusing on the very relevant and important issues of gender, and gender roles (which would be discussed in the next part of the findings), and the case of elders, who often, because of their physical or health situation, choose (or it is chosen for them) to move out of home to different residential solutions. In such cases, it was found that the loss of home, and the sense of home, are significant factors in the declining mental and physical health of those elders, in their mood and in their vitality (Lewin, 2001; Rijnaard et al., 2016; Falk, Wijk, Persson & Falk, 2013). .

In a few work studies it was found that there are two central issues that cause those negative effects. The first, is of the more general and abstract sense of home, which is often found towards hometowns, neighborhoods, and familiar streets around home. All of these features are part of the meaning of home, and are important aspects of 'feeling at home', which elders who move out of home, lose, and therefore, their motivation to leave the house is reduced, and their health is affected by it (McHugh & Mings, 1996; Cloutier-Fisher & Harvey, 2009). The second, is of what has already been mentioned in the introductive chapter, of the importance of domestic objects to the 'feeling at home'. As mentioned there, the important work of Hecht (2001), on a single case of a retiree, who has made a museum of her home, whose sole purpose is to reproduce the lost image of her childhood home, which was taken from her during the war.

Alas, other research on the matter show how domestic objects and the possession of them, are considered among the most important expression of 'home sensing'. In one aspect, objects give substance to the image of home and therefore, to the identity of its residents. Objects are always context and history related, as they signify messages of class, gender, culture, and the biographical path of the residents (Bowlby, S., Gregory, S., & McKie, 1997; Hunt, 1989). In addition, objects are a tool agency, of control and home control, that ensures the roots and stability of home, which lacks in temporary homes, and in which their temporariness puts weight on the elderly, as the absence of a 'sense of home' implies on their own temporal and last stage of their lives (Lawrence, 1982; Rose, 2003; Riggins, 2012).

Finally, the damaged sense of home, can be also the result of returning home, or of the re-using of home differently. Such a phenomenon is also quite discussed and common among retirees, as their retiring from work changes home and home atmosphere dramatically. The retired worker, suddenly stays at home much more, interacts in new spaces and times with the other residents, and tries to strongly engage in homely issues. This shift in the balance, normally with old married couples, creates a temblor for both partners, and a combined home-family crisis (Mason, 1989; Bushfield, Fitzpatrick & Vinick, 2008; Szinovacz & Davey, 2005).

The ideas, which were presented so far, display some of the most crucial aspects of the sense of home, and also the implication of change in the sense of home. Alas, It is not a coincidence, that home is such an important and productive research subject, when focusing on the elderly. Nowadays, moving between houses and postponing the commitment to one house, is only increasing and natural, although it is yet dramatic and life shaking. Nevertheless, while mobility

of the space called home is common but considered temporary in younger age, the sense of home for the elders is final, and could determine the reality and level of health in their final stage of their lives, if in the events of changing home, or losing home.

In this part of the findings, I wish to explore the same issues that display aspects of the sense of home, and mainly, the loss of it, by interpreting SAH's own perception of the image of home, and the concept of 'feeling at home', while confronting them with noticeable changes in those aspects. To do so, in this part, the visual presentations of home and the sense of home would be targeted, by emphasizing the visual and experimental methods which were used along this research.

From the beginning, the visual exploration, was indented to be a facilitator of mental representations of home, which could be confronted with the actual reality of the same given and selected mini-cases. More precisely, the visual methods were intended to find new types of data which would help the participants demonstrate, in their own words and drawings, the direct importance of objects, and their own relationship with the city, their neighborhood, and as part of home.

By focusing on domestic objects and items, two approaches were taken. First, objects, as seen, are as such because of their ability to perform as tools of different agendas. Of agency, of comfort, of consumption, or other capital and domestic ideas. By exploring the roles of objects, and their modifications which are caused by the growing work in the Airbnb service, it is possible to distinguish how different objects have different correlations with the sense of home, while exploring their impact on the emotional and mental state of the host. In addition, following the work of Latour, which was already discussed in the previous chapter, domestic objects are to be understood also as cultural items, as subjects, that as such, have the potential to be not only used, but also to be a significant actor in the relationship between SAH and their guests, and in the development of later changes in the domestic life.

Furthermore, it is easy as it is important, to find a few similarities between the dramatic return of a retired partner back home, to the Airbnb service, as both can potentially lead to the same loss of balance between the residents' dynamic relationship, and to an internal gentrification of domestic needs and domestic disorientation. Therefore, following the subjective but critical image and visual presentation of home, could imply on further and definitive changes that home is due to suffer from in the near and far future, and the implications of those changes to the human condition.

8.2 Objects as home-feeling facilitators

It is possible to begin and claim, that technology has always been a key part of objectification of home. Alas, if the first technological domestic items were made for improving the house and making it more efficient, the items which this research is interested in, connect home to the outside, and allow the increasing quality of communication with others outside home, communications that over time become efficient and legitimate also in dealing with work issues[154]. Adaptively, as home became more equipped with technology to engage with the outside, personal objects began acquiring more and more centrality in people's daily lives. The Walkman, the headphones, or the iPod, have dramatically changed the fashion in which people experience the outside and the public sphere, as their ability to reduce the exposure to urban stimulation has improved. Later on, items such as the personal computer, laptop, iPad, and finally, the smartphone, have made the individual more connected to the virtual space, and much more dependent on their digital objects.

Interestingly enough, while Airbnb is one good implication of the movement into objectification and digitation of the every-day, the Airbnb service, is entirely technology-free. It was expected that objects that are in use for the sake of operating the work with Airbnb, and with the guests, would have some kind of implication on space. Instead, in 145 mini-cases, I had only one incident in which technology was involved, as a funny correspondence has emerged with Tristan (L16, paragraph 4.4), who has forgotten his Mac charger in 'my room'. That was, in fact, a first and almost only indication of a room which is used as an office when guests are not there, as Tristan placed his personal laptop in his very comfort sitting and working area.

While it is obvious that the SAH whom I encountered defiantly use their phone and computer to engage with Airbnb, it can be noted, that most of them establish a routine in which (1) those technological objects do not have a steady location in the house, and they regularly move with the host, in and outside home. This pattern was especially found among younger hosts. Alas, hardly any desktop computers were found among the mini-cases. Or (2), when the bedroom allows it, technological devises are not only charged in the bedroom, but also placed and used there.

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[154] The peak expression of this development, a development that could be traced back to the landline phone, was one of the greatest phenomena of this in-motion Covid-19 Virus (Coronavirus), as the technological development of video conference has become one of the most important technological consumptions in numerous fields. From business meetings, to educational solutions. From a domestic familial escape to the fashion in which governments are producing policy and decision making. This phenomenon is so crucial to the sociological understanding, exactly because it is not new, and was technologically possible but hardly used before the pandemic. Alas, the very historically unique features of the spreading disease, led to new technological solutions that became socially trendy, and legitimate.

Furthermore, while no expression of such technology is seen in the domestic space of the Airbnb service, the service itself is 'free' of any digital interference. It is possible, as after the booking is made, and the arrival date and terms have been decided (or remained unspoken or unclear), both parties do not need to use the Airbnb platform anymore, as long the experience itself progresses normally. Once the actual visit is over, both parties need to use the Airbnb platform again, to comment on the experience. Thereby, Airbnb itself, and in contrary to the image presented in the 5th chapter of the findings, technological evolvement is virtually absent. Therefore, it is possible to notice a significant contradiction between the physical presence of Airbnb in the service, in its expression on technological objects, to the tacit, but effective fashion in which Airbnb is forcing its agenda over its hosts.

Other than the technological aspects of the domestic sphere, it is possible to notice a few more important patterns.

8.3 Airbnb service oriented and objects

The entrance into the hosting business of Airbnb, as noted, turns homes into facilities that need to deliver a certain level of an accommodation solution, which would fit the guests' expectations. Alas, the natural and also required ambition to create such a solution with minimum spending, normally leads to the reuse and conversion of domestic objects into service-oriented ones. As for example, normally, SAH do not buy an additional bed, but settle on the quality of the bed that was, if there was, already in the room. The result is the shift of a domestic object, made for home use, to a commercial object. Items such as the bed, sheets, towels, toiletries, cookware (when the kitchen is available for the use of the guests), and finally, the keys, are all taken into consideration of massive use, possible wear, and potential additional costs. For example, many SAH tend to react in three different manners to the use of toiletries by guests. (1) Most hosts reduce their own consumption of products like shampoo, conditioner and soaps, by replacing their previous preferences to larger packages, of a lower quality and with less personalization of the product (for example, shampoo for curly hair, colored hair, etc.). (2) Others, and especially women, but generally less mini-cases, place their own products in a bag, in a closet in the bedroom, as they take it with them every time they take a shower (or any other type of functions in the shower, like hair removal products). (3) The less common type of reaction is of displacing the toiletries and

moving them to the bedroom, while not supplying any replacement for the guests. Such occasions are indeed rare, but they were found among the case studies.

In addition, it is important to note that while such items, like toiletries, were easy to identify because of their fundamentality, same reactions towards items that are 'exposed'. Meaning, items that have a potential of a legitimate use by the guests, were treated in a similar manner, like kitchen cookware, a television, or a sofa. Such is the example of the home of Romero (L22), a father and a husband in his 50s, who used to live with his wife, along with their daughter, her husband, and their newborn child, while doing Airbnb. Romero's home is interesting, because from that starting point, Romero's home has gone through a series of changes, in which Romero and his wife left home, leaving it to their daughter who continued working with Airbnb, then, he rented one room to a permanent tenant, who lived with the family in the beginning, before they eventually left, while continuing renting the other rooms to Airbnb guests, leaving the tenant alone with a faster stream of incoming guests.

The constant movement of tenants or roommates and Airbnb guests, is visible in the image of Romero's home, as similarly to other homes, he puts a marker in the kitchen, asking each of the residents, tenants and guests, to write their name on their own food, so it would not be consumed by others. The use of the marker is only one example of a home that turned into a space of strangers, in which domestic aspects are manipulated to fit a home divided between people that lack the very basic care of each other. In addition, it is important to observe a few more preferences of such items that are harmed or challenged by the Airbnb service.

- **Exposed items**

In many occasions, an item loses its functions and centrality because it has a sentimental or a romantical value, which is in danger when it is exposed to guests and to the Airbnb service. Keys, for example, are such an item that has a great emotional value, as they represent the ability of a house to be protected and shut from external risks and uncomfortable views. Alas, one of the most fundamental aspects of the Airbnb service is the natural freedom of the guest, in and out of the accommodation, a freedom which is expressed in the ritual of the key exchange. Keys are a crucial part of the physical arrangement of the check-in, and of the check-out. In a few places, hosts have even found solutions in order to avoid giving away their keys, or the keys virtually become redundant, by the manipulation of the terms of coming in and out.

In addition, the keys, are not only a symbol of the possession of entrance rights, but also of the possible value of another item. The door. And indeed, one of the most common complaints I have received, in my collection of data, was the issues that guests have with doors, as they tend to fail to open them, close them, lock, or unlock them. The door is often viewed as a sacred object, whose possible damage would be seen as upsetting, far more than only because of the financial meaning of fixing it. Such is the image Alessia (M49) who has pictured in her thoughts the option of discarding the keys for better solutions for the guests. *"... well look, I have thought about it once, it is like, home for me is something, it is like a goal, you know? I don't know, maybe I talk like this because I am pregnant (laughing), but I have a picture in my mind, of that house with my dear husband, with a child or two, my cats, a dog. Something nice, you know? And, there are many days that this place looks like it, like this could be it, at least for now, and to be honest, to be giving my keys to strangers, you know, **my keys**, of **my home**, that's tough, and they never manage to enter, so they are upset. But hey, this is my home you are talking about, and if you don't know how to enter, maybe you shouldn't come in you know? But that's really stupid talking, but I am thinking about turning it to a password door, I will still have my keys, they will have something else, something digital, not the real thing..."*.

- **Cultural items**

While the patterns of protecting an item by discarding it is very present among the mini-cases, in fewer ones, the accumulation of an ideological or cultural mutual idea between the objects, can become part of the experience of the service itself. In the house of Antonio (L39, paragraph 2.2, paragraph 4.4; paragraph 6.3), for example, Antonio's curiosity and exploration of the act of love, and the idea of polyamory, has led him to put artistic images of animals mating, all over the bedroom. While Antonio admits that such images reflect, in his opinion, something very basic about human love and passion, it was the Airbnb service which has led him to invest and put effort in displaying this culture and ideology for the visitors to experience.
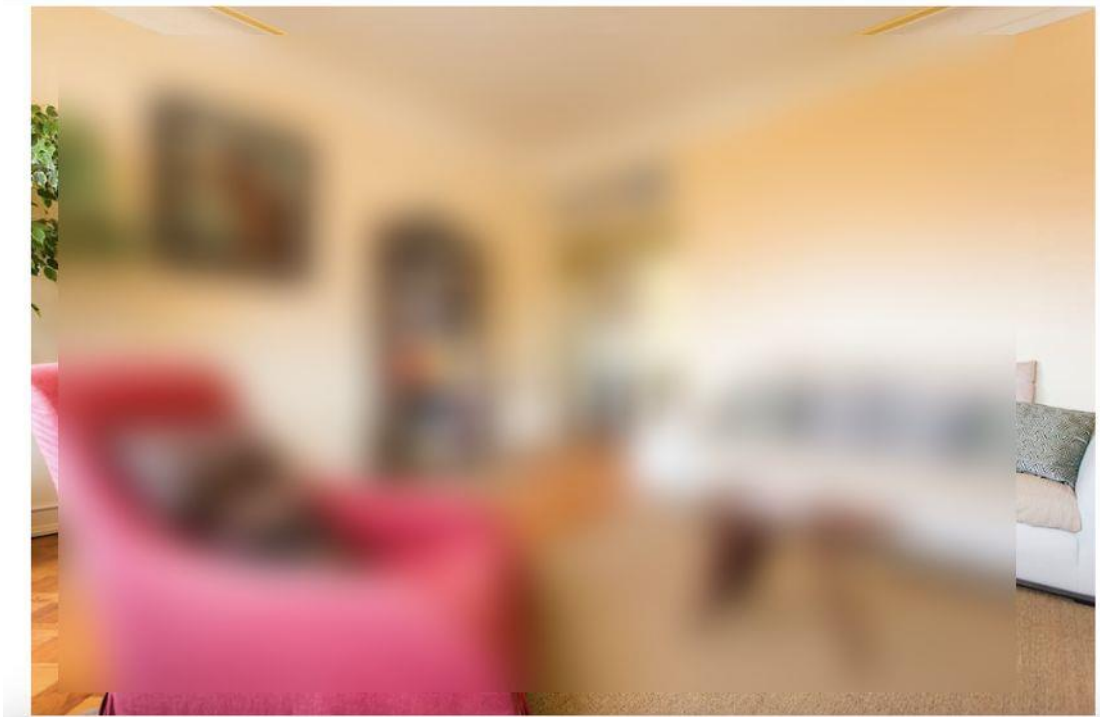
The house of Shana (L02), however, is introduced to the guest in a display of no less than 50 images spread around the house. Shana, a photographer, would like to present her house as an ecological home, in which no meat is consumed, and mainly, in which the entire big home is full of green and wooden ecological systems, providing a full natural experience. Shana, it is safe to say, holds true ideological beliefs of the importance of the presence of nature in the domestic space. Alas, eventually, that ideology has become a concept, according to which Shana presents her house, however, the house is actually very far from being green or even nature-oriented.

Shana's home (L02), a green ideology into a domestic concept

(one of Shana's pictures in her profile, no real correlation to her actual home)


Alas, the most impressive Airbnb homes which I have witnessed, as an expression of a domestic vision and the Airbnb service, was also the first home I have experienced in Lisbon. This apartment, like Shana's, was in the area that I grew to love the most, the lovely yet busy street of Saldanha. Eduardo (L01), is a Portuguese man in his mid-30s, who had first rented, and then managed to buy, a big and open apartment, that he shared with his friends. Their love for video games has led him to slowly acquire more and more collectibles of classic and historical games, followed by classic and historical movies. Later on, his friends slowly resigned from their mutual home as they got married. Therefore, Eduardo started using the option of Airbnb more and more, and also started to see Airbnb as a profitable business in which he could exploit the increase in the tourism of Lisbon. Therefore, at one point, he decided to leave altogether, and home turned into an entirely Airbnb apartment.

My own room, which was booked minutes before I boarded the flight to Lisbon, was designed in the theme of the Star Wars movies. The room was painted all black, spaceships were hanging from the ceilings, while the entire rooms was full of dolls, quotes, and other Star Wars collectibles. The room had no window, it was extremely small and black, and quite claustrophobic, but it was worth the effort, as the living room's theme was of classic movies, and included hundreds of special versions of such movies. Other rooms were also designed in different themes, one in the theme of

the Zelda games, giving it a more white and pleasant atmosphere, the bathroom was designed in the theme of the Mario games, while an old Game Boy was there working and ready to be played with.

Eduardo's home raises a few interesting questions. First, it is obvious by spending time in his home, that Eduardo has a real passion for his collectibles, as he spends a lot of time and energy on obtaining knowledge on each of the fields he is interested in (like Mario, or Star Wars). Alas, it is not clear what the ability of Eduardo to enjoy his collection really is, and the many video games spread around the house. Secondly, Eduardo even warns his guests that the room might be too dark and too small for couples, or for people who are not Star Wars fans (I am not, but my choices at the time were limited). Meaning, Eduardo is ready to sacrifice the flow of guests, in order to sustain a domestic vision that he cares about deeply. Thirdly, if he cares about his collectibles, but cannot enjoy them, what could be his motivation to keep investing in his work. Reviewing several types of data while focusing on these questions, indeed raises a conflict and conflicting interests, in which the love for classic video games and other such types of popular culture, has been divided between his old home and his new home, that received a new vision, a more mature one. In the old house, investments in his themes continued to create a full experience for the guests, and thereby offers an additional value for the stay. At one point, his investments stopped, as he started to invest in his new home, and new situation.

Eduardo's home (L01) – claustrophobic yet unique

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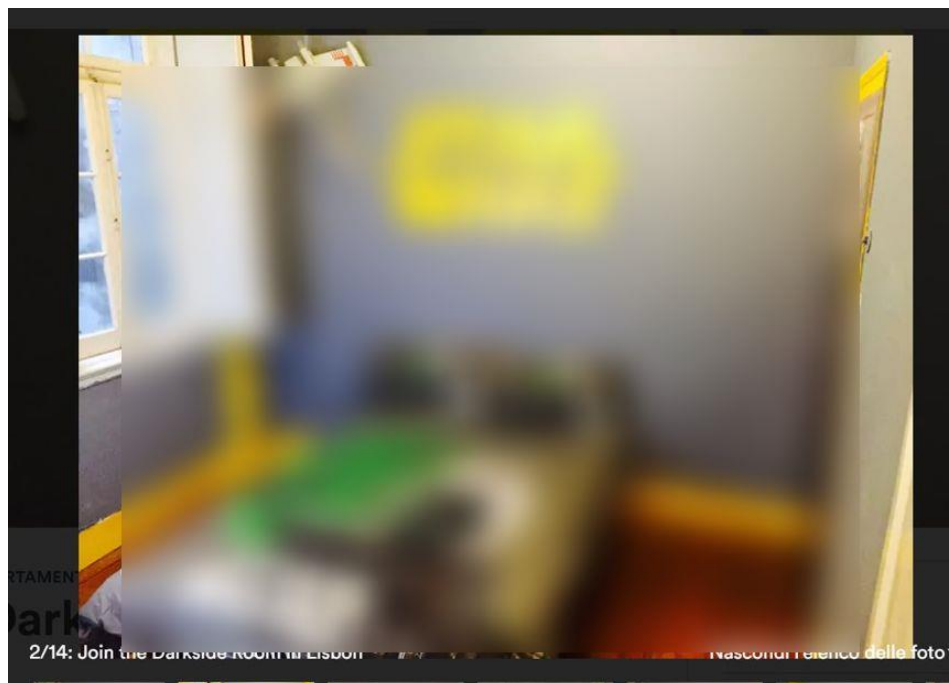
8.4 'Feeling at home' objects

Looking for a connection between objects and home, has created a sort of a small 'thinking game' among the participants, who, evidently, were not used to think of home as what it 'owns', but instead, 'what' it is, and 'where' it is. That 'thinking game', was quite entertaining, both for my interviewees, and for me as well, as the participants soon realized how different items or the absence of them, could reduce their sense of home. As mentioned in the previous sections, participants have created an important distinction between what makes them 'feel at home', and other items, that are necessary for them, but are not correlated as domestic items. Such items are exactly those technological features, which were almost ignored during our conversations, but actually serve as an integral part of their every day.

Items, like the personal computer, the laptop, the smartphone, or any such technological devices, were indeed perceived as completely necessary, but they also do not represent to them any value or need in the domestic realm. Instead, 'live' items are considered for many as key items of home, whose loss was in fact sensed as losing home, causing their sense of home to be reduced. The family pet(s), or grandparent, who live with the family for years, are both critical for the sense of home. In such mini-cases, the participants themselves were often embarrassed to objectify such 'items', but they soon realized, that the reason for that feeling, is because such figures are *'always at home'*. Indeed, pets do not tend to have a very busy and independent schedule (at least not most of them!), and are therefore just like home itself, steady and fixed in one place (none of the mini-cases were on a boat). By doing so, participants have managed to unveil an important aspect of home and the sense of home, in the image of stability and confidence, in the space they dwell and rest.

A good example of that stability can be seen in the cases of the 'Violas'. Viola (M32) the young student who was just in the beginning of her educational academic work in psychology. And, Viola (M38), a senior freelancer who works in visual and graphic editing of magazines and covers. Other than their similar names, the 'Violas' have little in common, in age and in their course of life. Alas, they both represent different yet mutual visions on what makes home. The young Viola, has gone through a few dramatic occurrences in the past years, as she moved to Genoa to start her studies in psychology, only to discover that her family is splitting up, as her parents began a divorce process, and her father could not support her studies away from home anymore.

Her new financial situation has brought her back home and put her life into a crisis of uncertainty. Slowly, and with the help of her mother, she managed to turn her impressive childhood home into a Airbnb rental, as she now bounces between her home, in which she is the one responsible for the guests, her part time job, in which she stays with an old lady to provide her with company for two or three nights a week, her boyfriend's place, who is just outside of Milan, and finally, her new University of Milano-Bicocca.

Like young Viola, also older Viola lives in her childhood home, a two-story private house, which managed to stay beautifully preserved since its establishment before the World War II. Like young Viola, she too, has gone through a dramatic change in her life in the last five years, as her beloved partner had died from cancer, leaving her alone with three children. Viola, years after his death, is still grieving his loss, and has engaged with Airbnb in order to fulfill two holes in her live, as she herself noted, a financial solution as her freelancer work has been reduced in the beginning of the last decade, and as her children have gradually left the big house which she wished to refill with young students, who she could mother and take care of.

Young Viola has considered her two black cats and her grandmother, a sweet old lady with whom I had a lovely time chatting in Italian, as she told me from her experiences with guests, teaching them the art of making pasta, as her main 'home-feeling' items. Although the cats are pretty new, and were adopted only after her return home, Viola feels that no matter where she was, and no matter when she would come back, her beloved grandmother and the cats would always be waiting for her, offering warmth and a familiar affection. In a very similar sense, older Viola sees the kitchen as the most important 'item' for her sense of home, which she now uses to fix meals for her incoming guests, and for the other and more steady Erasmus student guests who come for a whole semester in Milan.

Alas, the most important aspect of home, is the many pictures and photos she had placed in many of the first-floor rooms, where she usually stays. These photos, of her husband, of the two of them together, and of the family in different happy occasions, are the ones that eventually prevent her from leaving this home. *"… often I stumbled upon the idea of leaving this lovely house. It is way too big for me, I am getting old, it is not easy to clean up this entire house, and the guests are not always the nicest… I could live with the thought that this lovely house would serve now a new family, but for me, this home, is first of all the very few years I had with him, I had us as a family. Leaving this place, would mean putting behind all of our memories, and that I am not ready to do,*

I do not know if I will ever be able to do that… I have a support group, it is an issue that keeps coming up…".

'Live' objects are considered, in fact, important as well as sentimental, leading to understandable ideas on the image of home and the desired potential of participants for a sense of home which is projected in steady yet substantive relationships. A relationship which is plausible with such live actors, as they endure the possibility or the higher potential of a chorological development of the relationship. Just as a pet's level of comfort with its owner normally increases over time, it is only logical that young Viola's relationship with her grandmother as a child, was significantly less complex and deep than it is now as young and aware woman.

Alas, this centrality of the live actors does not mean that more immobile objects do not take a central place in the sense of home. As displayed with the older Viola, the kitchen and cookware are found by many mini-cases as central to the sense of home, as from time to time, it implies on the desire and the freedom of participants to be in charge on their own diet, to have control over their eating habits, and to demonstrate different cultural roots.

While the kitchen is indeed a fruitful space of a domestic sense of objects, it seems that the living room is even more fruitful, as the item that was most mentioned, is the sofa, that became an icon, of the current most important domestic feature, as it represents the ability of participants to rest and to enjoy intimacy. The sofa has become a fascinating piece as it serves several functions, to different people. It is useful to separate those function, to ones that allow self-care, as resting, sleeping, consuming popular culture such as television or reading a book, working on the laptop or even playing a guitar, and other social aspects of the sofa, that allows social encounters with friends or guests, or intimate moments with partners.

One such example is of Marco (M33, paragraph 2.2), who has passionately discussed with me of the importance of the sofa to his everyday routine. As a photographer, Marco was driven, in a very similar way to the way I myself am driven, to the concept of home and to the meaning of home. therefore, he had met and got to know, for the very first time, his own neighbors, asking them (again, as I did) to access their home, and take a photo of them (as a family, a couple, etc.) while sitting on their sofa. *"...When I go to other houses, I always look at the sofa. For example, in Italy, compared to the world, it is a place you need to feel comfortable... it is a place of rest at home. It is also a place where the person puts the things that represent him, and the ones he wants to present, as opposed to the bedroom, for example, where things are more private. So I wanted to*

explore that representation, because that is the sofa for me, and that is why I don't let my guest access the living room, or at least to the most of them…".

Marco's (M33) home-sensing objects, his sofa, and a very old and big dinner table
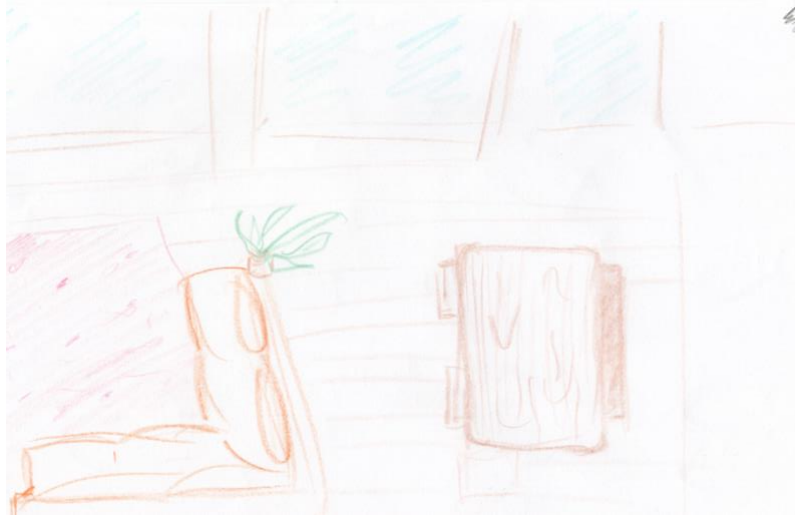
Among SAH (and probably in general), there is a strong debate that is unique in its preferences, on the correlation between the sofa and the television. Some SAH, who have an active living room, see the television as central, and organize their living room to provide the best experience possible, for their TV watching routine. Others, neglect that idea by discarding their television from their living room experience, if by concealing its presence, or by removing it completely from the house. Such is the case, for example, of Sandy (J03), a former American woman in her 90s, who began hosting strangers forty years ago, as a relative of her good friend had asked her to help a younger girl from Sweden to find her way as she started her studies in Jerusalem. Sandy agreed to help that girl and continued hosting her even years later, and was even present at her wedding, to a guy who she herself introduced to the girl. Sandy's story is fascinating in many aspects. Sandy still hardly speaks any Hebrew, and had gladfully told me how the political situation, and the division between the left and right wings in Israel dazzle her, and still today, does not make any sense to her. After hosting the Swedish girl, she understood the potential of such a kind of routine, and continued receiving guests in need and tourists, for a fee, through her acquaintances. Sandy has learned about Airbnb through her friend, Sheila (J01, paragraph 2.3). A significantly different kind of hosting, which has taught her a lot about the image of the cultural and age differences of people. Differences

that have taught her to trust the travelers, and to be careful of Americans. Sandy's situation, in her advanced age, has changed a lot in the last years, as she had lost her husband and her two dogs, former guide dogs (*"... I always choose them, they had a rough life, they work hard, they deserve some rest in the last period of their lives...)*, leaving a hole in her heart.

Alas, and despite her age, and following her long experience as a teacher, Sandy is part of many boards of directors and committees, which, quite opposite to her dear friend's type of activism, as part of the extreme right-wing of Jerusalem, Sandy is invested in educational improvement and for Palestinian-Israeli collaborations *("... you know what I have seen in my old town in Philadelphia? They bring dogs now to kindergartens and first school years, the children read to the dogs, so the kid is not ashamed to make mistakes, cause dogs don't correct people and make them feel bad, it is wonderful!...").* But Sandy should not be viewed only as the image of her ideas and important work, but also as the image of her house, which is filled with colorful dolls and other child-like collectibles scattered all around the house. I could probably spend hours (and she would let me), viewing her many special pop-up books, turning stories into life.

Sandy sees her heavily equipped home as part of her childish personality, a personality that she had let herself grow in the last years as she got accustomed to living by herself. *"... you know, a few years ago I had a television in every room, and I didn't like it, it was useless, I prefer to read any book than turning on the television. So in the beginning I only took out the televisions in the rooms, one by one I throw them away, and watched only the news. But today, to watch news? Are you kidding me? So I called a friend of mine, and he took it. It was a funny story, because he is Arab, and you know that I live pretty close to the prime minister's residence, I showed you how I can see their garden from my bathroom (she laughs), so imagine that an Arab is carrying a big television from a building in this neighborhood? It took twenty seconds and he was already stopped, but it was fine, I told them he is a good friend of mine, and they know me, they check up on me every once in a while. It is a bit embarrassing, but look, at least I know that here the garbage collection will never stop*[155]*(laughs again) ...".*

[155] Sandy refers to a constant phenomenon that is especially common in Jerusalem, of strikes in the public sector, which is mostly known for the piles of garbage all over the city. Alas, naturally, such strikes do not affect the order in the main residence of the prime minister, and the areas around that residence.
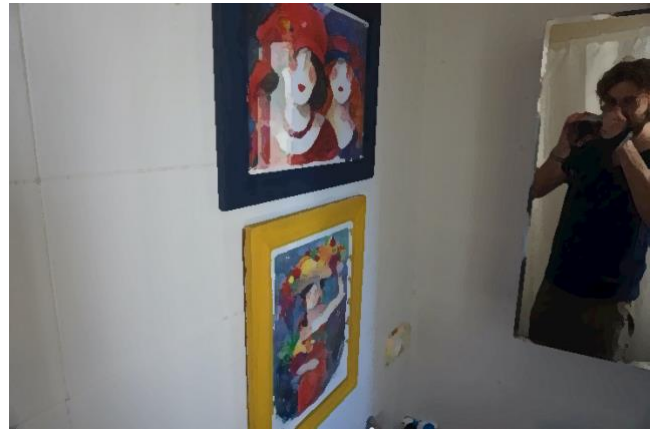
Therefore, the ability of objects to manipulate and influence the sense of home is significant, and it reflects on many of the houses I have visited, and not only on their sofa. As learned, many items could turn into a place of centrality and of a representation of home.

Pietro's (M39) image of home and home-sensing items

In the mini-case of Pietro (M39, paragraph 5.4), for example, home is a place of intimacy and interaction, which is best expressed over a glass of wine and a good dinner. After all, Pietro chose

Airbnb because of its potential trigger multi-cultural interactions for his daughters. Therefore, Pietro's living room is almost absent. Instead, Pietro envisioned the big and impressive dining table as his image of home and of the sense of home, combined with the importance of the sofa. Together, they create the exact balance that Pietro sees as the domestic needs, a balance between sociality and privacy, and self-care.

Like it is possible to imagine, the cases of Pietro, Marco, or Sandy, are of 'grown people', who have already had a substantive experience of dwelling in their own home, and therefore, some differences between younger and old age can be seen. The mini-case of Hadar (J07), is a good example of a younger, and maybe more abstracted vision of home, that keeps the patterns of balance between domestic and intimate sociality, and the importance of spiritual and private self-care. Hadar is a very young woman, in her mid-20s, who works as a yoga teacher, aside from her work and studies of art performance.

As in many other mini-cases, Hadar understood that she could not financially survive only by her yoga classes, and therefore, she continued her Airbnb service which she has already experienced in another roommate apartment. Living in one of the most charming and beautiful neighborhoods of west Jerusalem, she sees home as a community. On Friday evenings, she says *"... the whole street dresses white, you can feel the Sabbath in the air, in the smell. It is like that in such places, everybody can hear you, see you, and even smell what you are cooking. Before you came, I was lying in bed reading a book, probably whoever walked around could see my butt, but that's how it is. On Friday evening, you could hear Yitzak, do you know him? He is a very famous Jerusalemite pianist, and he plays and the whole street listens..."*. Hadar, is disturbed by this strange setting of home, which lacks almost any sense of privacy, but at the same time she is charmed by it. She feels comfortable with the screaming coming from the next building because she even knows what they are fighting about. *"... nobody will horn in this street[156], it is just not the style, and there is something special about a street with style..."*.

In our interview, like others I had in Jerusalem, Hadar chose to test my mussels by conducting the interview on her living room floor, which was quite a challenge during that five hours interview, in which Hadar told me much about her current and previous home's stories, as well of her perception of home, love, and intimacy. For Hadar, the very carpet we were sitting on (or falling apart on), was one very special item, which represents home to her. *"...look at it, it is nice isn't? I*

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[156] In Jerusalem, as in Israel in general, it is very common to hear car horns, all day long, regardless of emergencies.

was very happy when I first found it, I think it is with me since like, my last four houses. It is hand-made, and for me, it represent what is home welcoming for me, it is those dinners I make here with my friends, that we all sit on the floor on those pillows that you already hate, and drink wine, discussing everything that you can imagine about life, you should come one day, you also should know that sitting like that? That's what yoga does…".

Hadar was right, and as I arrived to Lisbon, in the 3rd stage of the research, I indeed found much passion and health in the yoga classes I started participating in, which have always ended in a long journey home with a sea view. Furthermore, the second item that Hadar chose as a representation of home, is her little ukulele. Hadar explained how *"… I always take it with me wherever I go. It is a piece of rest, that someone once bought me as a gift, and what has drawn me to it was that it was so easy to learn, soon enough I felt that I can express myself, string on my mood at the moment, and let it out…".*

Hadar's (J07) home, and the selected home-sensing items

8.5 Home sensing and homelessness

Diving into the concept of home sensing, and the ideas behind the meaning of home, leads to an obvious but important understandings on the gaps between the representation and the scope, or

borders of imagination, regarding the ideal home, and the actual dwelling at home. If the ideal home is normally and usually fixed and steady, over the life course of the average individual, and shaped by experiences that bring more accuracy and perhaps, also more 'real', or at least, more gripped in reality, home sensing, of the everyday, which is much more abstract and elusive, changes daily, and is heavily dependent on the emotional and mental state of the host.

Therefore, it is very likely, that SAH suffer from a sense of homelessness, which is part of their overall experience, a sense which the host is tackled by, and tries to resolve over the ASEP. Through the actual experience of hosting, and the many different consequences in many aspects, which were discussed in the previous parts of these findings' chapters, the image of home and home sensing is distorted, and some domestic needs are neglected as part of a compromise. Those compromises, that turn into the loss of the sense of home, and therefore, create a deeper gap between the ideal image of home and the actual dwelling, and SAH in fact, become habituated with them, while pondering on different settings of home, which may better resemble their expectations from their home, as part of their image of the 'ideal home'.

The search and the increase in the awareness of SAH, is the result of the 3rd and 4th stage, that turn Airbnb to be a more constant figure, in the sense, that is no longer in development, but contain a more fixed routine (a routine that is the result of the compromise in the 3rd stage). At this point, the knowledgeable SAH can understand much better, and mainly, see the integration of the Airbnb service in a wider spectrum, of which they can see and think of their life and their domestic situation, as well as their financial one, now and in the longer term.

Not many SAH have shared with me such pondering of the 5th stage (about 13% of them were in the merge of looking for an exit, the 5th stage), but the ones who have, in fact correlate between their wishes to end their work with Airbnb, and their sense of home. A good example of that correlation can be found in the interesting story of Idit (J08), a woman in her 30s, who, like Hadar, seated us for our interview on the pillows on the floor of the Airbnb room, which was free at the time of the interview. Idit has an interesting story, as her place is rented from her relatives, a family from Italy, who has taught her a lot about the Italian language and culture. Idit has been living there for years since she was a student while sharing the place with two other students. When she completed her degree, together with one of her roommates, and after the two have already become close friends, they both decided to rent the extra room to students, who were replaced by new ones at the end of each semester.

This routine made the two women tired, and so they have both decided to try and work with Airbnb, to allow a freer house, without any roommate who would not fit their new and more mature lifestyle. Idit's story is so fruitful, as it displays, with great awareness, the ASEP steps. In the first step, she started learning about the service, and maturely and untypically, incorporated the new adventure in her apartment lease, after reaching an agreement with the owner. At this point, Idit and her roommate slowly tested the nature of hosting, until it got steadier and more frequent, in the image of the second stage. Alas, the Airbnb experience has often made them feel uncomfortable, or even as if they were strangers in their own home. At that point, as the image of the 3rd stage, they decided to swap the rooms, moving the Airbnb room to the living room, where she used to sleep before.

Idit's (J08) home, the pillows on the floor, and the elevator

(on the left of the bed by the window)

This way, the two roommates felt better, as they both had their own closed and disconnected rooms, which gave them their needed privacy. Alas, as they understood during the 4th stage, this change has created new problems, because of the structure of the house. As can be seen in the image below, at one point, the residents of the building decided to build an elevator, that reaches directly to the living room, where the guests are accommodated. This situation has created another

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structural dilemma, just as the ones who were represented in the 7th part of the findings. This dilemma which affected they daily routine, and led to several incidents with guests, along with a continuous exhaustion, has also led to her present state at the time of the interview, of looking for other financial solutions, and even a new home, that would take her back some of her old ideas of the sense of home and traditional Jewish weekend, which are missing now.

The movement towards the 5th stage, therefore, could be seen as the result of the de-domestication of home, as home is practiced and habituated to deprive home sensing. A deprivation that cannot be settled anymore. A few such patterns of home deprivation and homelessness can be noticed.

- **The escape to the city**

Home is so powerful, as discovered and understood in the introduction chapter, as well in the findings which were displayed so far, also because its nature of being perceived as the escape, and the enabler of many and basic features, as well as feelings, that the public sphere rarely allows. What is normally considered in literature as the dichotomy of the public and the private, in the individual's experience, as understood from the words of Simmel, or Goffman, and also well perceived as so by the participants. A balance, in which the individual, in this case, the host, or the stay-at-home host, is in a constant quest for mitigating between the different needs which the private, the domestic and the intimate provide, and the public, urban, and often social important and basic features.

This balance was extremely vivid in the perception of SAH, who have often referred to the outside as an integral part of their routine, a routine that is worthy of understanding. According to the hosts, work is only a small part of that scheme, in which their city, neighborhood, or even street, become part of their important sense of familiarity, which cannot be understood as a 'community', but instead, it is the accumulation of colors, people, services, and often, atmosphere, that makes everything personal, and resembles an external room in the house, that as all rooms, has some specific functions, rules and norms of behavior.

One particularly useful visual and experimental method, was the participants' own sketch of their home as a central living experience, in which they go out daily, if to work, to do shopping, take their dog for a walk, or stay at their partner's home. Completing the sketch was helpful, not just to

obtain new data on their daily lives, but also to ignite many discussion and revelations of the participants themselves, who have found their discoveries intriguing and thoughtful[157].

To understand the fashion in which SAH connect their domestic experience to their urban one better, by viewing some key examples in which SAH present their own experience of the city, in the context of their home and Airbnb experience[158].

One of the ideas that were captured during the long conversation with the participants, was of a slow but increasing doubt on whether home can be in only one space, and about the movement of features from home into the city. This pattern can be understood by viewing the two sketches made by Matan (J12, paragraph 6.2). As many others wished to initiate their sketch, Matan's first one, of his home, is an abstract image of his home, deliberately referring to the story of the biblical Abraham, whose home, his tent, was open to all 'spirits of the sky', as part of the very basic Jewish concept of hospitality, to all strangers.

As can be seen in the first image below, Matan wishes to emphasize the cultural and religious roots that have led to that vision, that he himself sees as part of his work in Airbnb, as a 'Mitzva', a commandment, to bring all people together, from all religions. Alas, there is something else that can be noticed by viewing Matan's perception of the outside.

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[157] This method was an interpretation of former visual methods, adapted to a geographical home search, and it has indeed created fruitful discussions with the participants, giving me a new self-observation of how the city is integrated in my own life. As such, I understood the centrality, and the way in which I myself created, in many of my former homes, a grid of the different supermarkets and markets that each has different products that the other did not. Doing the same exercise today, would reveal a very different 'map', that also shed light on my current situation and sensation of home as part of the city, as much more vivid, diverse and connected to the 'Pavese vibe'. Therefore, using that method for self-observation, could be an entertaining, as well as useful exercise to try alone, or among family and friends. I, personally, could recommend using this method in school and academic classes, and in all ages.

[158] This particular method, because of its efficiency, was the only method that ranged well beyond the scope of this research, and deserves, most defiantly, an additional text which could frame what could be learned about home and the connection of the geographical aspects of the city to home. That being said, in this section I would try and focus on those images that reflect the sense of home in general and patterns of change in the sense of home and the use of home.

Matan's (J12) illustration of his own home

In this image, Matan places one item that to him, is part of home. The famous San Simon Park, where he often spends his time, and where he works, in a community center. Apart from this 'item', Matan has drawn a junction outside his home, which to him is essentially a T junction with only two direction. On the left, his source of spiritual sentiment, of the walls and history of Jerusalem's old city, but on the right, the very highway back to main road to the Israeli coastal plain, known also as the central region (where Tel Aviv is located). Right after he finished sketching, Matan himself noted, that he sketched the road so central and big in his work, and started a monologue, talking about the place and importance of the city of Rosh HaAyin to him, where his parents live. He understood, that for him, home would always be where his parents are, and often, as problems occur or atmosphere changes at home, he escapes to that road, and to that sentiment.

And indeed, that sentiment was found among many cases, whose other homes, or former homes, raise a sense of deprivation and longing, which already exists regardless of the influence of the Airbnb service. Instead, hosting and working at home as a host, as it seems, increases those emotions, and eventually floods them in certain situations.

Matan's (J12) sketch and view of the outside of his home

Those emotions were often linked to different religious and cultural rituals, that more often than not, were time related. In Jerusalem, some younger hosts refer to the sense of home on the weekend, that back home could be more traditional, and includes family gathering and certain rules. In many of the mini-cases, those young hosts (in all cities, but more evident in Jerusalem) try to imitate, or reproduce those feelings with their partners and roommates, an effort that is often blocked by the arrival of guests. Such is the case, again, of Idit, who was just mentioned (J08) Idit defines herself as an 'almost' secular young woman. Almost, as every weekend she wishes to go back to her parents, and to enjoy that special sense of home and tradition, of a private house, in a middle of village, that shuts off all communication technologies and electricity during the Holy Sabbath and other religious holidays.

However, because her lifestyle is still quite different, she struggles to reproduce this special feeling at her own home. A struggle which had been well integrated into her and long-time roommate's life, who Idit describes as much more religious than herself. Because of that struggle, at first, Idit was eager not to allow guests in on the weekends, but over time, as she described, she caved into Airbnb's encouragement. Therefore, and as a replacement, Idit looks for that feeling outside.
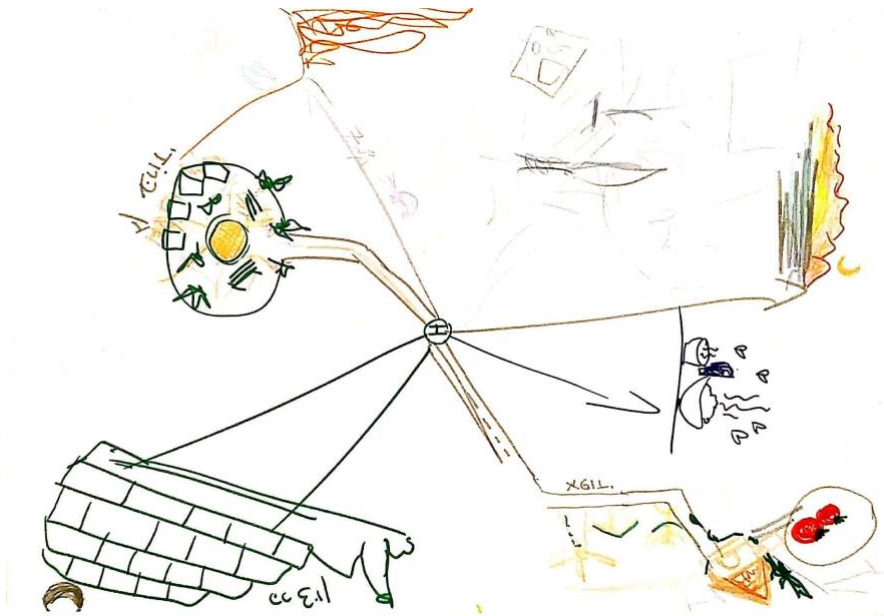
That well thought-of but yet spontaneous and intuitive159 sketch of Idit, was also followed by her own stream of thought, while she was drawing, as she demonstrated the domestic and familiar emotions in her city. The small green park, in which she sits to enjoy those colors she misses from her home village, the routes she takes to her favorite café to enjoy a sense of home with a bowl of soup, and the tomatoes that give her a sense of home which she buys at the vegetable store. Idit combines the image of family and religion, with her walks around the city, which softens and replaces occasional deprivation of her those senses which is caused by the presence of the guests.

The image of home, therefore, is always balanced with the city, and the perception of the SAH, and their thinking process, describe an image of home needs, but also the possibility of the city to be part of that home experience. In order to understand it better, it could be useful to dive into the stories of Rita (M48), Luca (M40), and Alessia (M49, paragraph 8.2), as they create very different images of the city of Milan, and of their relationship with the city.

159 As explained in the methodological part, visual methods were conducted at the end of every interview, as part of the interview. Therefore, normally, participants were explained that such a stage would occur, and to which they have agreed, however, the method was described briefly, as a 'visual game', or 'drawing exercise'. Therefore, participants were not able to prepare or to create a preliminary stream of thought on the concept that was brought up, by the visual methods.

Rita, a woman in her 70s, is an interesting mini-case, as she herself engages in some visual explorations which are combined with technology in order to express and document, festive, emotional and other important moments. Rita's professional history tells another interesting story, as she described how she chose to learn the field of computers at a young age, in times when computers were far of being integrated at home or as organizational systems , leading her to be an asset in the days when organizations started to work with computers, making computers more accessible. In her mind, the city is an image of opportunities. She is almost never at home, and her routine is filled with business meetings and familial gatherings. All combined with places that she is accustomed to go to and create those encounters, at her favorite coffee shops and other places of leisure.

Rita's (M48) perception of the outside
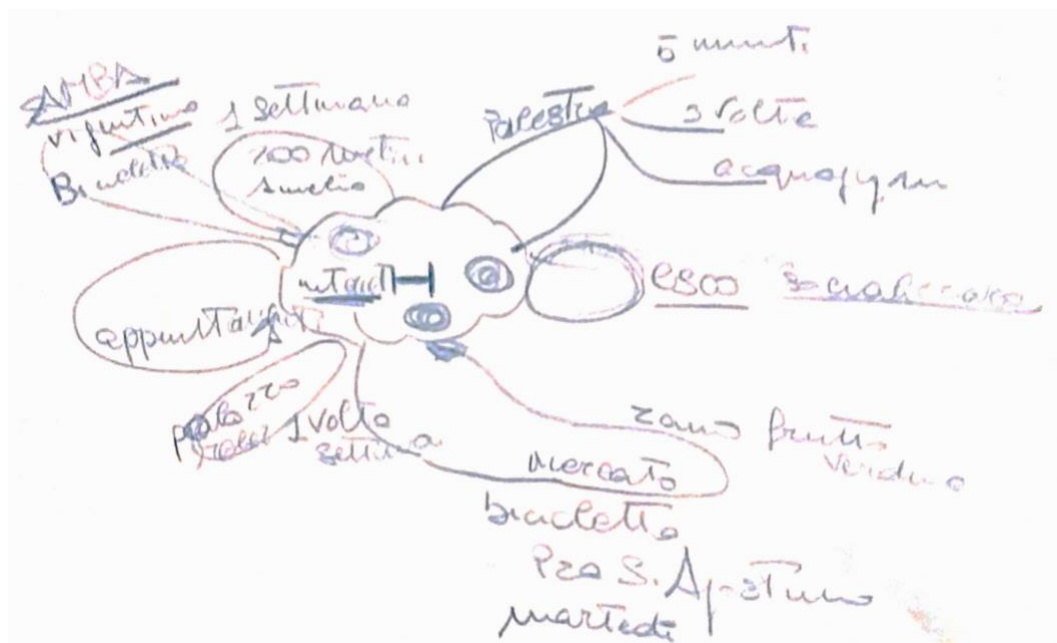
Compared to Rita, whose home is just one establishment of many, in which she looks after her granddaughter, and rests in the company of books and art, Luca's image of home as opposed to the city, is much more narrow. For him, home is a center of family and comfort, which he got accustomed to while working at his day job, as a programmer working at home. Luca shared with me his difficulty to return back to being a programmer in the office, and how he could not stand it. Alas, while his job is a very good paying job (and so is his wife's job), he stumbled upon a lot

of obstacles when looking for the right job which would enable him the right balance between home and work. Luca is well established and financially secure, as he share with me, his family is one of the most solid families in Milan, owning a number of apartments in the riches areas of Milan, including the very impressive, yet homey apartment, where he lives with his wife and three children.

Therefore, Luca's engagement with Airbnb, interestingly enough, seems almost irrational. Luca described that decision as divided into two. His understanding through his friends on how popular and worthwhile it is to be part of that service, before what was the latest Milan Furniture Fair, known better as the international exhibition 'Salone del mobile', which is considered as one of the most important events in the Milanese calendar, attracting people from the creative sector around the world. In addition, he saw Airbnb as a sort of response to a family crisis he had gone through in the last years, in which he and his wife divorced after their second child, remarried a year after, and had their third child. In his view, it is important, under the 'new version of the family', to try new things, and experience new ideas as a family, while exposing the children to different and new boundaries and respect for strangers. While Luca has a very big house, incoming guests create quite a mess at home, as the kids need to switch rooms and to change, and mostly lose, their entire big and colorful play area.

Therefore, and according to his views, his perception of the outside, compared to Rita's one, is much more functional and limited. As a result, Luca keeps his listing price quite high, to always ensure a slow pace of guests. However, it is important to emphasize that Luca is only in the first stage for his Airbnb experience. Therefore, it is possible that Luca would get more involved with the service, or that this slow pace would remain, until this adventure would come to an end. Either way, Luca presents an image of home, that could be understood in two frames. Of the chronological stage, in which Airbnb does not hold agency in Luca's home, yet. Or of a situation in which the economic, as well as the mental state of the host, would not allow that penetration, as the conflict would result in the end of the work with Airbnb.

Luca's (M40) perception of the outside
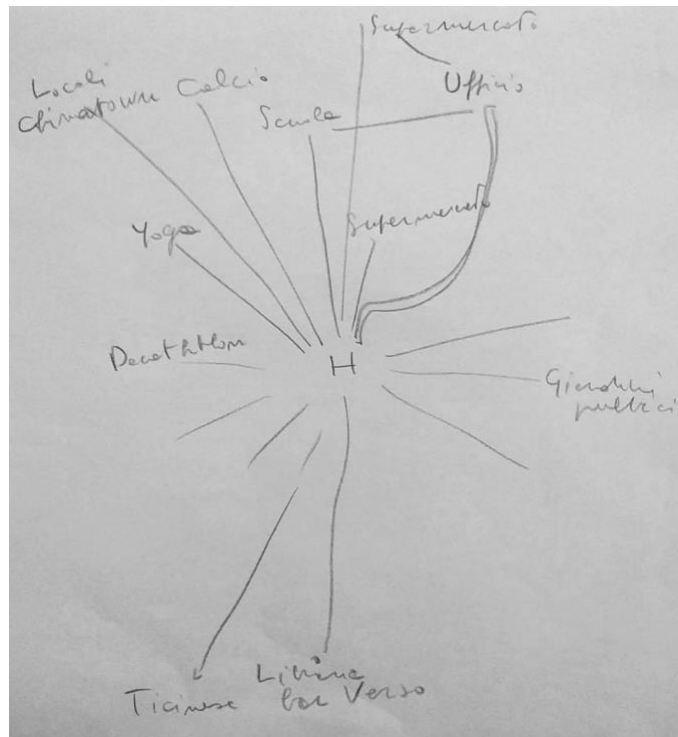
Finally, the mini-case of Alessia, who was just introduced in this part of the findings, mentally and emotionally displays the place of Airbnb in the act of home dwelling, and its possible impact. Alessia, a woman in her 30s, lives with her husband and their three kids, on the southern part of Milan, in a small but charming apartment. The two are struggling financially, as the partner is at the beginning of a journey as a sport journalist, and she has a day job at the store. To handle the payments on the house, they started hosting via Airbnb. As can be seen in both images, Alessia drew a rich and thoughtful spiritual and emotional representation of home. A home that Alessia sees in her image and strives for (and which was completed a year after our meeting, with a newborn child).
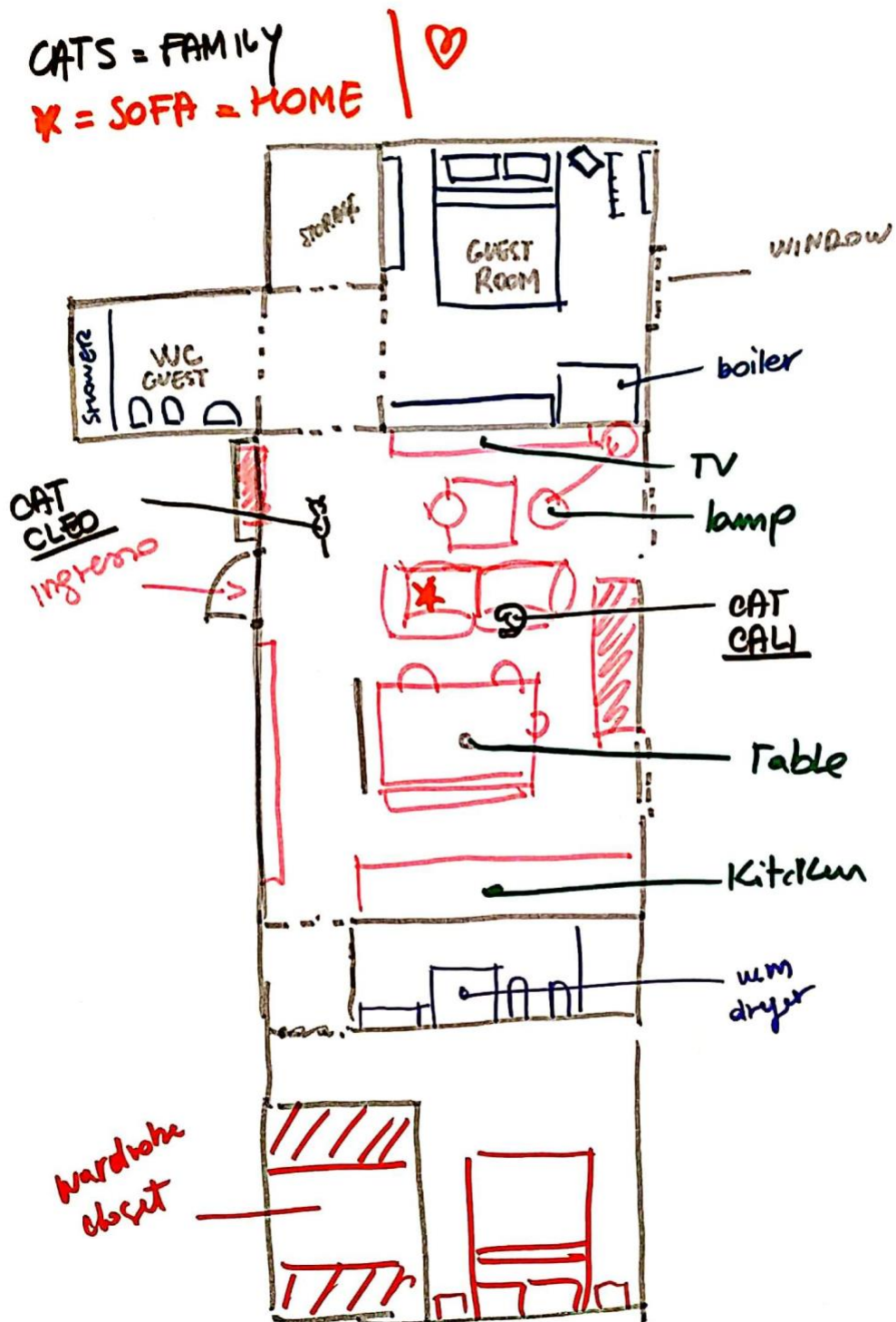
Taking the image of home, and placing it in the image of the every-day, as Alessia portraited it, gives some ideas of what home is for Alessia, and what could risk that important feeling.
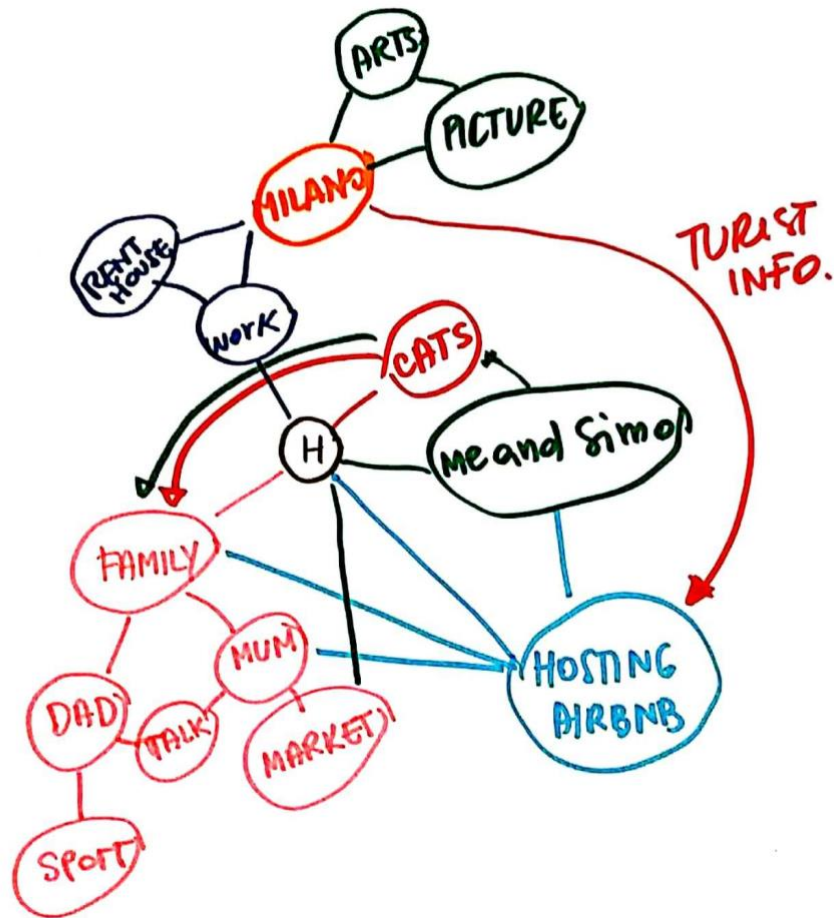
The unusual use of the marker colors, as shown here160, was noted by Alessia herself, saying that she thinks they are prettier, and also, clearer. And indeed, as can be seen in the 'outside' sketch, is an abstract scheme of her vision of her every-day, and most importantly, the links are presented in different colors. For example, it is important to take a look at the triangle that Alessia created of work, paying rent, and the city of Milan, and another triangle, in which Milan is placed with art and films. Those connections are the representation of her sense home, in, and out of home.

160 The participants were given in the start of every visual method, a few sheets of blank papers, and a pencil case, with colored pencils and markers. Most of the participant chose the pencils. Alessia was one of the few participants that used the markers.

- **Stuck at home**

The context of time is a key factor in the understanding of the fashion in which SAH handle that balance between domestic needs and urban ones. It is probably best to say, that the context of time is obviously meaningful in every context of dwelling at home, but it becomes noticeable, and problematic, when hosting via Airbnb, and because of the limitations that the service creates in the ability of SAH to make their plans in and out of home.

One of the issues which the participants thoroughly discuss, is of occasions in which home could not bear the penetration of guests, putting them in a struggle and suffering, when no cancellation is taken into consideration. Such is the difficult case of Livia (M47, paragraph 3.1), and the unique case of Gilbert (L43). Livia is a retired 90-year-old woman, who lives alone, in a house that she slowly divided to two, while she sleeps in the living room, on her sofa[161]. Livia does not have many issues with the guests, especially since she banned the entrance to the kitchen and living room, alas, while she was working by herself to continue the renovation of her lovely house[162], she fell from the ladder, and broke her leg and hand. *"... I was lost, I didn't know what to do. In normal times, I would just go to my friend, my cousin, so they could help me, I was completely helpless, and my age (she laughs), it takes time to heal, it is not simple! But I had visitors coming over, and I couldn't cancel, I already did it once, was a mistake...so they came, and I can't do anything, I am in bed, try to tell them where is everything and called my aunt so she could make them breakfast, I felt terrible, for my situation, and of the guest...".*

The mini-case of Gilbert is not very different, but it has a whole other starting point. Gilbert is an Italian from Milan in his 50s, who got tired of the busy life of the city center. Because of his work, as an exhibition curator of art and paintings in museums and galleries, he had developed extensive connections in the city of Lisbon. When he fell in love with a Portuguese guy, he decided to move indefinitely, now owning a luxurious apartment in the central and busy street of Bairro Alto, and in the same building as his partner. The apartment he took, was formerly a big and fancy

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[161] Livia refused to continue the interview, until I moved from the kitchen bar table where we chatted over a cup of tea, and go with her to that sofa, to show me how comfortable her sofa mattress is, which is actually a bed. An obvious result of her noticing my face, as I realized her living situation, in which a woman in her 90s, needs to sleep on a sofa, permanently.

[162] Livia retired and had a sufficient amount of money for her plans to travel the world to some ancient and religious areas around the world (she was telling me, and showed me for hours photos from her last trip to Jerusalem with her group), for her plans to renovate her house that now, after her divorce, is entirely free for her to use. Sadly, Livia told me about the company that she hired for the renovation, as they took all of her money, and left her with a house half done. That is the main reason she decided to start working with Airbnb, to afford the completion of the renovation, in a more modest ambition, as the rest she decided to do by herself.

hairdressing saloon, which he had emptied, turning it into something else. Gilbert, like Livia, was in a middle of a renovation process, in which he decided to make to a live gallery, as all the paintings and furniture are of temporary artists, who contributed their work, for the enjoyment of the guests. As it possible to imagine, Roberto was far from any financial need, and for him, it was an experience, a new way to let people engage with the work of art, in a space where ordinary people could spare the time and intimacy to do so. This unique experience is as such, because the house itself hardly has the necessary facilities of a home yet, like a kitchen, as Gilbert himself eats outside or goes to his boyfriend. Therefore, the guests enjoy a bizarre experience of living inside a gallery, which serves no homey feeling, while even the use of the furniture is not allowed.

Roberto's (L43) home and gallery
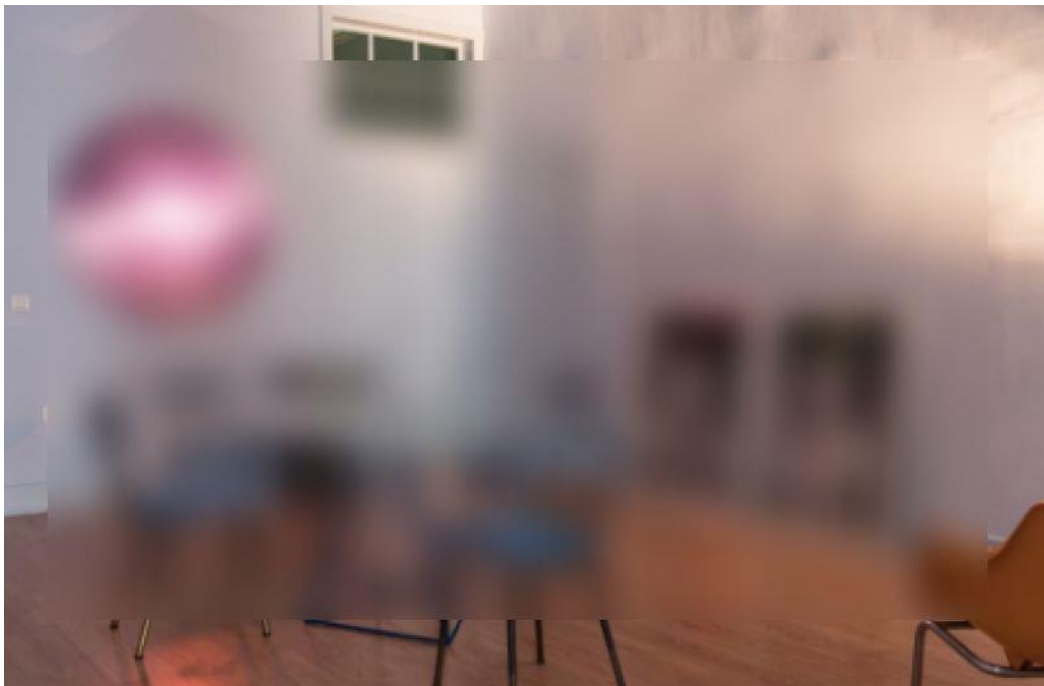
Like Livia, he has too, fallen, tripping on one of the most slippery steps of the Alfama neighborhood, returning back from the hospital with a broken hip[163]. He too, was aware of his

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[163] The story of the broken hip, happened, in a quite similar way, to me as well, as returning from an interview with Genevieve and Pedro (L33), in the beautiful Alfama, quite satisfied, I was very stupidly hopping while going down those slippery stairs after a day of rain, and listening to music. Naturally, like Gilbert, I fell hard as well, and typically to myself, I just limped back to my home in Santos, what became an injury that I felt well weeks and even months after my fall.

problematic house, as he could not move, and there was no kitchen for him to use. Alas, he could not go out to his boyfriend place, as visitors were scheduled to arrive, and he could not leave his new exhibition unattended. In both cases, Livia and Roberto preferred to be taken care of outside of home, but Airbnb did not allow them to do so. They both, share a difficult story, of embarrassment, discomfort, and one that did not allow the public space to serve to their needs.

Those feelings can be joined to other similar disturbed practices, as many SAH have often referred to their home as a 'prison', in which the Airbnb service does not provide them with room to express their desire for the outside, forcing them to stay at home as a survival instinct, for themselves, but also for their home. Such is, for example, the mini-case of Rossana (M42, paragraph 2.6), a person, to recall, who is very anxious and protective of the 'Airbnb Spirit'. *"... I only enter the website with the phone. because I can do almost anything with the phone. I noticed at one point that I always write the same phrase to which I write please, please, please tell me when you are coming. So some indeed answer, tell you when they will land in Orio al Serio, and they are late, but it is okay, I know Milan, it is not their fault. But those who do not answer you. Not at all. One guy didn't showed up, I have no idea when he'll come, and I wait and wait, and can't go out, it is a nightmare, I feel like in a cage, in a prison... but it is not right, cause if he doesn't answer so I shouldn't wait, but I wait anyway, I can't help it. **So sometimes I feel like a child, you know? Like a miserable child that is not allowed to go out to play, but I want to go out and play! Have my dinners, my wine, my friends, why should I be in prison? It makes no sense!...".***

Rossana's view on her sense of prison is important, and repeated in many occasions and situations, in all case studies. Alas, it seems that such a sense is and could be connected to gender differences among the SAH, as would be discussed in the next part of the findings.

8.6 Discussion – **Back to the 'Sapiens'**

In his book, "Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind", Yuval Noah Harari (2014), has been worldly complimented on his ability to create in an extremely readable text, a simplification of the history of humankind. Harari manages to draw, critics claim, a rich narrative that allows to attain the perspective of how our civilization has developed over the last thousands, or perhaps millions of years. Alas, while his unique style of writing and accessibility to the audience must be indeed appreciated, the critics, rightfully so, note the display of numerous theories of the ancient past as

lucid facts, while in reality, those theories are constantly changing and clearly demonstrate the depth and scope of truths we actually do not know.

As the critics as well the complementors, both have good points for their arguments, I would like to follow one observation of Harari. One that perhaps, as a concept, could be taken as both logical and historically correct. That is, the observation of the first process of domestication designed by the Homo Sapiens, ten thousand years ago.

In Harari's narrative, he draws a civil world which is prior to agricultural societies. The one of hunter gatherers. In this frame, the first process of domestication has begun when people understood the potential of **controlling** animals and plants. Controlling, in this sense, means to control where they live, and encourage and manipulate their reproduction to the most "comfortable version" of the species (produce more meat, more obedient, etc.).

While those types of domestications are trivial and are the very process of obtaining the key for the human survival today, back then, such an **intention** was not trivial at all. Nevertheless, humankind did not need only the intention and understanding of the productivity of such a strategy, but also the **technology**. Technology to work the land, to keep away threats, to keep animals in one location, and to keep crop and cattle all together, and alive.

But as significant and fascinating the technological growth inherent in this change, Harari's point is much more fundamental. He claims, and rightfully so in my opinion, that the narrative of humans as an agent and a subject facing the crop and cattle as the objects, is a wrong one. He claims, that while the agricultural new society indeed allowed the Homo Sapiens to finally prosper, the real beneficiaries of this first domestication process are actually those particular species that the human became so dependent on. That they are the ones who have actually domesticated us, and not the other way around.

Harari explains this narrative quite well, as he says that *"... The currency of evolution is neither hunger nor pain, but rather copies of DNA helixes. Just as the economic success of a company is measured only by the number of dollars in its bank account, not by the happiness of its employees, so the evolutionary success of a species is measured by the number of copies of its DNA..."* (Harari, 2014, page 177). The wheat, as the main example, did not prosper alone, but leaned on humankind. The wheat was and still is protected, fought or, and with the help of people, grows now in every corner in the world.

On the other hand, people, for the first time in history, were bound to stay put, to lose their geographical freedom. Unprecedentedly, land (and home) became important and vital. People needed to work hard to help the soil grow food. Harari emphasizes on the huge differences between the life of hunter gatherers, which includes a short work day of a few hours (between 3-6 hours a day) chasing animals and picking food from trees, to the one of a farmers, who work all day, doing tasks that do not fit the evolution process crafted in the duration of millions of years. Furthermore, Harari gives numerous examples on how the post agricultural revolution has led to an extensive focal attention to work and 'work at home'. Duties the hunter gatherers were free of.

So while it can be said today that humans are conscious about their successful ruling over the earth, Harari, in his book, manages to convince that the individual human beings could not enjoy the fruits of their investment. They needed and still need to work harder, much harder. They are slaves to their home, crop and cattle, and overall, in an over populated society (which is caused by and started in the agricultural revolution), their economical options are narrower and more limited than in the past.

This story, of Harari, can be told as a story of a harnessed technology harmonized with intention. This harmony's purpose was to benefit the individual, to give them more food, more food for their family and tribe, and much more certainty. In reality, the growth of population denied all of these benefits, and has only fulfilled the unintended massive growth of labor and hardship. On a slow and tacit process, technology betrayed people, but even if they realized that they have lost more than gained, it was too late to go back.

However, history is bound to repeat itself. In the urban realm, technology is considered as a key factor in the way we live our lives, and the manner in which space is organized, the public one, and the private, domesticated one (Shapiro, 1998; Kitchin & Dodge, 2011).

Furthermore, as the process of domestication in that far past could be told as a warning sign for wrong direction technology could lead, we should ask ourselves if there are other types of domestication processes which are made in the merge of intention and technology, can be seen today.

The findings displayed in the last chapters, which added another layer in this chapter of the findings, suggest such similar process, or processes of domestication. Domestication, in the sense that one intends and controls the very basis of home dwelling, for the purpose of growth and

technological opportunity. But also, a process of de-domestication, in which the actual nature of the service leads home to be less domestic, less domesticated.

Airbnb, by viewing the company as an actor, has clear and obvious intentions, which were already presented in previous chapters of the findings, and the technology, leads to this kind of domestication process. In addition, the nature of the service itself, as, once again, can be deduct to a mutual process. In this process, SAH 'harvest' new technology for their own new ambition, and by understandable, framed by the 'sharing economy', opportunities. Alas, the very effort of taking advantage of the technology, and domesticating it, eventually turns into a double-edged sword, as the SAH themselves begin working for the service, for the opportunity, while forgetting their initial purpose.

As the story of hunter gatherers, the implications of the new dependency on the land, and the crops, could be seen only many years after it has slowly changed society. So are Airbnb hosts, who begin hosting while thinking of a natural process, that is meant to keep their home in the definitional and practical sense, intact. Over time, hosting becomes more and more demanding, inconvenient, exhausting, and eventually distorts the meaning and the use of home.

The verb domestication is inherent in the stabilization of a domesticator and a domesticated. While in ancient times the domesticator was an unconscious species driven by the natural forces of nature, benefiting from the technology they did not craft. In this case, the domesticator is an intelligent modern force that uses technology to create a tacit process of domestication of the host and their home, for the manipulation of space to its own needs.

The meaning of home, therefore, is not only an emotional state, but a question of agency, and of actors who compete over the fashion of consumption, the norms and values in it, and the setting of interaction, to achieve the best results. When a SAH does not 'feel at home', or looks for other domestic solutions, they signal on the possible intervention of other actors in their own home, and the fashion in which the SAH decides to cope with those signals.

The nature of the meaning of home, or what home 'should' feel like, shows the variety of versions in which home can be understood, imagined, and eventually, corresponded with urban space (Tueth, 2005; Haralovich, 1989; Jones, 1993). Airbnb, in this frame, or the Airbnb service, seems to be one actor in a set of actors who change this imagination and eventually, the practice of home, the meaning of home. Instead, Airbnb as an intelligent actor, with intention and technology, should be seen as a trigger for the change of the sense of home, and therefore, a domesticator, for the

SAH, who take decisions that eventually de-domesticate their own home by themselves, in the emotional state, in their relationship with their home, and in their ability acquire basic domestic needs, which could not be fulfilled, without the sense of home.

8.7 Conclusions **– the idealized and the provided**

In this part of the findings, I wished to address the very abstract notion of home, as a place of imagination and idealized goal of home dwelling, but also as a feeling, an emotional state in which home has specific and personal features of needs. Looking closely at the collected findings, shows how items are a basic part of the feeling of home, as they deliver both, the longing for what was or what is to be understood and desired, and for the physical and emotional perception of home as the place of comfort, privacy and familiarity.

Research shows how items are constantly debated and modified as part of the natural and typical properties of the Airbnb service. Indeed, the Airbnb service plays as an actor in which home is seen differently, and creates different kinds of situations in which the balance between home and the city, is distorted, and the lines are getting blurred. Often, SAH feel trapped at home when they wish to be outside and move outside as a solution to the search for basic domestic needs.

Alas, the sense of home can also be seen, as understood from the finding, as one that is undergoes a dual process, in which the SAH themselves become domesticated in the combination of the technological means of the service, while they, themselves, try to take and shape a new kind of control on their home and its possible uses as a financial source. And, in addition, the intentional component in the Airbnb service, of a technology that has a company behind it, with goals and interest. As such, Airbnb can be seen as a domesticator, one that wishes to hold agency in the domestic realm and triggered by such processes that it could benefit from.

This movement of agency, can in fact, be seen as a technological evolution, perhaps, even a natural one. Alas, and as the next chapter of the finding would show, it could also mean a dramatic development in the image of home values, and the freedom, as well as the legitimacy, to craft them again, towards a new, and more flexible perception of home.

"…You got a fast car

I got a plan to get us out of here

I been working at the convenience store

Managed to save just a little bit of money

Won't have to drive too far

Just 'cross the border and into the city

You and I can both get jobs

And finally see what it means to be living

See my old man's got a problem

He live with the bottle that's the way it is

He says his body's too old for working

His body's too young to look like his

My mama went off and left him

She wanted more from life than he could give

I said somebody's got to take care of him

So I quit school and that's what I did

You got a fast car

Is it fast enough so we can fly away?

We gotta make a decision

Leave tonight or live and die this way…"[164]

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[164] Written by Tracy Chapman, from the song: *'Fast Car'*. Album: *'Tracy Chapman'* (1988).

9. 'Sleeping with the Enemy' (or),
Possible Gender Implications of the Airbnb Service

1st Stage	2nd Stage	3rd Stage	4th Stage	5th Stage
Interest, Preparation & First Guests	Increasing Rhythm & Adjustments	The Turning Point	A New Setting of Home	Looking for an Exit
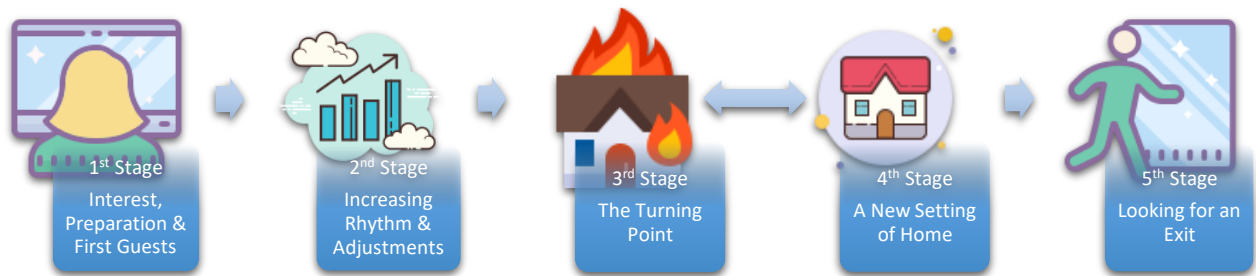
9.1 Introduction

Gender perspectives regarding the place of home, as introduced in the introductive chapter, displays an image in which home means, or can mean different things to different genders[165]. In the heart of those differences, lies the very and simple fact, that home was initially designed to offer different functions, that could fit and serve the different needs of the man and the woman. Home, therefore, was and still is, a key facilitator of what is known to be as the 'gender roles' (Croft, Schmader, Block & Baron , 2014; Nelson, 2019; Pink, 2004).

The concept of gender roles can be viewed and theorized, as the concept of 'gender' as a whole, which is distinguished by the term of sex. In other words, the sociology of gender defines gender as 'constructed', and therefore, 'imagined', in the same manner that a 'state' or the concept of 'money', is implanted by the values and mechanism, in which a given society shapes the expectations, norms, behavior, social behavior, and eventually, duties, or 'roles', which were determined to each gender (Somerville, 1997; Lindsey, 2015). By construction, the identity of an individual is already 'crafted' into the understanding of gender, as early as by the age of three. An understanding that gives the tools to create a more precise imitation of the messages received by society as a whole (Martin, 1990; Beal, 1994). Those message are for example, by the behavior of

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[165] As it was already explained in the methodological chapter, while this research was taken into consideration the deep and historical relation of home to gender, in practice, the LGTBQ+ community was not presented fully in the very diverse demographic exploration of the 145 mini-cases. That is simply because, that while diverse sexual orientations ware presented in many mini-cases, the display of different genders, like trans genders, and other non-binary genders were not 'found' and presented, and therefore could not be studied. That fact could imply strongly, that such fluidity of genders is less common among SAH.

people in society, representations of such behaviors and values throughout the mass communication platforms, popular culture, and the educational system[166].

According to Talcott Parsons (1955), for example, there are five key features of gender roles, that eventually impact the entire organization of the every-day. In education, in which children are tracked towards different directions, allowing men to reach a grown age with more tools, and better understanding of the cultural preferences of the working market, while a career is a goal, specified to men alone. The working space, in that sense, is a space which is designed and suited for men, while housework, childcare, and child education, are under the responsibility of women. Agency, in general, is perceived inside the nuclear family, as the one of the man, who is in charge of making the 'last call', and is the one responsible for the consumption decisions at home.

Other theories see culture as the key facilitator of such values that image femininity as holding, or that should hold, certain characters, which are often dichotomized to the image of masculinity. The feminist theory has developed rapidly over the last century, asking to de-conceptualize the idea of gender, as a social tool of inequality, if by turning it into a fluid concept, in which a variety of spectrum of definitions and combinations is possible, or by dismissing it as a whole, by capturing its imaginative nature, and resisting to it, because of its use as a tool for discrimination (Butler, 1988; 2004; Elliot, 2009).

In this text, I wish to focus on the concept of roles, from the sociological concept of social roles. Social roles, in the frame of the interactionist theory, are the result of the daily practice of social behavior, which is framed by the context of the space, of the situation, and the members of society who participate (Mead, 1934;Blumer, 1966). As such, it is easy to imagine that a female teacher entering a classroom, creates, first and foremost, an interaction based on her role as a teacher. Leaving the classroom and entering the meeting room, such a teacher could be seen as an educator, with the experience and knowledge that allows her to take wider decisions about the curriculum. Outside school, she could be seen as a mother, a wife, and probably, as a sexual object. In each of

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[166] Just in the last few weeks, a yearly event has raised a fluster in Israeli public debate, as teenage girls came to school wearing shorts, due an extreme heat wave in the country, and they were banned to enter the facility, because of their clothes. At the same time, a 2nd grade child, seven years old, was demanded to remove her dress, as it was against the school terms, which has somehow led her to be sitting at school wearing only a long T-shirt and her underpants. The accumulation of the two events, as it occurs every year with the rising of the temperatures, has created a strong protest by feminist movements and opinion leaders, of the subjective, discriminative, and mostly, sexist perception of modesty and self-worth, and the fashion in which the educational system contributes to reproduce such distorted values.

the contexts, the actors understand their part, but might resist it, and succeed, according their gained social capital.

Roles, which are seen by the interactionist perspective, hold such importance, because of their meaning considering the right, the duties, and the social expectation, of behavior and decision making on a daily basis. Those expectations, along with the strong connection of the roles which the individual holds, to the understanding of the self, and the image of identity and social identity, create inevitable conflicts of different preferences (Burke, 1980; Serpe & Stryker, 2011). Conflicts that enhanced when one role is conflicted by another as the two are in play in the same space and the same context (for example, a teacher whose child studies at the same school, would need to find boundaries, that could settle her needed different behaviors in the two different contexts that merge into one).

Alternatively, situations in which an individual is experiencing an event that forces a sudden transition to another, especially if that role was never performed by this individual, or as the role does not fit the individual's character, skills or even ideology (for example, a soldier who is forced to take the role of his commander during battle, as the commander was killed). Often, as mentioned, conflicts arise if the given role cannot be accepted by the individual, which could trigger the punishment mechanism of society against violators (Biddle, 1986; Lamertz, Martens & Heugens, 2003).

Following again and completing the understanding of Goffman's Dramaturgical theory (1978; 1961), role and context, in a situation, are the two that define the 'play', as the status of a social encounter is the actual scene (of the play), and the role determines the script of each of the actors. A play always constitutes of a front stage, in which the actors are visible, and a back stage, in which there is no 'audience' to judge and to perform to, and therefore, social behavior changes. The individual, while engaging with others, is 'performing', in the theatrical sense, of a practiced, planned, and 'staged' behavior, while over time, individuals learn to sharpen their performance, so it would highlight their positive sides, and would distinguish between their different roles. As such, identity, according to this view, is not in any sense stable, but it is constructed, and contexed.

Judith Butler (2001), in that frame, continued Goffman's work by emphasizing the aspect of gender in one's identity. According to her, performance is the social activity that challenges the existence of a primal core self, and therefore, places the act of 'performing' as the one that carves the gender aspect of identity in the body, and thereby, turns gender into something 'real', as it is

practiced by the body and through the ritual and the set structure of the role which each gender is demanded to perform upon. Therefore, the performance is an integral part of establishing gender identity, which is shaped by the success and reaction from the audience, and which helps craft a legitimate and homogenic performance of gender. The audience, therefore, is a political entity, in which different forces of agency take control over the image of what can and cannot be accepted.

The stage of Goffman, therefore, is a space of actors. If of performers, audience, or outsiders, who are divided by their level of knowledge. The performers, who know the most about themselves, and their sincerity of performance, the audience, who know what they see, and the outsiders, who know little, and play a minor part in the play.

Placing the Airbnb service, and the SAH, in such a frame of roles, reveals some new interesting ideas, of the fashion in which SAH, as displayed throughout the chapters of the findings, engage in conflicted spaces, of domestic needs and urban and public new duties. In this chapter of the findings, I wish to focus on the different and overlapping roles which different genders of SAH experience during their hosting. From a family member, to a businessperson. From a consumer of the domestic space, to a service-taker, and a service-giver, it is already possible (and was mentioned already in reference to the emotional labor of Hochschild, 2005). And, in addition, to the change of the stage, as home could be defined as the place of no audience, in which the individual can retire and shape the roles on which their identity is dependent on.

While this part of the findings would engage in the meaning of social roles in general, and in gender roles specifically, one role would be specifically investigated, as the role of the 'housewife'. Women have protested the image of the housewife, as non-productive social role already at the end of the 18th century, as, exactly as today, women were not paid nor economically calculated as a contributor to production. In the 19th century the 'cult of domesticity' as it was called, or the cult of womanhood, has been developed (Welter, 1966), which defines a reality at home which has become more and more important spiritually, but also gradually, lost their productive role, which was integral before the industrial revolution. The perception of home, therefore, has started to shape and correspond according to the new developing production outside home. Home has suddenly become a space of calmness, altruism, and steadiness. While the workplace was viewed as a dynamic, competitive, and masculine quest, of interests and self-fulfillment (Matthews, 1989; Johnson, 2000).

Following the work of the Beecher sisters (Beecher, Beecher, Stowe & Tonkovich, 2002), we can understand how home has been shaped, under the frame of the new economy, as a place that aims to contradict the new capitalist economy, with religious ideas of love and family, according to which, women are responsible for creating, while learning how to shape a non-productive but yet efficient housework. Over time, this image of 'housework', has been replaced with a new idealization of the woman at home, framing a more representative image of the 'lady', who does her housework without an effort, while nurturing a well-kept appearance, with the latest style of clothing, hairstyle and makeup. Those too, were considered a necessity to contradict, and to soften the practice of family, embracing more moral and positive values than the ones established in the free market.

As discussed in the introductive chapter, over time, the ability of women to join the labor markets has increased, until it was developed into what is known today as the career-woman dilemma. A dilemma that portrays the new reality of today's working-woman, who is in an impossible quest, in the social, cultural, and even physical realms (Milkie & Peltola , 1999; Cantera, Cubells, Martínez & Blanch, 2009; Voydanoff, 2005) . Career women, unlike men, are judged and still valued nowadays by their performance in the domestic space, as even when holding a full career, as the other partner, they are in charge of taking care of the kids, and making sure the house is handled (cleaning, cooking, washing, etc.). A career-woman who fails to show an appearance of a good housewife as well, is considered a 'bad mom', or a 'bad wife'. All the while, women are also judged in the labor market by their family ambition or familial situation. Even when there is no family situation, employers still value women less, as they expect that their family would come before work. As such, the career woman needs to handle daily decisions that could make her 'look bad', in one of the roles she is performing, as the quest for a successful career is full of such crucial decisions, in which compromises are required.

As previously discussed, home, for women, is not always the expression of the known features of home. Home, for women, could be a prison, a place of sexual abuse or daily violence, and therefore, fear, and shame (Hogarth, 2015; Wardhaugh, 1999; Roth, 1991; Tomas, A., & Dittmar, 1995). Such alternative representations of home, are widely introduced by academic work, as well as by popular culture, like the famous movie of Julia Roberts, released in 1991, 'Sleeping with the enemy', of a young woman who finds herself in a violent and abusive relationship, which she tries escape by running away from home (Mahardika, 2009).

Some of these emotions and feelings were already introduced in the context of Airbnb, in the previous chapters of the findings. For example, the sense of 'prison', which was demonstrated in the 7th chapter, is an example of a known phenomenon, that Airbnb, as it seems, created a lighter, shorter, but yet existing version of it. In this chapter, I wish to explore how the historical connection of women to home is reshaped or influenced by the service of Airbnb, by defining new values, and legitimizing others, and by exploring women's feelings at home, during the service of Airbnb.

9.2 Gender differences among the mini-cases

Airbnb, as a pure private organization, which thrives in its efforts to collect as many domestic (and now not only domestic) spaces. Therefore, Airbnb does not display any sign of gender discrimination. Not in the process of becoming a host, and not in the long relationship a SAH has with Airbnb. As such, the service attracts a very wide range of familial situations, starting from people who live on their own, couples, and families with children. Therefore, it was possible and sometimes useful, to put the attention on those situation, in order to obtain ideas on the way the service is felt among the genders, and among couples and families[167].

As already discussed, and would now be extended, there is a massive difference when dividing those situation into those three main settings (singles, couples, families).

- **The single SAH**

The single SAH is the most basic unit of the service-giver in the Airbnb platform. The main outcome of such situation is (1) the tendency of being more attentive, concerned, and careful of possible guests, and taking extra measurements to ensure their own safety. (2) The noticeable additional and complicated work that is required of the single SAH, including performing interactions, cleaning, changing sheets and towels, managing the Airbnb calendar, and in Lisbon, also working with the municipality according to their financial and administrative demands. (3) And most important, the sense of ultimate control over the house and the decisions taken concerning the domestic space, a sense of agency, that along the stages, begins to fade.

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[167] Another common familial situation is of roommates who do not hold any kind of sexual or romantic relationship. Except one mini-case in Jerusalem, all the familial situations of this kind, were of the same sex (two, or more women, two, or more men).

That being said, it is important to note that these three preferences of the single SAH, are correct in all genders, with small but meaningful differences. First, around 80% of the mini-cases whose information I managed to obtain, have reported a sexual or physical threat (10% of them have actually experienced a physical assault, none experienced sexual assault). This fact turns the process of habituating the service of Airbnb harder for women in the first stages. In addition, while men are usually concerned with physical damage to the apartment or items in it, and their financial worth, women are much more concerned of sexual and violent events, and of the loss of items of sentimental value.

More importantly, findings show that single female SAH are frequent and are part of the SAH so-called community (which also applies to women who share their apartment with only female roommates) and present some good reasons for that. First, female participants feel more natural with hosting strangers, as it seems to them, after the period of fear and concern (which turns into embarrassment), an optimal solution to avoid the difficulties they already experienced with roommates, and even partners.

It is important to emphasize, that both men and women see, especially in the first stages, the Airbnb solution as both a financial opportunity, when they need one, and a solution for keeping agency as a loner resident who have their freedom and full privacy. In addition, they all benefit from such a solution, as an ambition or a line of work, which is part of the creative or artistic sector. Alas, the difference between the genders, shows that while men are not enthusiastic and comfortable with integrating Airbnb in their day job, women are much more habituated to do so, and also usually show greater stamina in lasting for a longer time.

Such is the example of Sapir (J40), a woman in her late 30s, who, after years of an unsuccessful search for her one, has taken the offer from her parents, to help buy her own place, to her request, in Jerusalem, far from them. After years of living with roommates, she wanted her new and sunny home, which is full of family pictures, to be just of herself, and so she decided to start working with Airbnb, along with her day job as a teacher. Sapir is one example of many women, who decided to design her life in her own image, by taking advantage of Airbnb. Another example is of Beatrice (L47), also, a woman in her late 30s, a painter, who is trying to financially survive through her painting. Because she does not manage to do so, she decided to work with Airbnb, while having her own space to design in her own taste. *"... That's what I was looking for, staying for a few days, because I lived in the apartment a few years, so I felt it was my home, so I loved*

the feeling that I was the one in control of the area, but with roommates it was my home but it was also their home, and I spent a long time at home. So, I have little habits, I need it to be that way and maybe the roommate doesn't want it that way, so guests will have less control or influence over it. So it is both people and society, and also in my control. It is little things, I don't even know, the way you see things and you get used to seeing them, I don't know exactly what kind ... maybe the kitchen… but lately I am quite exhausted… the cleanliness, I am very conscious and I worry, I want people to be comfortable ... I clean a lot more than before, if there is one thing I talk about with my friends, that I always have the house really clean, and if I have three days without guests then straight up my friends feel like mom and dad aren't home for a few days (laughs). So it helps you to get organized, but it is not the job, it is more about being able to relax at home and no one will come in, or notice how you dress or throw things here and there. I'm aware of ... everything ... providing space for people to feel comfortable. I sit around all the time, reading or studying, or on the computer, so it is different when I know that no one is supposed to come home ... I use the porch a lot, so if there are people, then I try to give them space, I'll wait a bit, if I have to , I'll go in, but I'll try not to…".

The mini-case of Sapir shows how an agency becomes over time, a mutual agency of Airbnb as a service, a service that must endure certain rules and politeness, which puts her on the edge, and questions her feelings about Airbnb, and about Lisbon in general, as she is thinking of a way out, in the 5th stage of the ASEP, and therefore, her thoughts are of moving out of Lisbon altogether.

- **Couple SAH**

Gender roles, in the frame of the introduction of this chapter of the findings, were found to be useful in understanding how work from home is divided between two people who lives together. In general, most couples were found to be organized in their work with Airbnb, as one of the partners is in charge of the service, and the other plays a more a supporting role. The decision of who would be in charge of the Airbnb service, is usually shaped by the initial motivations to begin the work with Airbnb, which can be seen as a statistic balance, according to which, in some couples the woman is in charge of the service. When there is a balance between social and cultural motivations and a financial necessity, it would be the woman who would take over the service, and these are the most common situations among the SAH. In times in which the financial component is more dominant, the man would be the one in charge of the business. And finally, in

times when the social component is more vital, the couple would usually share the responsibilities, and are represented together[168].

Alas, responsibility is rarely an indication of the actual division of labor in the house. In this sense, it is possible to identify again a variety, in which often, but hardly as a tendency, women are the ones who do the housework related to Airbnb, while men are more focused on the actual experience, and its social side. In most cases, the couple divides their work somewhat equally, by taking into consideration both their timetables, and their positions. Such is the example of Tereza (L31, paragraph 3.1). As mentioned in the introduction to Tereza's mini-case, the work with Airbnb started with her (ex)boyfriend, but then, the boyfriend had left and Tereza continued alone. Looking a bit back, Tereza, and her ex-boyfriend were both journalists, as the economic crisis in Lisbon emerged, it was him, who had entered a financial problem, that first led him to move in with Tereza, where she was living alone. Because Tereza is a free and independent woman, she was not pleased with that decision, and preferred that their relationship would stay as it was before. However, she found a compromise in which they move in together, but her boyfriend still has to pay rent, which he failed to do.

Although Tereza was in a little better economic situation, she desired to exploit her shaky work situation and followed a long-time dream of writing a friendly guidebook for tourists about the city of Lisbon (a book she proudly showed me). Therefore, handling the boyfriend's economic situation, together with her own ambitions, has helped her to find a solution with Airbnb. Alas, their work division, is what had eventually led to their break-up. *"... At first it was nice to meet a lot of new people, but at one point my boyfriend got sick of me because I was crazy about cleaning. He was saying that I am obsessed, and maybe he was right. Now it is not like that ... It was a new thing and I wanted to be a super host! And he wasn't paying the rent, he stopped bringing me money because he wasn't working, not enough. So it was very problematic. And our relationship just got worse, and I kept worrying because I had a problem with the accounts ... He was very social, a good sense of humor, he knows and likes to be a good host, we would do lots of dinners and parties, going out with the guests and spending time with them. They loved him. He would go out with them, I would less. I handled the cleaning and he was the host and the cleaning manager*

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[168] This scheme is also correct for same-sex couples, in which often there is one partner who is more set on the financial organization than on the household work, while the other is more social oriented. The motivation to initiate the Airbnb service, would determine, normally, the structure in which the service is organized.

(laughs). We were a good team at first, but then I started to be ... very worried about money and obsessed with cleaning and housework...".

Tereza's realistic view of the situation, blaming herself for her behavior, while giving her boyfriend the benefit of the doubt due to the general economic situation in Lisbon, is an example of conflict. A conflict between domestic needs and a romantic situation, which has led her to sacrifice some of her domestic ambitions, not because of Airbnb, but because of her boyfriend.

A similar yet different situation, that reveals the tendency of women in the Airbnb community to use Airbnb as a solution for crafting their own domestic every-day, can be found in another mini-case, of Graziella (M35, paragraph 5.2). Graziella was already mentioned, as a woman in her 50s, who sees Airbnb as 'work', a practice that she feels that is a necessity for a normal and healthy daily routine. Graziella was an interesting mini-case, of an interview that lasted hours, but almost never happened, as Graziella was very undecisive, in her willingness to help me and meet me, a stranger, in her lovely home. A decision that was even harder, as she wanted to help, and was already helping a smaller Airbnb research that was part of a lesson in an undergraduate course. Alas, her boyfriend, who does not live with her, was against 'taking the risk' and meeting me (as I may be a potential serial killer). Eventually, Graziella's vision of her life, as hers, and hers alone, made her take the decision she wanted to take. That small methodological anecdote, is useful in understanding the fashion in which Airbnb, as a practice, leads to that sense of agency, a sense that is usually natural in the domestic experience of men, but needs to be fought for among women.

Graziella is proud of those choices, that actually liberate her, and make her feel 'in control': *"... Two lovely girls arrived, but at night, one of them (well both of them, but one) was drunk and accidentally entered my room instead of her room. I did not close it. The truth is that since that experience I started to lock my room, I understood that I would feel better ... so she came in, and at that time there was actually also Andrea (the boyfriend) and it was a little awkward. But the morning they went, she apologized extensively and I said it was nothing, that I was young too... but my boyfriend didn't like that, he started mentioning again of the time that a German couple, they had a shopping addiction, were my guests. They came to Milan for one night only, for that. So in the afternoon they returned home with tons of bags and were trying to get to another shopping center outside the city, and with the bus, well it is a mess, so I offered them my car. They were so grateful, but my boyfriend was shocked, he was saying I am crazy, he cannot stop talking about it ever since...".*

Therefore, the balance of a couple can be a space of conflict, in which the partners have opposite approaches towards the Airbnb service, which leads to conflict on the image of home, and home values. Alas, when there is good communication, and as was found to be the most common, a completing approach among the two, the service and the ability to cope with the Airbnb service, increases. Such is the mini-case of Genevieve and Pedro (L33, paragraph 8.5), a biologist from Brazil, who came to Lisbon to study, and met Pedro, and they decided to tie their lives together. Genevieve has a family in Brazil, with a big operation of farming. Her father is struggling with the farm, which is why they spend half of their time in Brazil, where Pedro, although with no prior farming experience, feels comfortable and calm, compared to the hectic, yet social life in the heart of Alfama. She, on the contrary, while respecting the quiet life of the village, suffers from the struggles with her father, as he finds it hard to accept his independent, academically knowledgeable, and 'woman of the world' daughter, who indeed prefers the hectic and rich life which Alfama offers her. Therefore, the moving between those two locations, completes each other, for both of them, and fulfills both their domestic needs, while Genevieve, struggles with the concept of home, and the exact location of home, the family and her family's lifestyle, or the image of the every-day, an image that is well reflected in their home as well, where she feels comfortable. In that sense, Airbnb is a perfect reflection of that balance the couple has.

The Airbnb service that Genevieve and Pedro offer, has very different features in the different seasons and periods. When they are in Lisbon, the house condition seems almost impossible, as the couple owns a very small house, of one bedroom, where they sleep, as the guests sleep in the living room's small sofa. During those days, Genevieve and Pedro are a vivid part of the neighborhood, organizing late night parties and gatherings at home and in their small yard, making it impossible for tourists who do not wish to be part of that experience, and very difficult to manage a typical touristic routine, of waking up early in the morning to tour the city. Alas, in most cases, Genevieve offers a much more authentic, social and cultural experience, that most guests indeed appreciate, as she is a very social person, who completes Pedro's notion to be very shy, but also very attentive and generous towards his guests.

When they are in Brazil, a 'co-host' is in charge of cleaning the apartment and welcoming the guests. In those situations, the perception of the guests changes dramatically. While the guests have the house to themselves, without the hosts, it is easier to notice how old, small, and seemingly dirty the house is, and so, the couple often receives very harsh and negative comments. In both

situations, Genevieve is the one in charge and responsible for the service, and their actual work is divided equally. This perfect balance was also noticeable in their reaction to me, as Genevieve provided me with a unique experience of sitting in one of the local cafés in Alfama, while Pedro rested calmly outside. Another example of what Genevieve described as shyness but also kindness. A few minutes into the interview, the café decided to close, as the owner and sole worker was feeling ill. The two, then, took me to their house, as Pedro kept filling up my glass of beer, while adding a magical background sound to the interesting and positive atmosphere of our conversation, with the strings of his classic guitar.

Therefore, Airbnb presents, in most situations, a re-organizations of home and of the expression of social roles that suits both of the partners, and mainly, reframe the meaning of housework and their importance, as a vital and fundamental part of the very ability to sustain an Airbnb service and business, by valuing the social part, that is in no sense the sole (or at all) role of the woman, but also the maintenance and the care of the house, that is firstly monetized and considered, as female SAH perceive those kind of works, in their commercial, and not in the hospital, or 'social' sense, as the image of a home, that was always connected to the responsibility and the value of the woman, as a housewife.

- ▪ **Families doing Airbnb**

At last, families doing Airbnb are the least common phenomenon, which should be understood under the frame of the roles of each household member. In these cases, and contrary to the happening among couples, the traditional order of gender roles is visible, as the woman is usually the one in charge of the Airbnb service, and also of taking care of the household and being the principal caretaker of the children. Alas, it was found that there is a significant diversity in the approach of such family homes, that also reflects on the gender roles of the family members. As an example, we can look at the mini-case of Angelique (L26), A French woman in her 30s, whose doctorate venture has led her to Lisbon, where she found her husband, and where they are raising together their newborn, in a large and impressive apartment which is five minutes walking distance from the sea. Angelique is in charge of the Airbnb service of their home, along with two other apartments they have in and outside of Lisbon. In their organization, it is visible that her husband, who does not speak English, is in every sense Angelique's 'helper', as Angelique is in charge of the

house, and the one who chose for the Airbnb service a vibe of a hotel, combined with a domestic and familial feeling.

Her story is quite different than the story of Carmen (M05), a woman in her late 40s, whose children are gradually leaving the house in search of their own path. Carmen is also the person in charge of the service, while she manages the house, with the help of weekly cleaning services. According to Carmen, Airbnb is nothing more than a business, to support her current struggles as a journalist. Therefore, the family does not engage in any sense with the guests, who are the ones who need to adapt to an active family that uses the same facilities, as the Airbnb room belongs to one of the children who has already left. A room that was not modified one bit, leaving very little room for the guests to expand, a perfect symbol Carmen's own presentation of the limited domesticity she offers to her guests.

While Carmen and Angelique demonstrate two different, yet similar expressions of models in the HGRS scale, directed and leaning towards the left, a business or commercialized interaction, a business, or touristic vision of the Airbnb service, Verra, however (M27), is an example of a different position on the HGRS. For Verra, a woman in her 40s who works as a photographer and a designer, the work with Airbnb is first, an experience, in which she wished to enrich her children's life, but also a solution to the reduction of work during the last economic crisis in Milan. In her three-story apartment, the guests sleep right next to her young daughter, who is shy yet curious, to meet and experience people from all over the world. And indeed, Verra presents a warm and familial welcome, along with her big old dog, and the sense of comfort and calmness that the house itself spreads. For Verra, another important aspect of the experience, is to fill this big house (as the Airbnb room belongs to another child who has left home at young age to experience the first years in the university at the dorms) with people, as her husband is often away for work reasons.

Therefore, the expression of women, whether they are alone, part of a couple, or a family, is of the ability to control the atmosphere, and create financial opportunities, that could have additional value, if they choose to exploit such value. The ability of the SAH to express a wide range of interests, could signify the appearance of new ideologies, which defy the former ones. Appearance that per se, diminishes reproduction of unequal and separating norms of spatial, gender and social roles.

9.3 Between gender and ideology

In the previous paragraph, I have tried to demonstrate the differences between men and women, in the practice of doing Airbnb, and in experiencing Airbnb. At the end of this paragraph, as in other chapters of the findings, the penetration of market and business values into the domestic sphere was hinted, or specified. In this paragraph, I wish to discuss and show findings that show how this penetration is crucial and meaningful to the balance of gender roles at home, but mainly, to the ability of women to display, or more accurately, to 'perform' such values at home, and therefore, it makes the image of home more flexible.

Such a prognosis is crucial, not because of the differences between the men and women, as clearly, both genders can have a business approach under the service of Airbnb. Instead, it is the wider vision and distinction of home from the outside, that unlike other professions that are now become legitimate at home, the Airbnb service does not only allow the use of the domestic space to produce value for the outside, by technological means, but to actually perform such values and fully integrate them into the every-day and inside the domestic realm. A few patterned expression can be noticed, of this important phenomenon which should be discussed further.

- **Domesticity of boundaries**

The ability to maneuver home values to others, is nearly never a 'black or white' expression, but rather, an accumulation of decisions that craft a new meaning into home and a new way to define home, under different and selected values. Throughout all of the findings' chapters, those manipulations of the domestic image can be witnessed, which would now be understood in the frame of gender and social roles.

One such typical manipulation, is of a partial movement of domestic values, bounded in space and time. In such situations, the SAH still preserves traditional domestic norms, which are reduced and limited to specific spaces at home, while others attain a commercial and business approach and strategy. In such scenarios, the domestic values are not exchanged, but are conflicted and adapted to the change that Airbnb brings.

To better understand that manipulation, it could be worth exploring the mini-case of Livia (M19, paragraph 6.3), a woman in her mid-40s, a former actress and now a teacher, who offers a room in her green and sunny home in the well-developed and full of life area of Lambrate. Laura has

offered me a quiet and spacious room for the night, and in that short time, I had to wait outside to start my check-in, as she was sleeping at the time of our scheduled meeting, to be locked out at night, as she 'forgot' there is a guest at her place, and to be ignored while checking-out, as Livia was locked in her room listening to music, and did not hear me saying goodbye.

For Livia, Airbnb is a forced solution, in which she struggles, as evidence shows, to adapt to her life and character, as my own difficulties with her, were quite visible by other guests as well (that unlike me, arrived into a point of a conflict and argument with Laura).

Livia's (M19) conflicts with the guests

Ottima posizione

Il signor Aristide è stato poco educato sin dall'inizio, poco collaborativo per stabilire l'orario di check in, critico su cose assurde, come il fatto che non riusciva a capire come funzionasse il citofono. Ha avuto da ridire sulla casa e sul condominio, quando sia la casa ache il condominio sono perfetti per persone anziane (ne abitano molte). Il Signor Aristide non ha mai fatto domande specifiche sul condominio e le informazioni da me ricevute sono state molto accurate rispetto alle sue richieste. Inoltre è stato sgarbato sin dai primi approcci telefonici. Sconsigliato

Therefore, and in the frame of this view of Livia, she did not, in any sense, place herself in the role of a 'host', a mother, or even a service-giver. Instead, Livia chooses to do the minimum, which is expected of her, in the terminology of Airbnb, by offering a good and comfortable room. Other rooms are completely shut and even locked, as those rooms are directed to the sole purpose of her own image of home dwelling. In the rooms that 'must' be shared, or expected to be shared, like the bathroom or the kitchen, Laura puts a number of notes whose point is to keep their domestic sense to herself, while making the house less welcoming and for sure, less social. Therefore, as can be seen in the boundaries Livia is trying to set, they have neither a traditional domestic sense, nor a business approach. Instead, the borders aim to protect the domestic, and leave it with the core and minimal projection of the Airbnb service.

A similar approach can be also found in the mini-case of Nerea (M16), a young Spanish woman in her mid-20s, who has arrived from Barcelona as part of her growing experience as an actress and a movie director. At one point, Nerea fell in love with an Italian guy, and rented a big apartment right in front of one of the beautiful extensions of the Navigli river. After a short period of time, the relationship ran aground, but Nerea was eager to keep the apartment, so she chose Airbnb as a solution. Like Livia, Nerea does not see Airbnb as a business, nor as a social experience. She keeps

her domestic needs in the space and in times that would not intrude her guests, but will also not lead to challenging the very specific and set view that Nerea, in her age, has of the meaning and the purpose of home.

Illustration during ethnographic work (M16)
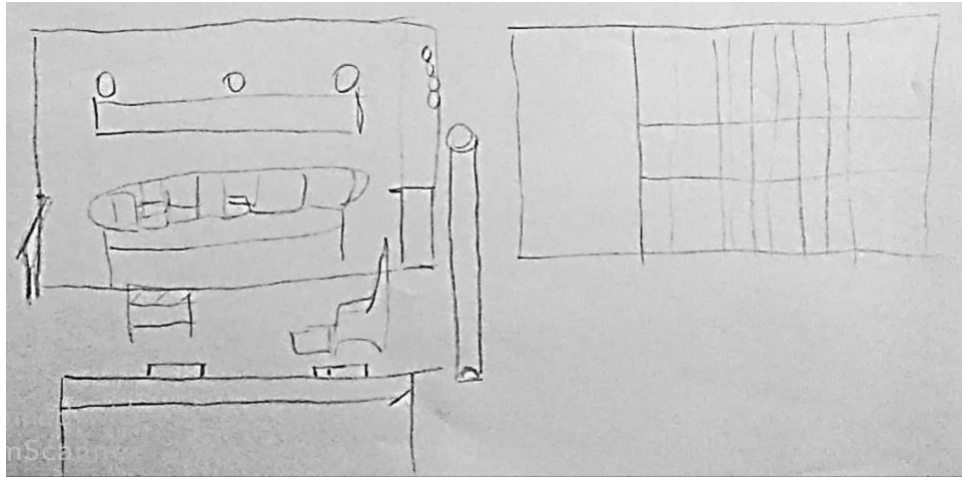
To do so, Nerea, as can be seen from the illustration above, divided home into two parts, one part with the three rooms that serve the incoming guests, and the other, where she lives. Although the main conversation which I had with Nerea happened in the kitchen over a cup of tea, in practice, that conversation was a result of casual and momentary curiosity of Nerea, that hardly represent the will of Nerea to interact. As in the case of Livia, Nerea expressed an extreme style of self-indifference, that were designing her home accordingly, by two very different and separated spaces. Therefore, for Nerea, as well as for Laura, in one space (theoretically, when guests follow the rules), the domestic space, there is no audience, while in the Airbnb new space, they have a role, one that is minimized to the obligation of Airbnb.

- **Hybrid shape of domestic features**

The image of the divided home, as also described along the 7th chapter of the findings, is a solution, which is part of the 3rd stage of the turning point. Alas, SAH and especially women, find other ways to settle the conflict between the domestic and the service, by bending the norms of the domestic space, in their presumed role in it. Another such solution, and the most common of them all, is of the 'hybrid home', in which domesticity is performed according to new norms, which are integrated with the business and professional roles. In such cases, home is directly corresponded

with the image of the hotel, and with the standards of the politicly correct terminology and behavior. In such situations, the role of the SAH, and especially of woman, which is by bending and merging between values, creates new images, which under the umbrella of Airbnb, become legitimized and normalized.

Such cases are more evident in mini-cases, in which the host is a foreigner to the place where home is now. In such mini-cases, traditional domestic values are more present, exactly because they are so vividly converse to the establishment of the new norms of home[169]. To comprehend such a scene, it is possible to dive into the mini-case of Anita (L13), a Latin mother, who lives in the developing, and now popular area of Anjos, in Lisbon. Anita started to host via Airbnb, as her children started moving out of home, and while the area where her home is located was in-demand, which became an opportunity to improve the financial situation of her family. In the beginning of her work with Airbnb, the experience at Anita's home, was described as especially homey, as she used to welcome her guests as family, with values that can only be understood as representations of comfort, warmth, and affection. Alas, with time, Anita experienced negative situations, of guests who did not appreciate the home welcoming of Anita and treated her home like a hotel. Therefore, over time Anita reduced her interactions and caretaking of guests and started using her new source of income to fly back home and visit her family, leaving the house to her husband.

Therefore, instead of warmth and hospitality, the house has indeed developed into a dark, gloomy and dirty house with broken facilities, that was accompanied by a set of rules that was meant to prevent the former situation, and limit the guests' sense of freedom[170]. In the chorological path which Anita decided to follow, it is evident that Anita is the one to set the tone, and to shape a domestic experience as she desired to put her effort, an effort that at one point, she was not willing to give, and was legitimized, and even supported, under the Airbnb service.

Another, very different example, can be found in the story of Natalie (J16), an American women in her 30s, who, a few years earlier, while searching the next step in her life, found the city of

[169] Alas, it is important to emphasize that such developments of hybrid homes occur also in other mini-cases, but their expression in normally more subtle, yet composed of the very important meanings.
[170] On the day of my arrival, it was indeed Anita's husband who had welcomed me. He, whose name I never knew, opened the door for me, and without saying one word, walked me to my room where my keys were waiting for me, and showed me the bathroom. As in other houses in Lisbon, also in this house, the gas boiler needed to be started with a lighter, not a standard one that would not fit the entrance of the boiler but a long one, which is normally used for the kitchen stove, and that the husband could not find. Therefore, he himself, while trying to show me how to use the hot water, failed to do so. Needless to say, that I did not shower during that ethnographic stretch.

Jerusalem, and fell in love with it. As Natalie is not Jewish[171], she has struggled for years to legally stay in the country, while not knowing herself if she really wants to stay in the long-run. Finally, she managed to stay, by working and becoming an important part of a Christian organization that helps Christians to get to know the city of Jerusalem, and to turn it into a touristic, but more importantly, a religious space for other American communities. Natalie experienced another struggle when looking for a good home for herself, until she came across a very sunny and large apartment right near her favorite location in the city, the market of Mahane Yehuda.

After much debate, Natalie took a deal, in which she hosted for long periods of time, groups of tourists on their religious pilgrimage in the city. A settlement that was not comfortable, but very satisfying as in other times, home was free and all to herself. Unfortunately, at one point, that arrangement ceased to be possible, and Natalie needed to find another solution. After much hesitation, she decided not to leave the place she loved, and found two roommates she was fond of, from her social circles. In addition, they all chose together, to use their free room in a limited fashion, of hosting guests for only ten days a month.*"...Well, we are really good friends, the roommates and I, it is my name on the contract, so I have a lot of responsibility, to them and to my landlord. So I was really careful choosing them, but I know them, they are good, but they struggle sometimes, like me... I had a guest who was very passive-aggressive and in the end it just exploded, it was terrible. So in face of this event we decided to give up and stop with the website, but eventually we got back to it. She was really cheeky, and I love the Israeli style because it is direct, when it is right and it is good. Sometimes people are also unaware of what they are doing. There was one woman that wanted to be too involved in our lives, if we went running then she wanted to join, she walked alone, I can understand but she really wanted to do everything we do and at one point it was like, oh stay away from me!. In general, the right duration of a stay is of three nights, I had couples coming in for six nights and it was awful ... because over time you start spending too much time with the same stranger and it gives you less and less a feeling that it is your home, I want it to stay mine, just mine. In addition, they feel more and more comfortable at home and therefore take over more easily... The house changes, it is inevitable, but we try to limit it with ten days, sometimes we go out of the house to cool off, or we give up dinners here and there ... I don't*

[171] Israel, historically, maintains a particular and complicated immigration policy, that in its core, allows the migration, or 'Alia' (migration to Israel by Jewish are called as going up, while Jewish that leave the country, called 'going down'), only for people that can prove their Jewish roots (in Judaism, unlike other religions, like Christianity, those roots are defined by the religion of the mother).

know how long I'll do it. We all agree that we like it sometimes when there are people in the house, but we know we love it more when it is just us!...".

The mini-case of Natalie, is another expression of a woman who spends time, thinking and crafting her own desired image of home. Choosing to live with roommates, for Natalie, was a choice of her role at home, a role of agency that comes with responsibilities. That role, was greatly shaped because of the presence of Airbnb guests, and her understanding of the growing sense of her role as a host, a role that changes her ability to perform other roles, until they merged and became one. Alas, being the main actor of agency, does not mean, for Natalie, and for many others, that she has any obligations to perform a feminine version of hosting, but instead, she wishes to display the image of herself, as a woman with a rich life, who hosts through Airbnb as a financial solution.

Therefore, the principal difference between the 'divided home' and the 'hybrid home', is that in the divided home, roles are hardly challenged. In the domestic realm, it is still possible to carry certain traditional social and gender roles (although many do not), while in the other, a very minimal role, or a business one is carried. In the hybrid home, different roles are implemented on the same space, and therefore, create conflict, and a compromise, a change, which places commercial values in the presence of the domestic roles.

- **Full implementation between home and hotel**

The Fashion in which SAH, and particularly women, implement new values into the domestic space, shows a rational, chosen, even if, in later stages, modified and distorted by compromises, whose key feature is the wide range of values that Airbnb offers as a prototype of hosting. If to continue the scale which accompanies these findings, the HGRS, Airbnb does not only allow such a business terminology, a hotel industry terminology, but also supports that shift. Alas, while supporting it, Airbnb provides legitimacy and justification to a new, 'non-feminine' presentation of home, with a new interpretation of social and gender norms.

The 'new normality', of the domestic sphere, therefore, does not have any more rules or clear norms, a direction, or a path that progressing over time to be more radical in practice, exactly because the 'audience', the guests, which do not only accept non domestic, or non-homey behavior, but reproduce physical and virtual messages that support that behavior, in which home is replaced with minimal hosting standards.

To understand that particular point, it is useful to address the third and last pattern of the ideological domestic shift, in the shape of full implementation. In full implementation of home, domestic values are not separated, or merged, but simply replaced by a business orientation, as in the example of Electra (J28), a young woman in her mid-20s, who is on the verge of finishing her undergraduate degree in Mathematics. Electra, untypical for her age, is already quite knowledgeable in the academic system, she has a brilliant mind with big plans for the future, and has her next steps figured out already. Considering her age, Electra is also quite experienced in living with roommates. Therefore, she decided she wants to have a place for herself, in one of the smallest and most charming streets of Nachlaot, a street which is decorated with 'professional' graffities of old Hebrew poems.

The experience at Electra's home was unique, as guests can check-in only after 20:00, so she could study, and because the guest's room, which is located right at the entrance of the ground floor apartment, has no door, and it is actually Electra's living room, where a bunk bed is located above the sofa. Electra, therefore, has no manners of domestic representation, she is a young and casual person, who is part of the very special community of students in Jerusalem. Unlike most of my ethnographic experiences with single women in the three cities, not only did Electra not lock her own room, but she did not even close it, nor did she lock the house itself, as it seemed as though she had just fallen asleep. Electra's situation demonstrates a calculated, up to date design of home in the image of Electra, interrupted by Airbnb, but yet, a symbol of agency, at home.

The same, but yet, very different, is the mini-case of Mara (M43), a woman in her 60s, who refers, for the first time, to the phenomenon of 'guest houses'. Not in the currently known form of a budget hotel or hostel, but as a version of ancient times in which families used to rent out a room in their home for strangers passing by. Mara's guest house, alas, refers, as she says, to the English form of the guest house, which offers that exact experience of domesticity combined with a set of British norms of formal hospitality. Mara is also the only mini-case, in all three cities, who actually owns an official certified and registered 'B&B', by the region of Lombardy. Mara's impressive private house, in one of the central areas of Milan, therefore, is in any sense, a business, which is not at all limited to Airbnb. *"... this place is an accommodation solution within a home where someone else lives, but it is also a professional place, under British standards of guest houses. In a way it is like a hotel in a private house, where I need to find a balance between myself and the business. But also, a very illusive balance between respect and warmth, to be invasive but to not be invasive,*

do you understand? This is the English guest house. So somehow you need to make people feel at home, but also that they don't feel it is my home, at least when they are here. It is very complicated, and difficult, but it is not really my biggest problem… the fact that I need to use Airbnb, I have my own site, but Airbnb goes usually better, and the Airbnb guests, they don't get it, this manner, so I adjust, I have my business, but I also compromise…"

Mara's (M43) official status as a B & B business

The mini-case of Mara is a good reminder, that Airbnb did not invent the domestic dwelling as a consumption and accommodation solution. What Airbnb did, was the ability to create an option which is designed for the unprofessional segment, who do not have the knowledge or the skills to present professional hosting. After all, in order to be an Airbnb host, the only thing which is necessary is a domestic space. Therefore, the penetration of Airbnb to the social fabric and the legitimate social behavior, as a strategic venture, if towards as an attractive type of consumption and a touristic solution, or for the hosts, as a plausible financial opportunity, displayed and expressed so efficiently, and successfully, in so many urban contexts around the world.

As in the mini-case of Mara, Airbnb is often perceived not as the 'second shift' of Hirschfield. Instead, Airbnb could be understood as the next career, after the children grow and move out. Alas, the evidence found in this line of work show, that women doing Airbnb, may desire a social experience, or even the comfortable sense of mothering and caregiving. Either way, and in all

mini-cases, they do not wish to reproduce the image, the effort, and the responsibility which they had before, or grow to accept (or ignore) it. Alternately, they design a new path, that suits their own ambitions, and that is the result of their experience and collected ideas of their lives, and the way they wish to live it. In that sense, Airbnb emerged as an enabler of such ambition, and of stories of many liberated women.

9.4 Discussion **– My home is not my gender**

- **Technological liberation**

In this chapter of the findings, I wished to discuss and show evidence on the differences between the genders, while exploring the possible meanings of those differences. To do so, it was useful to focus on the very nature of gender roles, and the fashion in which Airbnb provides a new ability to interpret gender roles and thereby, 'performs' and displays new or developing images that challenge the traditional spatial settings which place those roles in a gender context.

In this context of gender, this chapter of the findings showed, that the differences in the practices of hosting via Airbnb are quite small. Women tend to go through a tougher process of emotional coping with the idea, and the physical as well as the sexual threat of having a stranger at home, during the first stages, which in turn, allows them to develop a better stamina from the average male SAH, while keeping similar degrees of exhaustion, like the male SAH, during the later stages of their work with Airbnb. Furthermore, it is the very fact that female SAH do not differ much in the nature, style, or agenda of hosting from male SAH, which demonstrates Airbnb's ability to change gender and social roles, with a symbolic and every-day performance, that has the potential to signify a shift in the domestic sphere, and the sequence of technological ignition and implication onto the domestic space. In that sense, it is almost too easy to forget that Airbnb is first of all a technological development, that has the means to create those changes, because of the process of normalization that such applications and services slowly, almost unnoticedly, induce into social norms and social behavior, by offering new options and new interpretations, or such that were already met but kept in the marginal part of society.

Furthermore, the fact that Airbnb is so absent from the actual ritual of the Airbnb experience, is the very feature that helps those new interpretations, are under a reality in which Airbnb is not and cannot be really separated from the offline and natural lives of the SAH, and therefore, has the

potential and principal ability to create significant changes in the domestic dwelling of women and men who are part of the Airbnb working force.

- **The movement of agency**

The image of home changing in the frame of gender roles, as mentioned, showed a bigger and wider implication of the Airbnb service in the domestic realm, in the image of practicing, and more importantly, performing an ideology in which the audience is judging the performance under the 'Airbnb spirit is guidelines' (which are vague and minimal), or by the standard of an accommodation solution, that is neither social nor domestic. Therefore, this chapter of the findings provides, first and foremost, another chance to look at the emotional and social implications of Airbnb, as experienced by SAH, both women and men.

Chronological movement of values and agency
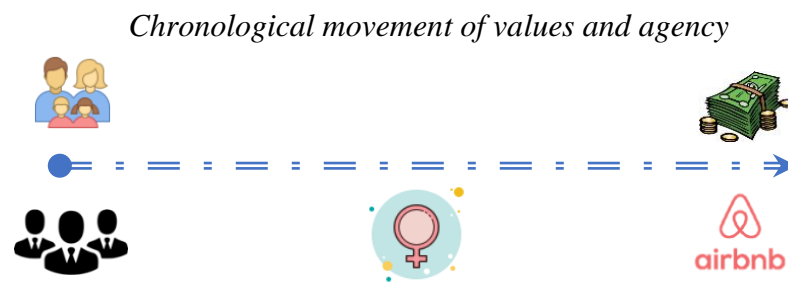
The images that were represented in this chapter of the findings, tied together with the aspects that have been displayed throughout this part, eventually create a wider image, of a chronological flow from one set of values to another. That process applies for both men and women equally. The difference, is the way in which this set of values, have been historically nurtured, which is strongly connected to the role of women, and their responsibility in creating a domestic space that fits the needs of both the economic system and the patriarchal society (Croft et al., 2014; Nelson, 2019; Pink, 2004).

History, in fact, is quite certain of the importance of the domestic space, in its 'feminine' form, as a key mechanism of coping with the difficult implications of the economic system onto the social order. A social order, that anyhow constantly loses its ability to produce expressions of sociality and solidarity. Alas, the truth is, that this mechanism was born in sin, and in times in which gender inequality could fluster and be part of any social institutional establishment, instead of promoting

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values that are indeed important for the enrichment of a positive social behavior, that allows interactions and social initiatives which are not only based on currency and political power (Somerville, 1997; Lindsey, 2015; Martin, 1990; Beal, 1994).

Therefore, the findings in this line of work, as it seems in the illustration above (page 406), demonstrate a chronological and dual-processed mechanism, which has some important and interesting implications. Dual, as neither one of the processes seems plausible without the structure that the other allows. By feeding each other, it is possible to witness a combination of a personal and spatial process, with a cultural, or social one. The first, is a process of movement from domestic and familial values to the ones of the commercial market, and ultimately, the global market. This process is often complicated and painful, however, it triggers the ability of the SAH to give daily and growing attention to their own needs, and their own ability to take 'egoistic' decisions, that does not take into consideration the wide audience, but only the one of the Airbnb 'community', or better, of the incoming guests, who are educated as well, by the platform of Airbnb, to focus their judgement on minimal sociality, instead of on domesticity.

The movement of those values can be identified by two main and important elements. The first, as the illustration is trying to demonstrate, of a dynamic nature of those movements, that only rarely reach the final path of a complete monetization of the Airbnb experience (especially for SAH whose motivations were never financial-oriented), but in a constant progress towards a financial vision of their hospitality. Secondly, as this process cannot be plausible without the Airbnb platform itself, and the intentional aspect of the technological services that Airbnb offers. That is, Airbnb's tendency to chronologically create dependency on their source of income, and their influence of the nature of the experience, leads to a slow, yet steady, transition of agency to the service, and to Airbnb itself. This transition is the one that 'breaks the chains' of the imagined or lived dominancy of the traditional and patriarchal image of home, towards a home, which is finally an Airbnb home.

Just as the process of movement of values, the process of transition of agency is dynamic, and describes a chronological shift, which does not always reach its extreme loss of agency of the SAH. Instead, for many SAH, that movement of agency, in which Airbnb is getting a tacit partial control over home, gives female (and male) SAH not only the physical agency of their home, but also the legitimacy, and normality that helps women design their home. Naturally, the physical and decorative sense, is only one and useful expression of that agency, that signify also an

ideological sense, by addressing their very core growing understanding of how home should look like, but also, of how home should feel like. Alas, the dual process which is demonstrated in the illustration also implies on something else, and it is the boundaries, or the slow tendency of women, as every SAH, to possess that agency for long periods of time, as the nature of the service, and their place in the service, creates stronger difficulties to apply those expressions of agency that just got liberated.

In the frame of these conclusions, it is with importance to understand the possible outcome of the Airbnb experience, in the shape of social roles, not only to female SAH, but in general to the domestic future experience. In this sense, as many of the phenomena that were discovered in this text, Airbnb is not a pioneer, but a trigger for processes that have already been in play but were never practiced and performed so evidently in mainstream global capital services. Airbnb is far from having any intention of leading such a change in the image of home. On the contrary, their very marketing strategy is of the combination between a cultural exploration (which would be discussed in the next and last chapter of the findings) and a domestic sense.

Therefore, it would be unrealistic, to say the least, to see Airbnb as a possible future actor in the development of a new domestic image. Instead, Airbnb demonstrates only an initial, yet a breaker of a 'glass ceiling' kind of example of the potential of technology to penetrate the most sacred and private spaces of the social every-day, and of the very core of the social order. It is without a doubt, that technology has already created severe changes in the fashion in which home is dwelled or experienced. It is less certain, however, if technology could create such deep and rooted aspects of the social order, such as the establishment of social and gender roles. Consequences, that are still to be tested, in the expression of further studies.

9.5 Conclusion – **A fly in the ointment**

Throughout the findings' chapters, I tend to be careful in the using of the terms 'positive' or 'negative' when referring to the features of the change that Airbnb SAH are going through. Patterns in which domestic values are traded for others, or the constant reduction of the social aspects of the Airbnb service, for the host as well for the guest, should not be necessarily seen as negative, as they are natural and eventually express the very basic definitions of the economic system, that for the first time, receives such a complex expression in the domestic space. Furthermore, seeing them as such, must endure some cultural and subjective images of the author himself. Instead, this

research, as a whole, tries to display a complex a biographical and emotional reflection of each of the mini-cases that were part of this research, an experience that can be seen by mini-cases as positive, or negative, but eventually, reduces the traditional domestic sense, and therefore, to a point of deprivation, that seeks a reaction.

Alas, in this specific situation as demonstrated among female SAH, it is important to emphasize the very vivid benefits of the Airbnb experience, as an actual liberator of a new domestic kind of dwelling. As for all SAH, men and women, the Airbnb experience could create and collect numerous positive encounters, but for female SAH it is a significant, and even public, expression of new designs of domestic representations, and of gender roles. These benefits, however, have a limited and a chronological frame, as the Airbnb service eventually, if not right away, becomes problematic as a result of all the aspects affected and affecting the experience of the hosts, which were represented in this findings chapter.

Therefore, the 'liberation' which Airbnb, supposedly offers, but anyhow allows, of the domestic gender roles, comes indeed for a limited period of time, however, during that period, it creates new ideas of domestic dwelling, which influences and will further influence the perception of home, and the fighting over the image of home in the progress of the biographical path of the SAH, even after the end of the 5th stage, and the end of the work with Airbnb.

"The kids have a new take
A new take on faith
Pick up the pieces
Get carried away
I came home to city half erased
I came home to face what we faced

This place needs me here to start
This place is the beat of my heart

Oh my heart
Oh my heart

Storm didn't kill me
The government changed
Hear the answer call
Hear the song rearranged
Hear the tress, the ghosts and the buildings sing
With the wisdom to reconcile this thing

It's sweet and it's sad and it's true
How it doesn't look bitter on you…"[172]

[172] Written by Michael Stipe, Peter Buck, Mike Mills, and Scott McCaughey. From the song: *'Oh My Heart'*. From the Album: *'Collapse into Now'* (2011).

10.'When in Rome...', (or),
Multi-Cultural Aspects of the Airbnb Phenomenon

1st Stage — Interest, Preparation & First Guests

2nd Stage — Increasing Rhythm & Adjustments

3rd Stage — The Turning Point

4th Stage — A New Setting of Home

5th Stage — Looking for an Exit
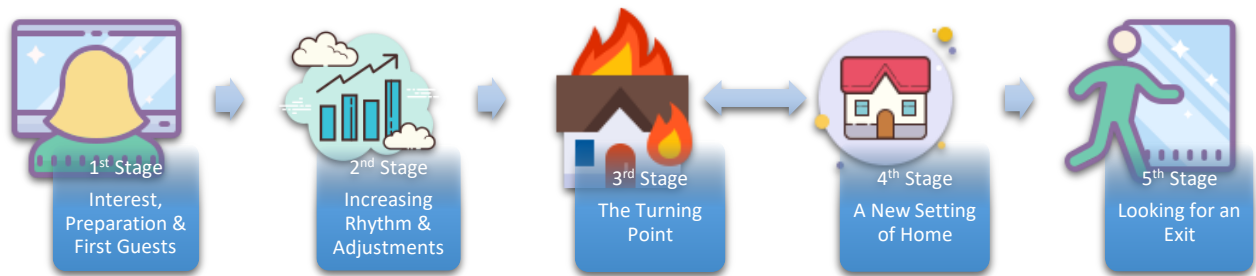
10.1 Introduction

The transition of agency among the SAH over their homes, that was discussed in the previous chapter, is the result of the chronological ASEP, as SAH slowly lose control of their home, that are bound to a new setting of home. This new setting, allows, in fact, a foothold to the Airbnb regime and intention, but also, a space in which guests has the legitimacy to negotiate, discuss, and even impose terms of consumption, in the domestic space. Consumption, that as learned, tends to, and is naturally expressed by cultural penetration and therefore, of conflict.

To understand that type of consumption, it could be useful to address the fashion in which the Airbnb service is shaped, according to the theory of 'co-creation'. Co-creation can be referred to former ideas, such as the 'market of emotions', or the 'experience economy', which discusses the ability to distinguish between different products and services by focusing on the experience of the consumers, who increase, over time, their search and their intentions to consume 'authentic', 'real', and therefore more valuable services (Campos et al., 2018; Ji-hai & Qin, 2016). Services, whose main feature is their ability to be rememberable, because of their nature and intent to be personalized and shaped by the consumers themselves.

Therefore, co-creation can be seen as a strategic marketing plan and product, or service, that is designed, to give a significant attention to a space of consumption that is crafted and changed by the consumers themselves, as the definition of the service itself (Füller, MüHlbacher, Matzler & Jawecki, 2009; Payne, Storbacka & Frow, 2008) . Furthermore, the very nature of the co-creation phenomenon, is of the 'dialogue', and not only the final image of the product or the service, between producers and consumers, which allows the establishment of creative and additional value, a value that can only be produced under spatial, temporal and finally, contextual preferences (O'Hern & Rindfleisch, 2010).

Indeed, at first the focus on the client has been the main focus of the model, which was seen as a strategy of creating a competitive advantage, by collecting useful information (as part of the 'information era'), and by manipulating the design of a service, by focusing on the experience of the clients, instead of the challenges of the organization (Firat & Venkatesh, 1995; Chathoth, Altinay, Harrington, Okumus & Chan, 2013) . Alas, Jansen and Pieters (2017) defies this narrow vision of co-creation by marking the term 'complete co-creation', which does not discuss co-creation as a sole marketing strategy and product personalization, but rather, a much deeper mode of interaction between producers and consumers, that has the potential to change the very core of the product itself. Observing co-creation in such a view, allows important implications on the broader image of social order, because of the very basic definition of the economic system, which is based on profit, while society itself is hardly that rational. Instead, it is a mix of interests, desires, and obviously, social ambitions, which has the potential of being fulfilled in infinite expressions.

Therefore, and for the sake of this chapter of the findings, co-creation would refer to the idea in which value, when a situation and a service allow it, can be a result of both parts of the economic equation, which influences the very image and setting of a space, the fashion in which it produces meaning, and the interpretation of that meaning by both the producers (who 'own' the space) and the consumers (Humphreys & Grayson, 2008; Terblanche, 2014).

One such important and fascinating situation, in this context, is the tourism industry. The research of tourism, as already demonstrated, has been slow, and used to demonstrate a certain gap in the ability of research and practice to understand the possible meaning of co-creation experiences. Tourists, in this frame, could be viewed as consumers, who differ by two main spectrums. The first, is of the fashion in which tourists wish to experience a different, familiar experiences they are accustomed to in their every-day lives, with a cultural twist. And the second, of their tendency to be passive or active agents of the products they wish to consume (Campos et al., 2018; Chathoth et al., 2013; Ji-hai & Qin, 2016). For example, a tourist from an urban context, could wish to 'change' scenes by exploring rain forests and live in a tent. In comparison, another tourist could wish to relive the nature of the every-day in another urban setting, but this time as a tourist. On the same note, a tourist could wish to join an organized 'group vacation', in which an organization is the one to choose the course of the trip, the locations and the path of consumption. In comparation to other tourists, who would want a total independency, of exploring different spaces in a more spontaneous manner.

These two scales are found and as already discussed in the theoretical part, are both moving, in the last decades, into a vivid and studied tendency of a new approach of the tourist who is enthusiastic about the urban setting, and on their own ability to create a unique and personal path for themselves, as an agent of the experience (Grissemann, U. S., & Stokburger-Sauer, 2012; Prebensen, Vittersø & Dahl, 2013) .

Co-creation, in the context of tourism, is widely recognized as a rising force in which new services emerge quickly and safely by technological innovation, in the image of niche personalization of hotel rooms that can be changed and personalized. Alas, the very nature that is known of co-creation, is of new platforms, which are based on the beneficial collaboration of locals, who are also known as the unprofessional sector of producers (Oliveira & Panyik, 2015; Zhang, Gordon, Buhalis & Ding, 2018) . One such prominent organization, is 'like-a-local'[173], or in its new name, 'withlocals.com', which focuses on navigating between tourists and locals, who offer an 'experience'. Usually, tour guides, cooking dinners, etc. The Dutch organization is a small example, which holds no more than 1500 listings[174]. Alas, in the image of such a platform, Binkhorst and Dekker (2009) have established a new image of the tourist experience, by understanding the fashion in which the every-day and spatial meaning of the every-day starting from home, to work, family and friends, are part of the imagination of tourists, in their decision-making process of creating and developing and planning a vacation.

Their research, therefore, is again focused on the tourists themselves, and their ability to gain and appreciate new kinds of value, in the Airbnb service as well. However, outside the scope of Airbnb, co-creation in the tourism and the urban tourism market is viewed as a spatial phenomenon, in which new cultural expressions can be created, as a result of the fusion between art and creativity of both locals and tourists. However, it seems that such an idea did not examine the very nature of the domestic space as a sight of those developments, as this study would explore furthermore.

Finally, the idea of co-creation is the result of another phenomenon, which was discussed as well along the theoretical part, the 'living like a local' experience. As other co-creation studies, the focus of current research is to understand the attractiveness of such services to tourists, who, following

[173] Observing the latest edition of the website, shows a remarkable resemblance to the Airbnb's website. So much, that at a first I was mistakenly positive that the Dutch organization was purchased by Airbnb and became a sub-site of the original. In fact, and as already mentioned, Airbnb itself offers in the last years the same kind of service, with the same kind of title, of 'experiences'.
[174] Withlocals.com.

the trends of the urban experience, are looking, adaptively, from their Airbnb experience to deliver an authentic and unique housing experience and atmosphere, interaction with their hosts, and interaction with the local culture (Paulauskaite, Powell, Coca-Stefaniak & Morrison, 2017; Kuusimäki & García-Rosell, 2018; Richards, 2014). The consensus of the academic and business realm, of the major effectiveness of the Airbnb features as 'authentic' and 'domestic' altogether, again fails to perceive, or to count the meaning of such services, as they are not only a service, but also serve as the most basic spatial location of the place called home.

In this chapter of the findings, I wish to focus on the cultural aspects of the penetration of guests into the domestic, as well into the urban sphere of the three case studies. Home, and the city, are the spaces of the most fundamental expressions of cultural identity, and are in the heart of the public debate of cultural preservation, especially in touristic cities such as Lisbon, in which the tourism market is considered the solution as well the main problem, as spaces are homogenized in the sake of touristic ventures and touristic consumption efficacy.

Therefore, in this text, I would firstly engage in the different case studies separately, as it will be the city and home combined into one, which gives the tourist a complete experience, and an experience which is built with and in front of the SAH, which affects their lives.

10.2 Co-creation of domestic and urban space

The ethnographic work, which the findings throughout the chapter were mainly (along with other key and completing methods) based on, was of a domestic and covert ethnography handled at the homes of the mini-cases. Alas, the ethnographic search did not end there. In fact, in all three cities, there has been substantive work and study on the city itself. That ethnographic search was handled in two main settings, and levels of intensity. The first, during the actual ethnographic work, as a significant amount of time was invested in pointless, or necessary vagrancy in the areas in which the visited homes were located. It is possible to mention three main types of such wandering and its usefulness. (1) Arriving and leaving home, was often done by foot, if it was possible, in order to have a better understand of the area I was accommodated in, of the connection of one such location, and therefore, of a home, to the city's happenings and atmosphere. (2) Leaving the house after checking-in and walking around. Sometimes to acquire necessities or eat, but in other times, for the sake of knowing the streets and people who are part of the scene which locals and tourists are experiencing daily. (3) In the hours in which I was between a check-out and a new check-in.

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Periods of time which lasted between a few minutes and long hours, in which the city and its attractions could help me 'kill time', while getting to know the city better. Secondly, in each of the cities I made sure to spend a period of at least six months, in which, a significant amount of time was spent on understanding the city, exploring it, and getting to know, as much as possible, the current debate, issues, and range of opinions.

While Lisbon has been the only city of which my knowledge was indeed slim before living in it, in all cities such an approach has proven to be effective and useful. In Milan, in which I lived on and off since 2012, the ethnography as well as the invested six months (along with the numerous conversations with local SAH, formally and ethnographically), have provided a completely new image of the city, as the dual ethnographic work has allowed me to re-experience the city, and finally capture its cultural depth and its social vitality. Milan, as would be further explored, is an intensive, yet seemingly effective prototype of a central and international city, in which tourists are rarely noticeable outside the very main and few attraction sites, such as the Duomo, or the Castello[175].

In fact, Jerusalem was much less known to me than the city of Milan, and therefore, the exploration in the city, and getting to know the very nature of living in Jerusalem, has provided me with plenty of information which I found useful and which created a better and more detailed scheme of the city. Finally, Lisbon was naturally the most challenging ethnographic and urban work, but also the most productive. The streets of Lisbon are an invitation of such vagrancy, in which images of touristic and local 'festive' consumption were always present, along rapid scenes of poverty.

Therefore, in this text, I would focus on the fashion in which the Airbnb service is reflected by the collaborations of hosts and guests, as the hosts would be both consumers and producers, in the domestic space, and its 'leakage' into the urban sphere, in each of the case studies.

[175] I came to realize how subjective the image of a rhythm of a city can be. In my years living in Milan, I was questioned numerous times about my difficulty to adapt to the 'fast and hectic' rhythm of the city. A question that always amused me as I have seen, and still see, the city of Tel-Aviv, Israel, as a much more hectic, fast, and tiring type of urban scene, which made Milan seem to me, more than anything else, relaxing and calm. After moving to Pavia, I also finally realized the image of Milan as a stressful expression of an urban atmosphere, as compared to Milan (and obviously, to Tel-Aviv), little Pavia is as a village for an urbanist who has never lived in one, a feeling that I have become addicted too.

- **Milan**

The co-creation production in the urban space is a result of the consumption and the nature of consumption in any given setting, which is normally designed by certain actors, as the communal authorities, the locals, and investors from the outside. They each have different interests and concerns, that after all allow (or do not allow) the accumulation of a free creation of new values which can be produced. Therefore, the Airbnb service, as a setting, is the perfect space for such a creation of value. Alas, the dominancy of Airbnb, as learned from previous chapters of the findings, mark such a potential, yet support other directions of the experience, in which the hosts play a small part.

In Milan, it is possible to note a particular part in the fashion in which Airbnb has become an actor in the urban and domestic space, in an atmosphere that allows such images of co-creations, which are expressed both in the domestic space and the urban one.

In the domestic space, Milan possess one of the richest examples of production of co-creation, which is identified by the fact that it is monetized. Meaning, once a guest arrives at a Milanese house, they could, perhaps, enjoy an 'experience' which is part of the host's agenda on their life, or on the cultural value which they can create with others. For example, Rossana (M42, paragraph 2.6; paragraph 8.5), regularly invites her guests to drink wine and chat with her, or dinners with friends which she is already hosting. Rossana does not see it, at all, as a service, but rather as a way to 'unite' her home, collect stories for her next planned books, but mainly just enjoy a cultural exploration. Or Giulia (M34), a woman in her late 50s, who, after her shift from entertainment journalism to a designer copycat, hosts every now and then an Italian Aperitivo for future clients to observe her new work. Giulia, who has placed her central workplace in the living room, which is full of fabrics and fashion magazines, is also a great and passionate cook, and as so, she invites her guests to join her in cooking, when on one night she is the cook and teacher, and on the other, the guest.

Giulia's (M34) view of her house and her living room

as a cultural gathering and opportunity

While that is a common routine in the Airbnb service among the 'Airbnb spirit' members, on one of the evenings of the Aperitivo, Giulia realized the amount of work she has on her plate, preparing to another showcase of her works to friends and clients, and realized she does not have the time arranging a proper 'Aperativo' . Then, a young student guest offered to take it on her responsibility for the buffet table. That decision had turned into a special event, for all of the parties involved. An event, which deepened the relationship between the two even more.

The mini-case of Francesco and Ilaria (M44, paragraph 2.3), is of a couple that organize intimate, yet social chef dinners and small concerts as a business innovation, but even more, as a social atmosphere, which, according to the couple themselves, are prompted to such a unique and massive house. In those events, the guests paying guests are encouraged to interact and to make friends, with a glass of wine and a snack. *"… of course, the Airbnb guest would not stay at his room while there is a concert. First, because it is impossible, have you seen the room? It is right at the entrance, it would be too embarrassing, we also don't need to tell them to wear something nice, it is their home for the time they are here, they can do what they want… but I don't remember anyone that was acting awkward, do you? (asking Ilaria)… no (she laughs), I really don't, but I do remember our friend Lisa that came one time to one of those things, and she met Liam… (Francesco remembers) oh of course! my god, how did I forget… yes… we had an Airbnb guest*

here, and he joined one of those dinners, and yada yada yada, we went to their wedding this year, that was fun cause we were the stars! (he laughs), cause this is us, we did that…".

In the urban space, the appearance of co-creation of value between hosts and guests is much smaller, but it still serves as part of the every-day of some of the SAH. Such is the example of Massimo (M24, paragraph 2.3). Massimo takes pride of the lovely area he lives in, Wagner. Therefore, he passionately supports local and small businesses in the area, and often join the guests, especially if they are up for *"… the best pizza in Milan, no, much better than Spontini…"*. Similar reactions, of people from the rich area of Buenos Aires, can be found as well, such as the mini-case of Gio (M07, paragraph 7.4), who has a folder, containing recommendations for the tourists of the main attraction sites and of small and local places in the area. Clo (M50), however, who works in another side of the city as a pastry chef, is not 'famous' in the online Airbnb community because of the many pastries she offers surprisingly to her guests (and as learned, no one can be truly famous under the settings of the platform), but enjoys do it anyway, as a social and cultural connection, that leaves the guest with a sensation of the Italian, yet domestic taste.

- ▪ **Lisbon**

If Milan can be seen as the very prototype of extraction of value out of a 'sharing economy' initiatives. It is important to remember, that even in Milan, such an ability or effort to co-create value that has no financial or economic significance, is not rare, but is not common either, as most SAH are bound to progress into an economic vision of the service, if they did not start with such a view in the first place (to recall, economic ambitions, in all case studies including Lisbon, are not the main aim of most SAH).

Alas, there is a very significant difference, and a surprising one, between Milan and Lisbon, which could tell much on the different cultural vision of both cities. In the previous paragraph, we learned that in Milan, SAH tend to follow social collaborations that have no financial motives, on one hand, but rarely triggered by a desire for a deeper connection that would develop into a friendship, on the other. In Lisbon, however, the situation is quite the opposite, as most expressions of co-creation in the domestic or in the urban space, between hosts and guests, are indeed motivated by a financial aspiration. Alas, in Lisbon, the required connection and intimacy for establishing a non-financial expression of co-creation, is more likely to emerge, as this connection, is not only more plausible, but it is unrelated to the social atmosphere. In other words, when a fruitful connection

emerges, it emerges because of two people who get along and become friends. SAH in Lisbon, who are open and allow a space and settings for interaction to flourish, are more likely to make friends, which shapes into main 'extra' value of the connection, instead of the activity itself (as it is the case in Milan).

Examples of that tendency, could be found in the mini-case of Amanda (L12), a woman in her 80s, who is helped by her daughter who actually lives in the United States, to use her spare room and to find a better balance in her economic situation. Amanda, suitably to her age, offers a very quiet yet colorful home, and does not 'enjoy' the 'technical' parts of the Airbnb service, such as the check-ins or the check-outs, that intensify her difficult sensation due the fact that her big apartment, is arrange in such a structure, in which her and the guest room, are attached to each other. That structural issue, creates difficulties in adjusting the very different sleeping hours of Amanda and her guests. Nevertheless, she is still very open to meet new people, and is excited when a person, naturally, often women, has the same mental approach as hers, which allows her to spend hours with her guests drinking tea, talking about life, and playing card games.

Or, the mini-cases of Zack (L44), Giovanni (L34, paragraph 2.3), or Said (L45), who have all experienced difficulties with guests, but eventually found in the guest the potential of a friendship that expresses the co-creation of values joined together. Apart of the young Giovanni and Zack, who enjoy enriching their night life by taking their guests to parties and other activities, most of Lisbon's non-financial co-creation happens at home, and allows a mutual cultural exploration, in which it is not the culture per se which is in middle of the interaction, but instead, a personal connection, that also deepens and creates a positive sense of the gained knowledge on the outside world. Said, is extremely a good example in that note, as he, like others I encountered during my ethnographic work and interview, is an individual example of the cultural contribution of another colonized territory, as Said was born and raised, again, by parents that one is Portuguese, and one from Mozambique. Said was quite indifference of taking advantage of his privilege to immigrant to Portugal, until he wanted to experience the Portuguese academy.

Coming from a wealthy family, the family, that was very supportive of this immigration, as other family members already made the decision, chose to buy Said a big and impressive apartment in one of the best areas in Lisbon. A house, which Said is occupying alone, but also host in entire family, as they come twice or three times a year for very long periods. *"...it is a good question what that you asked, because I think about it also by myself. Rarely, but I do, cause as a gay living*

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in Lisbon, suddenly having the whole family at home, is strange, I like being alone, but mostly I feel much more 'in charge' when Airbnb guests are here, then your mom is here (he laughs), you know what I mean? But it worth it, because home is so big, even, sometimes, too big, to I think often of having to start my own family…". Fahim started with Airbnb, as he could work less, starting his graduate degree. He often does not care too much of his guests, but as many others in Lisbon, rarely, he found good people in the Airbnb platform, with them he become a friend.

As mentioned, in many other mini-cases, the establishment of a co-creation production is much more calculated and it is viewed as a part of an 'experience', an experience that contains strategies which are aware of turning cultural 'products', that would help the guests leave the SAH's home with that extra and 'personalized' value, and that could lead them to return. Such are the mini-cases of Paco (L08, paragraph 4.4) or Perla (L50), who are both eager to add external values. In the mini-case of Paco, who organizes lunches with dishes of fish, or in the mini-case of Perla, who as a chef, is trying to build a catering service, that as part of that service, trying to create such experiences, by pay, to her Airbnb guests, that could learn deeply, and with their hands, the unique preferences of the Portuguese cuisine. The mini-case of Perla, therefore, is an example of a repeated phenomenon, especially in Lisbon, of adding experiences such as cooking together, or of invitations to special and fancy dinners, that are not offered spontaneously, but as part of a very organized and clear price listing, that the guests can choose to enjoy. In those cases, the co-creating value is reduced significantly, and the image of the experience is taken much more, as a regular job.

- **Jerusalem**

If it is possible to categorize Milan as the place of the modern image of social activities that allow co-creation, that has a significant effect on the urban space. And if Lisbon has a more market-based type of co-creation, which is more open, for more personal than social connections. Jerusalem, is somehow, neither, as it reflects much more strongly on a cultural fluster of co-creation, instead of social (Milan) and personal (Lisbon). Culturally, in the sense that it is not the social atmosphere, or the personal connection, that is central to the collaborative production and consumption in Jerusalem, but instead, it is the nature of the 'culture' itself, that is glorified, and that allows a unique experience, with values of 'peace' or 'tradition'.

As a starter, in many of the homes in which the hosts are more open for social activity (according, again, to the HGRS), Friday evenings provide special and important events for guests, who are invited to the traditional Shabbat dinners. The Shabbat dinners are so unique in Jerusalem, because they tend to differ so much from the 'generic' traditional ritual of the event, which includes the wearing of white clothes, the Kippa, the silver cutlery, the traditional festive Jewish bread, the 'challah', and the reading, praying and washing hands, before eating. Instead, around Jerusalem, there are countless interpretation of that ritual, which combines, according to each host's agenda, a unique image of spirituality, of international practices, like yoga, or mindfulness, with a great appreciation to nature and simplicity, and finally, a political frame, which in the frame of Airbnb, seeks to express different political opinions and thoughts, if towards the national and 'right-wing' approach, or, more likely, towards ideas of peace and 'right-doing', among the many 'left-wing' activities in the city[176].

Such is the examples of the mini-cases of Sheila (J01, paragraph 2.3; paragraph 8.4), of Ron and Yehuda (J10, paragraph 3.1; paragraph 6.3), and of Hadar (J07, paragraph 8.4). They all tend to have such dinners on Friday evenings, but they each look quite different. Sheila, although is not religious at all, before arriving to Jerusalem and still today, like many others in Israel, practices a very selective version of her religion, combined with a 'patriotic' political agenda of the extreme right wing. Therefore, her Shabbat dinners are an expression of wealth and empowerment. Not only of herself and her impressive home, but of the superiority, or even, supremacy of the Jewish religion. For Ron and Yehuda, an orthodox gay couple who live in a green, and seemingly isolated corner of the city, it is important to demonstrate their religious values to their guests. However, while addressing the more social values of Judaism, Ron and Yehuda express concepts as the 'goy', the foreigner, that should be hospitalized, taken-care of, and protected, inside the Jewish community. For them, such dinners are the expression of friendship and family, that the Airbnb guests are not part of, but their integration is welcomed. At last, Hadar, a young woman who has just finished her studies in performance and art, hosts Friday dinners as a 'collective' of friends and guests, from Airbnb or not, who like exploring new-age, and other nature-based rituals of laughter

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[176] Only by studying and experiencing the life in Jerusalem, it was possible to comprehend the very crucial difference, which was not known to me at all, between the mainstream image of the left-ideology of the coastal shore, also known as the 'State of Tel Aviv', which is considered as a 'clean' and detached pursuit for human rights and for the end of the occupation. And between the version of those ideas in Jerusalem, that is much more grounded and realistic to the actual experience of the Israel-Palestinian conflict. An image, which is not merely an idea, but a daily practice of activism and collaboration between Jews from West Jerusalem and Palestinian from East Jerusalem, working together in an almost impossible and definitely frustrating situation.

and joy. Therefore, as the hosting experience itself can be seen as only a vessel for spreading ideas that are already known, ideas that they believe in. therefore, Airbnb guests in the context of Jerusalem, have less agency to contribute, or space to bring cultural expression of themselves, that could allow co-creation.

In the urban context, the conflicting and heavy nature of the city of Jerusalem towards its locals, creates an intimate and complicated relationship between the city and the SAH. Therefore, the tendency of urban exploration and co-creation of production of hosts and guests, is smaller, and more common among the young community of SAH in Jerusalem, who lean more towards the nightlife in Jerusalem, by sharing it with the guest. Such a case, could be found in the story of the mini-case of Mor (J42), a man in beginning of his 30s, who lives in an ancient, cave-shaped apartment in one of the most richest and vital areas of Jerusalem, the area of Emek Refaim, what is known as the German colony177. With Mor, I had one of the longest interactions in Jerusalem and in general, as when Mor returned back from work, we ended up chatting for several hours, due to his prior experiences of living in France and in Italy, where he has family. It was very clear that Mor was longing for a conversation person, so he to discuss the great difficulties of the divorce he has been going through, while planning a home that would be both suitable for his small child, and for incoming guests. Therefore, at one point, Mor urged me to go with him for a drink, an idea that I was fond of, after finishing watching the basketball game I insisted on watching.

"... So, I got dressed, I didn't really know what to think of that late going out, I was already tired, and Mor, as nice as he was, doesn't seem like a guy I could really spend time talking with, but my ethnographic curiosity was stronger than anything. So, we went out, and I started to worry as I was walking towards the bus. And I thought he would think of somewhere close by, it is nice here, but he wanted to go to the center, and ironically, directly to the pub that I never visited personally, but I interviewed there not so long ago. I ordered my beer, and he got coke, that I paid for somehow. He was indeed a dull conversation man, discussing a very boring view of his desired change for the city. At one point he said he was hungry, and I thought he is going to order something from the bar. So, he kept asking me to go with him, and I told him that I would wait for him here. Only later did I realize that the bar does not offer anything to eat, and he was actually

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177 The 'German Colony' in Jerusalem, is similar to other such 'neighborhoods' in Israel, that was found by German immigrants, as part of the movement of the 'Temple Society', a protestant movement that believed in 'salvation' by settling and working in traditional productive labor in Israel, and in Jerusalem in particularly. Those colonies, over the years, are defined by a unique architecture, and upscale communities, filled with restaurants, cafes, and general high level of socio-economic lifestyle.

going out to eat somewhere else. I waited for him for an hour or so, drinking my beer slowly, and trying not to stare too much at the many women that were dancing around me. After trying to look for him outside, I sent him a message, and then realized that there was a miscommunication, and that Mor thought I wanted to be left alone, so after he finished eating, he went straight home. I walked slowly back to the house, where I found him waiting for me, a bit irritated, waiting to go to sleep…". (Note for mini-case M42).

10.3 Living like a local

After discovering the tendency of a domestic version of co-creation of production, in this theme, I wish to observe the 'dark' side of the 'living like a local' experience. As learned, this experience is one of the most successful and popular services in tourism in general, and the key engine that has been turning the urban tourism sector into such a vital and a generator of urban processes in the last decades. For example, shopping at a small local grocery store, experiencing the busy metros (or in Lisbon, also the very efficient ferries between the cities along the Tagus river) that people use daily to commute, and sitting at the same coffee tables that the urban population uses to energize their way through a long day.

Alas, Airbnb offers a much deeper experience. Just as I could have an unthinkable access to human lives, such access exactly, is the one that the guests 'enjoy', and upon which Airbnb relies its base marketing strategy, on homes that are located where 'real' homes are located, and where 'real' locals live. As already discussed in the 6th chapter *('If on a winter's night a traveler'),* it seems that, the 'Airbnb spirit', as taken by guests, is normally less appreciating of the possible cultural history and preferences of a home, but instead, expects a certain level of minimal sociality.

And indeed, the findings in this theme complete the ones in the 6th chapter, as showing that normally, guests are far from enjoying the 'real' living as a local experience, even when penetrating the very core of the living and dwelling of the locals. After all, dwelling of home is often, well, not fun. It is neither exotic nor relaxing to pay bills, and it is a struggle to return from a physically and emotionally tiring day at work, fighting with the kids to eat, shower and go to sleep, or handling an uncomfortable situation in and outside the family.

Therefore, it is possible to say, that tourists who experience the living-the-local experience through the Airbnb service, somehow, tend to notice, and suffer from the negative aspects of that phenomenon, which is the very natural result of the non-professional sector. While in this aspect,

the case studies are quite similar, it is still possible to find some exceptions and different patterns of the living like-a-local experiences.

- ▪ **Milan**

In all cases studies it is possible to imagine very different lifestyles and life situations, in which the guests experience, As soon as they step in, a story and a chronological sequence, which is expressed in quite a difficult image. Perhaps, an unnatural image, which implies on difficult or uncomfortable dwelling at home, which has already been displayed in many of the mini-cases collected for the sake of these findings. It is even possible to claim, that the randomness, in which mini-cases were selected, and the high rate of such imperfect and deprived domestic practicing, tells much on the urban situation in all cities, and the compromises which people take in order to enjoy the consumption of the city, and the job opportunities, within their own home.

In Milan, however, and unlike interactions with other SAH from other cities, guests do not only 'enjoy' problems like noises, dysfunctional families or dysfunctional utilities, but also a more honest image of the host and the situations that the host experiences, that could deter guests or challenge them into a new kind of experience, a deeper one.

One small example of that Milanese openness is of the one of Niccolo (M18), a man in his late 50s, a plastic surgeon, who, as part of his conflict with his wife, struggles to see and enjoy the company of his children, for whom he had prepared a room, which is also the Airbnb room where I slept, while also struggling financially. Niccolo, therefore, sleeps on a combined bunk bad in the living room, in a very small apartment in one of the richest areas of Milan. Alas, it is not only the bold vision of Niccolo's sleeping arrangement, who challenges the guest's 'living-like-a-local' experience, but it is in the very nature of Niccolo, who himself, admits to a very troubled mind, that almost reaches an obsession about the situation he is in, and the helplessness that he suffers when handling such a situation.

Another fine example is of Serena (M14), a woman in her mid-40s, who lives a very old and magical building on one of the extension of the Navigli river. Serena, divorced as well, lives with her son, who has a very small niche in one of the corners of the living room, separated by curtain, and with a very old cat, that hardly moves. Serena herself, sleeps on the sofa, while the guests can enjoy a spacious bedroom, which is covered with ancient artistic masterpieces.

Therefore, in both examples, the city and the house itself, carry a bold and very felt contrast, between the struggle which lies in the very essence of the urban living, and the image of the 'vacation' as it is sold to, and perceived by the guests. A scenery, which is visible and presented in many of the mini-cases of Milan.

- **Lisbon**

If, SAH in the case study of Milan are fond to allow guests into their emotional and intimate state, out in the open, SAH in Lisbon are much less fond of doing so. Alas, it seems, that in Lisbon's issues of utilities are much more evident, as guests are accustomed to stumble upon a situations of no hot water, a broken lock, or electricity problems. In such cases, guests typically respond to the 'living-like-a-local' experiences (as a normal home is a home in which things do get broken and problems should be fixed), according to the fashion in which the host responds to them, in two typical mechanisms.

The first, if the host is honest about the situation, it can emerge into an 'authentic' 'living-like-a-local experience, as in the mini-case of Farah (L17, paragraph 7.2), who had asked me to change the light bulb in my room. Such an incident has only made us closer, and I got an authentic, yet 'light' moment of the problems of the locals.

Alas, and the second pattern, and the more common one, is of SAH who are dishonest, or not attentive to the effect of those problems on the guests, as after all, those same problems that affect the guests are known to the host, who usually also knows how to avoid or solve them. Such is the interesting mini-case and example of Martim (L18), a man in his early 40s, who holds very precise and clear opinions about his city, and as it is very noticeable, he is tackled by his own contribution to the nature of the city, as he himself is part of the industry that 'touristifies' his beloved Lisbon. Therefore, Martim harshly distinguishes the people in the city who are doing 'good Airbnb', like him, by hosting in their home, from those who are doing 'bad Airbnb', referring to the Airbnb lords, who essentially evict locals from their homes in order to build generic and Ikea-style rentals and consumption, which erases any cultural indication and identification. Martim, who presents a very derelict home, with two enormous and noisy dogs, and as many guests have complained, smelly and disturbing.

I, myself, have enjoyed my time at Martim's home, as in the beginning it felt like a nice welcoming, as he was one of the hosts who has offered me a cold beer when arriving breathless after carrying my luggage under the hot sun. Alas, during my time there, I have experienced some issues when using the shower, a dysfunctional internet connection, and two power outages. I was hardly the only one who has experienced such moments, but it is possible to comprehend Martim's own reactions to such disturbances through his response to reviews.

One of Martim's (L18) reviews, and his comment

Primitive, suited for very young people or older hippies. The photo of the room is very far from reality. The bed is a mattress on a pallet. Bathroom is tiny and dark, but there is a shower. The three dogs are quiet, at least when they are in their tiny room. The host seems to have the key to how life should be lived politically correct. I cannot recommend this place to anyone I know, although it is very cheap and also central.

Eve thanks for the critic, it's a bit narrow specially for someone who actually wasn't staying, just to rectify - The bathroom has two windows that could be opened, (normally they are) and it's the opposite of dark, it's very luminous. The photos are exactly the room, maybe it's not clear how the bed is standing - I will take a specific photo of the bed. The dogs are quiet period, when they are around or when they are in the room to not bother when a guest arrive. I hope you enjoyed your Porto...All the best and thanks.

In other occasions, the living experience, as it is in Lisbon, changes, for the host, and creates severe difficulties to conduct a proper home dwelling, on the one hand, or 'reasonable' accommodation on the other. A situation that occurs, as both parties create a conflict that derives from each their practicing and consuming in the domestic space. The host, who is a local, and the guest, who is trying to 'live-like-a-local'. Such is the mini-case of Iris (L23), a woman in her 50s, who lives with her husband, her son, his wife, and their newborn child. Into that mix, it is possible to also add a new young puppy. The house, which is located ten minutes-walk from the beautiful Belem, is arranged as of two parts, connected by a long corridor. In one part, the entire family sleeps, while the Airbnb room is in the other part, which is in the center of a U shaped construction, starting from a kitchen, a sun terrace, and at the end, is the only bathroom in the house.
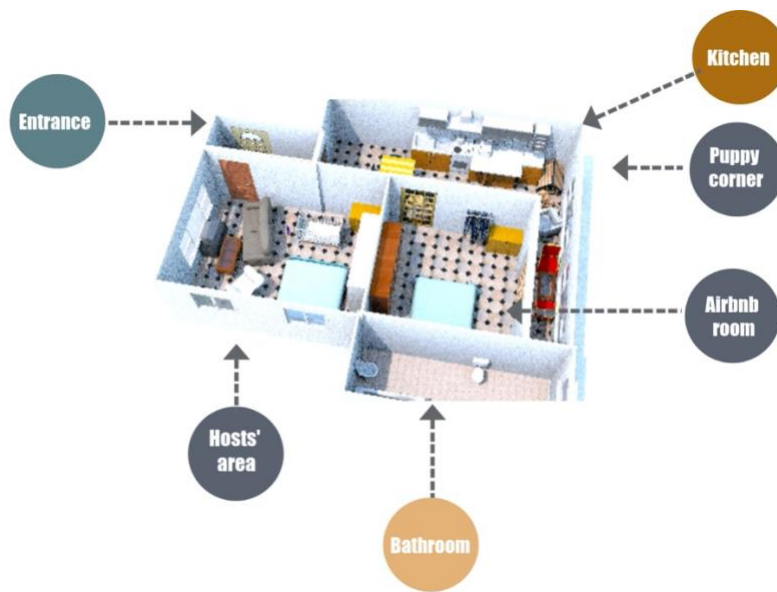
As we can understand from the illustration, Iris's home forces an impossible living situation both for the family and for the guests. As the guests sleep in a room without windows, but with two doors that prevents any sense of privacy, as the entire services of the apartment are surrounding the Airbnb room. The guests suffer from a dysfunctional internet connection, and even from a crying puppy who is always locked in his small space in the corner of kitchen. Because of the two entrances to the Airbnb room, the noises from both the kitchen and the balcony, are all directed to the room, although the guests cannot even use the kitchen.

Such 'living-like-a-local' experiences, are of the very nature of living, which the guests, and in many occasions, the hosts as well, cannot stand, and in many senses, reduce the sense of a vacation to a minimum.

- ▪ **Jerusalem**

At last, Jerusalem is as well, a domestic space that can bring a negative ordinary domestic sense which guests do not usually find in hotels and in spaces that do not let them feel as they are 'like a local'. Alas, while the cases of Milan, are aimed on exposure and emotional images, and in Lisbon, they are aimed on hiding or denying the nature of such experiences, In Jerusalem, that balance between the hotel experience to and domestic is hardly negotiated, And so, a faulty version of accommodation, among SAH, is expressed by denying the hotel experience as a whole, with an

invitation to embrace the Israeli culture, which, at least inside its territory, is known in its creativity, but also in its lack of professionalism. Unprofessionalism which is referred to by the slang word 'Shchuna', which means in Hebrew, neighborhood, but in slang, it refers to the actions of a person or an organization that are performed in an insufficient and spontaneous manner, and in which the temporary is the permanent. And nothing is planned ahead.

One example of that nature, could be displayed in the story of my stay at Rivka's (J29) home, who is a woman in her 50s, that lives with her husband in one of the biggest and most central streets of Jerusalem, in a building that has two entrances. One, on the side of that big road, and the other, at the top of the hill behind the building, deep in an entirely different neighborhood of slopes and hills. Rivka's home is a symbolic yet visual display of a home that has lost all substance, as the parents seem to be dividing their life between two apartments, the one I was staying in, where they sleep, and another, in the same building, where their son lives with his family. Therefore, the two, and even the cat, use home only for functional reasons (to shower, cook meals for them and for the entire family, and sleep) while spending the rest of their time in their son's apartment (and work, naturally). The result is a cold and empty apartment, which seems as if nobody actually lives there. That image of the apartment was clearly, not only as a reflection of the way they dwell at home, but also of the main host, who was surprisingly stiff and two faced.

During my time in Jerusalem, I had the opportunity to stay at four different mini-cases during the weekend (on the night between Friday and Saturday), a crucial time in the dwelling of the domestic space in Jerusalem. Rivka, who I have met on the previous night (between Thursday to Friday), which as can be learned, stands as a crucial time-contexed situation in Jerusalem as well, had seemed very stiff when trying to explain to me, that my booking was 'a mistake', as she does not usually host during the weekend. Alas, because of a favor that a woman who Rivka knows through Airbnb had asked her to do for her parents, who were ill and needed a place to stay in order to attend a ceremony nearby that very morning, Rivka was finally convinced and decided to open the possibility to order for that day. Alas, before that woman managed to make the booking, probably in a matter of seconds, I, who had no idea of the whole story, saw the listing, and ordered it for myself. Rivka, scared of cancelling my booking due to the Airbnb system, did not say anything about it, until I eventually arrived. In the evening, Rivka was anxious to know at what time I was planning to leave, as she did not want me to be present at home when she starts cooking for the

Shabbat dinner. However, although we settled on me leaving at 12 noon, at 11 am, she lost all her patience, and awkwardly asked me to leave immediately, which of course, I did[178].

And in fact, Jerusalem, as no other case study, is a city in which time is an important contextual frame of living in the city, just as much as space is. During the ethnographic weekends I had spent in Jerusalem, one of the couples were not at home during the entire weekend, as they left to spend it with their families (J38), one returned home after a long drive from a Shabbat dinner (J30, paragraph 4.3), one was a guy my age who was enjoying his weekend with his girlfriend and friends (J43), and one was an orthodox family. The mini-case of Yehonatan (J23), was a unique experience, as it was my first time staying at an orthodox family home, during a 'holy weekend'. Yehonatan, an Israeli man from Russia, lives with his wife and five children. As one of the religious customs during the holy Sabbath, I was not allowed to turn on or off any lights (some lights were left on throughout the entire weekend), and the entire evening was accompanied by traditional Jewish songs, that were not only heard all from this family's home, but from many other homes along the entire street.

The Jewish SAH, impose difficulties on their guests, as they define their home as 'vegan', in order to avoid any possibility for non-Kosher food to enter in the domestic space, and thereby, they disrupt the lives of their guests but also of their own. During the weekend, between Friday afternoon and Saturday night, there is no public transportation (by law), and it is very hard to find open grocery stores. Therefore, many hosts warn their guests in advance (and many do not) to be 'prepared' for the weekend, so the guests would not find themselves lost or hungry. And so, they place the guests in an eternal debate in the Israeli society, of the relevancy of the Shabbat rules and regulations, that in many areas in Israel, are less kept (Tel Aviv would be the most prominent example). Therefore, the experience of guests tends to be authentic, yet challenging, as the need of the host to cope and handle those difficulties in their own every-day in the city.

10.4 Discussion – **production can be expensive**

The image of co-creation, as learned in the introduction of this chapter, is of two main and important ideas, which are vivid and relevant for the present and the future design of social order.

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[178] It might be important to add, that although Rivka's actions were indeed rude that morning, I did not manage to go down the stairs out before she followed me to apologize. Therefore, Rivka's story should not be seen as a story of bad manners, but instead, the very typical time-constructed moment, before the Shabbat breaks through, which most Israelis are quite anxious about, and especially families, which was conflicted by the Airbnb service.

First, it is a marketing strategy, with a technological solution and encouragement, with Airbnb placed in the heart of that strategy, offering one of the most possible intimate relationship between the locals and the tourists (Campos et al., 2018; Ji-hai & Qin, 2016). The second, is another development, in which consumers gain more control over the product they are consuming (Füller, MüHlbacher, Matzler & Jawecki, 2009; Payne, Storbacka & Frow, 2008). Guests range from passive actors in the process, into active roles in the frame of the new platforms, and finally, in the making of the product, as consumers, and as part of the production. concerning the unprofessional sectors, in which Airbnb uses, exploits, and maximizes both in practice, strategy, and in the nature of the service, the very features of the co-creation, is successful by drafting hosts and to attracting clients, guests.

Alas, that image of an effective co-creation of production, in which the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, because of the additional value, is a result of the personalization of the service, as demonstrated in this final chapter of the findings, and can indeed be efficient in situations in which the hosts are not at home. If because they do not live in the Airbnb apartment, or because they leave it when guests arrive. In such situations, the guests physically 'replace' the hosts, or the tourist replaces the local, and there is no conflict between the two lifestyles and the two very different moments in both their lives.

In the experience of the SAH, however, they do conflict, and therefore, a real opening for a co-creation production emerges. That opening, as learned, is shaped differently in different urban contexts. In Milan, SAH who are open to that additional value that can emerge, embrace global ideas of sharing and multi-cultural collaborations, which are placed in the margins of the potential cultural contribution of the guests, and the intimacy that the host and guest could develop. Therefore, the urban sphere and the integration of home into the urban sphere, is what is established as a true expressions of co-creation, of social values, which are not monetized.

In Lisbon, however, the development is quite different. Such co-creation experiences are often produced, but as a strategy. Meaning, SAH in Lisbon reproduce the same mechanism of Airbnb towards their guests. However, when co-creation does emerge, its potential is higher, and a personalization of the relationship is more common. In Lisbon, the urban space normally stays out of that equation, as locals and tourists are rare to be seen together.

Finally, in Jerusalem, it is not the global concept of the social or cultural experience which is expressed. Instead, co-creation is an opportunity of cultural display, that the culture itself, and the

ideas behind those cultural events, are the ones the host wishes to express and thereby, to reflect on their own character, and self. Therefore, only in one of the case studies, in Lisbon, guests can enjoy a real opportunity and in a real space, to create their own, instead of choosing just a personalized product, as it is the case in Milan or Jerusalem.

However, while the case studies deeply differ in the fashion in which co-creation is designed, as a product or a social initiative, the experience of the guests living per se, as locals, is quite similar, as in all cities and case studies, guests deal with the ordinary and 'standard' struggles of the unprofessional sector, the hosts, and of an imperfect environment, that combines familial issues, and on-going problems with home utilities. The difference, therefore, lies in the approach and the coping of the SAH themselves, which is scaled from over-sharing, denying, or embracing the chaotic nature of home.

- **Invitation to yell on the neighbors**

The patterns displayed in this part of the findings, conclude a very specific balance in which different SAH from different urban contexts, choose their image of the possible fluster of co-production in the domestic and in the public spheres. Alas, while hosts and guests are creating something new together, the guests are exposed to some of the very problems they encounter in their own home daily. Those problems, as they create another layer, that for many SAH, turns into the center of attention, and daily coping, in which they eventually re-experience the challenging aspects of home dwelling, which also, in many mini-cases, involves shame and a feeling of self-insult, and damage.

A home which is conflicted, is often perceived as a 'sad' home, which reduces the sense of home, as a secure and steady environment. In addition, it raises issues and questions the very definition of home in front of its relevant dichotomy, the hotel. That pondering, is also the one that brings the concept of the hotel, over time, to be deluged into discussion, as SAH understand they need and are expected, to demonstrate, at least partially, an image of home, which is professional and emotionless. Alas, that connection, and the rising level of awareness, leads SAH to start valuing their home as a hotel, and thereby, to value it less.

The story of Ishbel (L30, paragraph 3.3; paragraph 6.2; paragraph 7.4) is a vivid exploration of domestic dwelling that is losing ground in the balance between the image of home and the image

of a hotel, that makes Ishbel question the future of that particular home, which is located in one of the central areas of Lisbon, in a building that suffers from constant noise from constructions operating 24/7 and from a 24/7 McDonalds branch.   *"... For six years there was a hole under the house, and they worked on it 24 hours a day. I even told my doctor that it was a trauma, I didn't sleep well for six years. They were constantly working. I would get up crying. Cause if it is in the public interest, then you can do what you want. At the time, this area wasn't that inhabited, so that is probably one reason. after two years of working on electricity, gas, and after two years, I have now a lot of trees, big sidewalks, grass in the middle of the street, I could enjoy it, but now, I'm stressed again, because work has begun on the building. All the mess that happened outside now happens inside. And outside is another building that is starting renovations. But it also bothers guests, of course, so I had to apologize and that's wrong because it is their vacation, so I gave them lots of free nights, so I lose money and suffer too. So with all that, I plan to sell the house, because I'm pretty much no longer able, and there are also McDonald's that is making noises, because the workers are coming out of the building and it is awful too…".*

Ishbel's (L30) mental idea of her home

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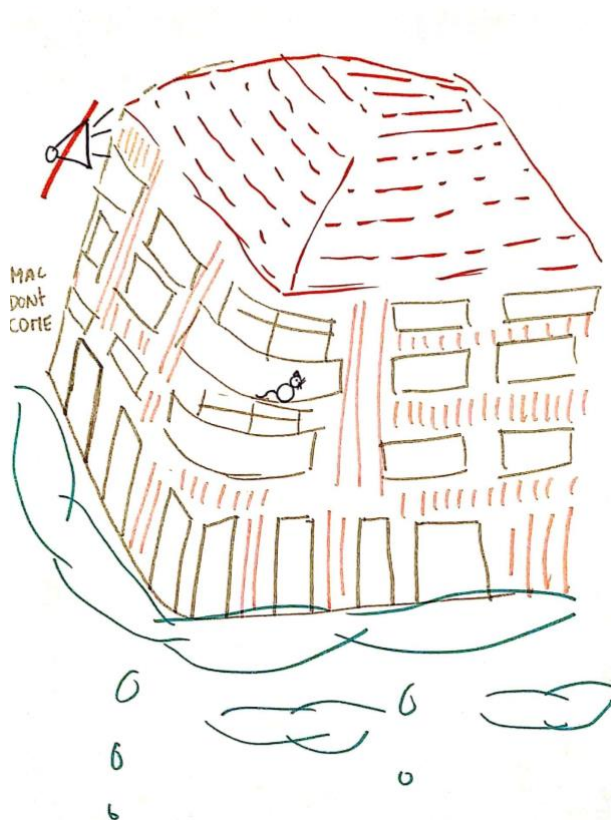
- **An urban vision of co-creation**

The Spanish television series, 'Valeria', is another development of a new and refreshing appearance of the female and feminist point of view, which has spread in the age of Netflix. Valeria is a show that is sociologically covered with infinite presentations of the digitations of our society nowadays. As Valeria herself, sends daily long voice messages to her girl-friends, and entire scenes are displayed with no words, just music, and the on-going instant messaging of the protagonist with her lover. In one of the episodes, one of the characters, Lola, who lives in Madrid, decides not to take a new roommate instead the one who had left, and decided instead, to try Airbnb as a financial improvement. Very quickly, two young Russian women arrive, and convince her to neglect her current bad mood, and to join them on a whole night of partying. Amusingly, the three finally arrive home late, as Lola is exhausted, and just as an angry mother, she sends them to bed. In the following episode, Lola decides to leave Airbnb.

While this small anecdote was a very transparent, and somewhat superficial representation of Airbnb's reputation in the Spanish contexts, as a financial and even popular source of income, but also as a dysfunctional and perhaps, even absurd and critical observation on the shallow penetration of external cultures and values, it was, in addition, an exploration of something else, of the mutual expectation system that the host and the guest participate in. One, that is in a constant negotiation, in which the host is torn between the desire to explore and earn the extra value which Airbnb potentially has to offer, and the one of the guests, who seek to get what they pay for.

Because Airbnb is so well known, in all selected cities and especially in Lisbon, where the emotional debate strongly exists, that negotiation becomes bigger and more crucial, as it is influenced by that debate in the city. This, for sure can explain how it is that in Lisbon, SAH are the least common to engage with their guests in the urban space, and how the lack of debate in Jerusalem results in placing other values and other ambitions in the center of the experience.

Therefore, Airbnb, in most cases, is often seen as a silent actor, as the organization itself hardly participates in those local debates (instead, these are the Airbnb lords who stand in front of such battles), as SAH need not only to cope with guests who are struggling in the local and domestic contexts, but also with the approach of the community itself towards those expressions of co-creation. But while Airbnb is lazy to enter the debate, the findings show the potential of the city and the locals to influence the very practice of the service, and dictate norms and eventually also

rules which would regulate Airbnb in order to increase the potential of the co-creation production, one that would benefit the residents as well.

10.5 Conclusions – **To get a room**

Airbnb is a home-based service, that for the first time, provides the tourists not only to sense the local occurrences in the public space, but also with a deeper penetration into the domestic one. In this last chapter of the findings, it was possible to dive deeper into the relationship between Airbnb and the city. The findings that were represented in this chapter, demonstrate the fashion in which different contexts create different types of co-creation of contributions, and different contextual meanings between the perception of the domestic space as home, or as a hotel.

The aim of the findings illustrated in this chapter, was to display yet another angle, of wider factors in which homes are framed in the urban context, as part of greater processes. In this chapter, I wished to address that call for a reaction by the SAH, that in need to cope both with their community, their city, and the guests themselves, in a state of conflicted home. In a similar manner to the one in which SAH have the opportunity to enjoy a new perspective of their city, they also need to handle domestic issues that are now seen by new eyes, and practiced with 'new locals', who do not have the time or the desire to habituate themselves towards a new domestic situation, as they arrive for a vacation.

Culturally, and surprisingly, the co-creation that the Airbnb service eventually enables, is quite narrow, and finally reflects, even in the domestic space, on the trends of the global economy, in which most cultural connections are monetized (in Lisbon), framed and limited (in Milan), or walled, and allow no development of something new, something that is multi-cultural (in Jerusalem). In that sense, the co-creation under the umbrella of Airbnb, is deeply connected to the urban context, and eventually, reflects it.

Under these understandings, the domestic space, as viewed in this chapter of the findings, holds another terminology, of which the urban penetrates the domestic, and affects it, to the point of the blurring borders between the two. Borders that in their absence, lead to a dual process of a changing city, but more importantly, changing home.

"…In an airplane between earth and sky

Reading a newspaper, time passes by

now,

And flight attendants walk by

And ask in two voices,

What do I feel like - juice or wine?

I sit between clouds and water

And for a while close my eyes

And describe and reconstructs

And try to remember

People at home.

No, I cannot anymore, I'm going crazy,

Suddenly I miss so much,

A loudspeaker announces - soon we will

arrive…"[179]

[179] One of the most known songs in the Israeli folklore is 'I am coming back home', performed by Doron Mazar. As the title implies, the song expresses the longing of a man who is on his way back home. That song is often played to young adults as they begin the process of their conscription into to the army, or when use the local airlines as the wheels of the plane touch the ground in the airport in Israel, while everyone dramatically and enthusiastically clap their hands. What most people do not know is that this song from 1984 is an adaptation of an Italian song named "l'Italiano", by Toto Cutugno, that was out just one year before. The original song, as the title suggests, speaks about a collective Italian identity which is bound in space and time. While the melody of both songs is identical, one can be mistaken thinking that the two songs could not take a more different direction. Instead, even if Shimrit Or, who wrote the Hebrew version (1984), did not notice what she has done, Mazar and Cutugno were talking about two very similar concepts.

11. *'A Panoramic Window', (or),*

Discussion on the Findings

11.1 Diving into the results
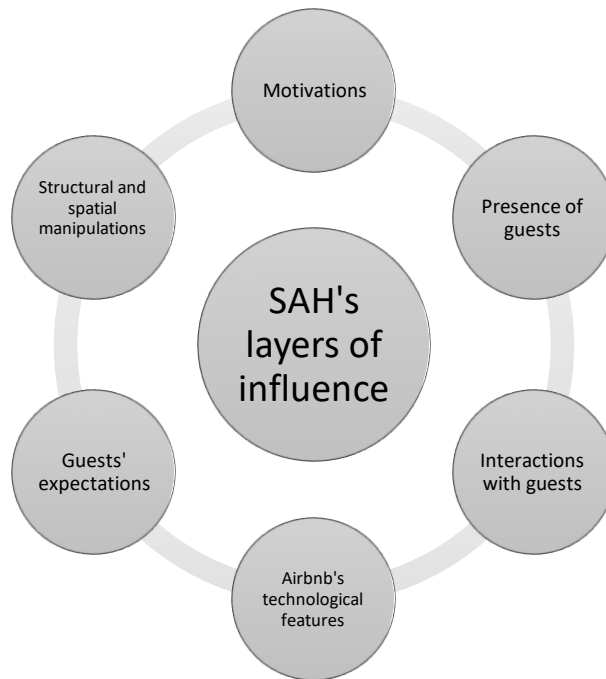
The findings that were displayed and demonstrated throughout the last eleven chapters of findings, as explained, have been divided into three main parts. The first, represents the ASEP. A chronological progression guide that showed efficacy as a functioning index, in which it is possible to understand the process, and progress, which classic or typical Airbnb SAH go through, from their first interest in the service, to the very thought of leaving it. Following the ASEP is useful to understand the fashion in which hosts enter the field with baby steps, and a low rhythm of guests. A pattern that changes in the second part, which is identified in a rapid and steady growth of guests, which in turn, leads to increasing disturbances in the lives and home dwelling of the SAH. Such disturbances are normally hardly noticed by the SAH, while they create small and tacit changes in SAH's routine. The awakening of the SAH, to those disturbances, is what finally develops the turning point. A short period, in which SAH are facing a dilemma, which can only be solved by a compromise. In the moment of compromise, the SAH enter the 4th stage, when they are already smarter, more knowledgeable, and normally, with a new set, or balance, between the different motivations that brought them to joint Airbnb in the first place. That awareness, and the

compromises taken, over time, lead to new disturbances, that can cause a new cycle with a new turning point, or the first intention and thought, of leaving the service.

In the second part of the findings' chapters, the central part, I represented six chapters as each one of them is focused on a different aspect of a system, that directs the host into a specific nature of using the service and investing their time and emotional, as well as mental sources, towards the guests and their needs. In short, it is possible to conclude those six parts in the following manner:

- Airbnb's SAH hold a variety of reasons to start hosting in the beginning of their work with Airbnb, in which the economical aspect is central but not exclusive, along with social reasons, cultural reasons, familial reasons, and even spatial motivations. Over time, these motivations are shallowed, and hosts create a dependency on the economic contribution of Airbnb.

- Airbnb's SAH experience severe yet tacit changes in their home and in their domestic routine, caused by the very presence, or imagined presence of the guests. Those are stimulated by sensual, emotional and spatial factors and aspects, that create patterns of minor home modifications and a functional decrease of the house, and an emotional movement from comfort and safety, to fear, that turns into feelings of shame and embarrassment. Over time, these stimulations influence the host's behavior and approach towards the service, until they reach the turning point.

- Airbnb's SAH practice ritualistic and non-ritualistic kinds of interactions with their guests, that represents that 'ideological' approach of the host, scaled in the HGRS, which ranges from a service provider-client type of approach and interaction, to a local-tourist approach, Airbnb community members, and finally, acquaintances and friends types of interactions. Evidence shows an interest and actions of Airbnb towards the service provider-client type of interaction, and relationship.

- Airbnb's SAH are part of a technological and sophisticated service, that uses its knowledge and collected information, to influence SAH's autonomy in determining their rates for hosting, their principals of accepting a booking or cancelling one, and the ability to collect social capital. Airbnb uses its imagined community, which is a crucial factor in the establishing of the 'Airbnb spirit', although actually and virtually it does not really exist, in order to implement a punishment system, that deters hosts and eventually educates them to be in a status of 'employees'.

- Airbnb's SAH deal with active consumers, who, like the hosts themselves, range in their expectations between the search for social and cultural experience, to a worthy, yet cheap accommodation solution, in which the first expect a minimal and shallow level of sociality, while the others judge an experience by hotel standards.

- Airbnb's SAH face structural and significant changes of home, as an expression of the turning point, when such spatial changes are needed to create a compromise between their domestic needs and their Airbnb aspirations (or necessity). Those changes often cause a dysfunctional order for the host, and for their family, and to unsolvable dilemmas that severely damage the image of home. A damage that eventually leads to the first thoughts of leaving Airbnb, by looking for other possibilities.

Finally, the third part of the findings' chapters, was focused on three separate and general issues, which reach some interesting conclusions.

- The meaning of home is a concept which is based on comfort, familiarity, and the presence of objects, or things, with whom the SAH develop a relationship. Such objects are due to be exposed and to lose their meaning, in the on-going presence of guests, who reduce the sense of home. In addition, home is space and time contexed, in which guests have, and in practice lead SAH to search for a home in other spaces and in other times, as home itself turns into a prison, where they do not feel safe or free, anymore.

- Both male and female SAH present similar characteristics in their hosting patterns, while women find it harder to begin their journey due to concerns of safety and hosting strangers. Alas, the movement of agency from the patriarchal structure to the hands of Airbnb, along with a movement that comes with legitimacy, of domestic and familial values, to capitalistic and economic ones, which enable a temporal but significant agency to women, who often use that agency to shape their own image of home.

- Co-creation of production and value is of a high potential in the Airbnb realm, alas, it tends to be limited and narrow, if under the umbrella of a 'true sharing economy' collaboration between hosts and guests, as in Milan, a monetized, but with higher potential of intimacy and deep connection between the parties, as in Lisbon, or in limited, and culture-centered activities that do not allow the actual contribution of the guest, as in Jerusalem. The particular and invasive nature of the 'living-like-a-local' version of Airbnb, creates conflicts between the host and the guests, who suffer from the typical and natural struggles of home

dwelling, if of familial issues or of utility problems, that can ruin the experience for the guests, and make the natural struggles of home dwelling more significant for the host.

The accumulation of different separated phenomena, along with the pressure on the SAH, that arrives from different actors and different contexts, is the result of an opportunity that emerges under the umbrella of urban tourism, a development in the ideas of sharing and collaborating economies, that are more plausible than ever, in light of technological evolutions of the infrastructure enterprises and the 'platform economy'. Together, they create an enormous and dramatic change in the practical use, conceptual understanding, and emotional reaction to the new and de- and re-domestication of home.

11.2 Between the case studies

As explained in the methodological part, the research was held first and foremost, as it is visible in this findings' chapters, on the basis of the 145 mini-cases. Understanding their stories, and finding patterns in different aspects of their stories, allowed a deduction into a wider image of repeated patterns within the city, by confronting them with studied and learned urban processes (which were displayed in the chapter of *'a tale of three cities'*). While the next parts of this chapter of the findings would focus on wider resolutions, referring to the general idea of Airbnb as a service with similar and different features,, and the general potential of technologies as Airbnb to continue and become a greater influencer on the social order and the economic system, in this text, I wish to focus on the urban context.

The comparison between the cities along the findings' chapters, should be taken with a limited liability, even if the revealed patterns hold empiric and scientific requirements, because they were not the focus of attention in this study, and, also because, the main focus of this line of work, has been to discover a mechanism of behavior, an 'approach' to their behavior, the nature of change, and the implications of those changes in the domestic realm. Therefore, the use of the mini-cases were of collecting sufficient data which would allow the creating of 'proto-types', and setting the rules of those proto-types, so it would be possible to examine other cities and also other applications (in higher resolutions) in the same fashion. Therefore, and although quantitative comparative data was obtained and calculated throughout the findings' chapters, in this chapter, these types of data would not be displayed, as it would be possible to focus on the subjectivity of behavior and patterns, and on the gap between those patters, instead of on the quantitative

statistical strength of 145 cases. While the differences that do exist were put in the background of the findings, here it would be the opportunity for a deeper exploration.

In the beginning of the field work, although no official hypothesis was yet developed, the assumption was that Lisbon, as the only 'declared' and known touristic city among the three, would present the most 'commercialized' version of Airbnb. In fact, when I arrived to Lisbon, for the six-months period of collecting data, I was warned, and therefore prepared myself for the possibility, that my numbers are not realistic (to collect 50 mini-case studies), as there are simply not enough SAH in the city to collect data from. Alas, the reality was far from being as such, as even if I did have difficulties collecting, at first, my interviewees for the mini-cases, the 'amount' of SAH in the city tells of a vital, flourishing, creative and diverse group of SAH, at least, if not more, as there were in the other two case studies.

Viewing the case of Lisbon, indeed tells a story of a monetized service, that exploits the nature of the Airbnb service, and its deep connection to urban tourism, to make profit or to exploit other benefits which the flood of tourists entering Lisbon could bring. Benefits such as social and cultural experience, and even a higher frequency of SAH that in Lisbon, more than in any other case study, were looking to use the service to 'open' their children to the world. Analyzing the HGRS of Lisbon, tells a story in which Lisbon has a greater tendency of SAH who perceive and interact with their guests as clients and tourists, than in the other case studies. Furthermore, co-creation of additional value, is much more monetized in Lisbon, and interactions, therefore, are slimmer. Alas, the SAH in Lisbon have also demonstrated a higher tendency to create value in the shape of a relationship, by making friends, as the imagined community of Airbnb hosts in Lisbon, is the most vivid one among the three.

These findings, placed together, reveal a complicated urban fabric, that more than anything, reveals the intense processes which the city and its locals are going through (Barata-Salgueiro et al., 2017; Rodrigues, Machado & Freire, 2011). Processes that have turned Airbnb into a necessity among many SAH, but have also created a conflicted and an internal struggle of SAH to place themselves in of the process, and their own contribution to its negative effects. In Lisbon, there is a consensus on the centrality of tourism in general, and Airbnb specifically, as key factors in the courses of gentrification around the proudest areas of the city (Gravari-Barbas & Guinand, 2017; Cocola-Gant, 2018; Guimarães, 2018). Therefore, Airbnb in the domestic realm, in Lisbon, is a reflection of that struggle. Of a community that wishes to be part of the global flourishing of the cultural co-

creation, and of global trends of leisure, but instead, falls into the economic burden, in the nature of the Airbnb service, that support the neglection of the domestic settlement. A process that intensifies the inner conflict of the SAH and their perception of the service, and of the guest.

In Milan, however, the contradictions that define the city of Lisbon, were virtually absent, and instead, there is a display of a recent, but significant embrace of the 'sharing economy', as previous research indeed tells, of the collaboration and the connection of Airbnb with the creative sector (d'Ovidio, 2016; d'Ovidio & Cossu, 2017; d'Ovidio & Ponzini, 2014). The difference between the two the cities, therefore, should be seen as a result of the different balance which Milan displays, of the image of the SAH and the guests themselves. First, SAH in Milan do not, in any sense, experience contradictions in their decision to use Airbnb as hosts, as the practice of the Airbnb service is not considered a negative force in the public sphere. On the contrary, SAH in Milan feel that they are part of the new revival of the city which contributes to the growing number of creative initiatives, that integrate and empower the traditional creative institutes of Milan, the main events in the city of the design, art, films, and fashion exhibitions and festivals, that are internationally known around the world (Forno & Garibaldi, 2015; Giachino, Re & Cantino, 2017)[180]. Moreover, this atmosphere has encouraged SAH to develop their own initiatives, that indeed focus on enriching the city and the happenings in the city, and thereby, they 'feel' even more connected to the city.

Secondly, the fabric of the Airbnb tourists in Milan, is significantly different than the one in Lisbon. In Lisbon, the rate of reported guests who were of the typical tourists, was extremely higher than in the other case studies. Tourists who are much less aware or interested in the ideas of the social situation and the 'sharing economy', and search much more for affordable accommodation solutions, in which the 'living-like-a-local' is perceived in its idealized sense Campos et al., 2018; Chathoth et al., 2013; Ji-hai & Qin, 2016). Or in other words, guests who are much less prepared to undergo the full experience of the locals, that in Lisbon is indeed normally higher. In Milan, however, the 'feel-like-a-local' experience is softer, neater, but more importantly, not the main goal for most of the guests who arrive to the city, for its opportunities of networking

[180] Naturally, this observation is correct for the days prior to the global pandemic that stroke in Lombardy the most, the region where Milan is located and centered. Although Milan, at the time of writing, was surprisingly affected in a minor way considering its size and centrality, those initiatives and fundamental events, were, obviously, completely shut down, until further notice.

and socializing inside of the creative sector, or for the many other possibilities that the city offers, from studying, to hi-tech positions, and financial enterprises.

The connection between collaborative hosts and a low rate of typical tourists, can and should be seen as the main explanation of the generally slower pace of exhaustion from the Airbnb experience itself, and of the central levels in the HGRS, under the title of the Airbnb members and community. However, in Milan, as in the other case studies, the community of Airbnb has no real role or even a visibility in the lives of the SAH Roelofsen, & Minca, 2018; Andreotti et al., 2017). Therefore, speaking of the SAH in Milan in their relation to the community, reveals that it is not the Airbnb community which they relate to. Instead, it is the Milanese community, a community of creation and social initiatives, that supports SAH in their decision making towards the Airbnb service and the nature of the fashion in which they design their own service.

At last, Jerusalem was seen from the beginning of field work, and was chosen because of that view, as a conflicted community, in which the emotional and social weight that is trapped, overcomes financial and global trends (Feldman, 2016; Leppakari & Griffin, 2016; Griffin & Raj, 2017). The exploration of the city of Jerusalem, has met this expectation in many senses, particularly, because of the inevitable comparison of Jerusalem to the city of Tel-Aviv, which is under the public debate, almost weekly, of the influence of Airbnb on the already problematic housing situation (Haramati & Hananel, 2016; Ram & Hall, 2018; Ram, Isaac, Shamir & Burns, 2016). In Jerusalem, such business initiatives, which are well spread along the coastal shore, exist as well, but their visibility and perceived influence, is much smaller[181]. Instead, Airbnb is perceived as a minor phenomenon, which does not severely change the social and spiritual fabric of the city. That fabric, of religious tourism in the city, is present in the Airbnb service, but is minor as well. Instead, what is visible, at least in the west and Jewish part of the city, is of rapid and on-going conflict between the young, political, spiritual and belligerent community in Jerusalem, and the religious and political atmosphere of the city, which displays a heavy yet fascinating image of a 'fight for the city'. This urban struggle ends in the borders of home, as homes become a visual presentation of freedom and gender, political and even religious expressions of the liberated self.

[181] The housing situation in Jerusalem (as in virtually every central city in Israel), is not less problematic, but less debated in Israel, as it is mainly caused as a result of the many 'ghost houses' in the city. Houses that have been purchased by wealthy private Jewish people, who do not live in Israel, but their financial situation allows them to buy houses in Israel while rarely visiting them, if at all, leaving them deserted for the most part of the year.

In this sense of home, Airbnb is far from challenging those expressions. Instead, the SAH in Jerusalem suffer from the same and patterned implications which the Airbnb service imposes on the domestic space. Implications that eventually prevent the development of rich presentations and opportunities for multi-cultural co-creation of value (Füller, MüHlbacher, Matzler & Jawecki, 2009; Payne, Storbacka & Frow, 2008). Home in Jerusalem, therefore, in the frame of Airbnb, is a 'protected' place, in the spiritual, religious and cultural sense, that denies the expressions of global trends, in a similar fashion in which it prevents urban penetration into home. A practice that triggers higher rates of exhaustion among SAH, and even strongly prevents the possibility for domestic relationships and interactions in the frame of the HGRS, in a rate that is even lower than the other selected case studies.

11.3 The domestic honeytrap

Airbnb's enterprise, over the years of its success in the last decade, has been widely connected, as it still is, to urban and global trends in the fields of urban tourism (Guttentag, 2015; Ikkala & Lampinen, 2015; Jefferson-jones, 2014), the 'sharing economy' (Srnicek, 2017; Dijck et al., 2018; Constantinides, Henfridsson & Parker, 2018), and the technological platform-based developments that foreshadow a change in the entire mechanism of social order, and its integration in the very core preferences of the economic system (Paulauskaite et al., 2017; Lampinen & Cheshire, 2016; Lalicic & Weismayer, 2017). That is also the reason, that in this research, I chose to focus on those three pillars, to manage and to capture the full capacity of Airbnb influence over spaces in the urban realm, and thereby, to understand and create conclusions on the nature of current and future such platforms and enterprises to continue and to create significant implications over the every-day of urban and domestic dwelling all over the world.

Because those three pillars discuss the shape of macro processes in the urban sphere, it was expected that those processes would be tacit in the domestic and micro angle of this research. Surprisingly, according to the collected findings, it is actually quite the opposite. SAH were found to be aware, active, and responsive to the image of all three pillars, by placing the ideas behind the pillars, in a balance and under a frame of ideology. This fact alone, discloses a very important meaning, of the place and the balance between producers and consumers, and mostly, of the emerge of a new force, of the unprofessional civilian, as a producer.

The economic capitalistic system has done a great deal of creating a constructed equation in which, historically, the producers were the subject and the consumers were the object, which is fed by messages, 'correct values', and education of consumption (Chambel, 2015; Ma, Lan, Thornton, Mangalagiu & Zhu, 2018; Almirall, Wareham, Ratti, Conesa, Bria, Gaviria & Edmondson, 2016). That equation, has been redesigned and reshaped by the increasing activism of consumers, who wished to use their power as consumers, and consumers in big numbers, to gain agency in the image of those values and norms, expressed by the 'freedom of choice'. A rational and fundamental determination in which consumers could choose different products and services, and therefore, choose between values that do not serve their interest. Technology was a key actor and factor in the ability of consumers to have more choice, and finally, have the tools to resist and gain social capital, in order to influence the transition of values through consumption Virilio (1995; Anderson, 2007).

In that frame, Airbnb could seem as a system in which the consumers can enjoy a change to change their social role, and become producers, subjects. Alas, the accumulation of data, stories and experiences, tells a different story, of agency that is being taken, in the last place in which agency was of the consumer, home. Instead, Airbnb was found to be efficient in using the economic terminology with a social orientation, of creating a 'honeytrap', in which hosts are being invited to become producers, as they eventually enter a mode of different consumption. Or in other words, the Airbnb system could be seen as a production of producers, who are being deprived of their ability to control what they produce, or the ability to determine who would be their consumers, as subjects who can initiate agency of their objects. This important claim, is the result of the connection of the three pillars to one intersection, which is expressed in the domestic space, and eventually changes it by creating social legitimacy, supporting certain types of social behavior, and using technological innovation.

Under the umbrella of urban tourism, urban processes have emerged, process that enabled the participation of the locals in the market, instead of being passive observers of the market taking over the city and affecting it. As learned, Airbnb, for many, could be perceived as one specific segment of the tourism sector, of an expression of the penetration of the middle-class, that is focused on hosts and guests of the segment (Lim & Bouchon, 2017; Paulauskaite, Powell, Coca-Stefaniak & Morrison, 2017). The association of the middle-class to Airbnb, indeed represents the

majority of the Airbnb population, if of hosts or guests. In reality, Airbnb's community is crowded with people from most of the socio-economic diversity.

That is also the reason that Airbnb must not be overlooked as just another organization that found a segment and an idea that many are convinced of. Instead, Airbnb only started as a 'nice' idea, but then managed to locate that idea in a specific market, of the urban tourism, while empowering that idea as a central and legitimate behavior in the urban society, among the rich and the poor, and among the seekers of an economic solution (hosts and guests altogether), and the ones who search for a new social and cultural experience. This process of legitimacy is the main development that Airbnb is in charge of, and its main contribution to the urban happening, and to the acceleration of urban processes, in the social and economic realms.

That being said, it is the right context to emphasize that Airbnb could not lead such a socio-economic development, without a new developed, or at least, seemingly new ideas of the very nature of economic-based interactions, in the image of the 'sharing economy'. It was Belk (2014), who knew to describe Airbnb as a pseudo-sharing economy service, while focusing on the duality of such organizations, that offer a service or product with social ambitions and intention, while benefit in the very capitalized system. The sharing experience of Airbnb, as learned, is based on two very important features. The very nature of the service, which leans on face-to-face and multi-cultural experiences, and on the creation of a community (Roelofsen, & Minca, 2018). Both, serve as the very fundamentals of Airbnb's abilities to attract producers and consumers, while in practice, they are both directed to ensure producers and consumers inside the boundaries of the urban and touristic market.

The community of Airbnb is a fascinating example of that duality. As on one hand, the community is the facilitator of the 'Airbnb spirit', a vague and minimal display of social and domestic values, while on the other, the community does not hold any role in the actual practice of Airbnb, and denies any possibility of individualistic expressions, or the gaining of social capital. This balance, between an image of a community and a community that does not function as one, or a community whose tools to empower itself are drained of agency and influence over the design of the service, is the principal key that allows Airbnb to work as a social service, that can strive for capital power in the tourism market.

Finally, it is possible at this point, to determine, that Airbnb is able to create such substantive decisions and policy making, towards the agency of its community, and of the individuals, guests,

but first and foremost, its hosts, by using technological features with significant, and well-constructed, and even accepted punishment system, along with tacit and subtle inception of social behavior, norms of ritualistic and non-ritualistic interactions, and chronological increase in the financial dependency of its hosts. As learned, the technological features of Airbnb are far from being new or innovative (Castells, 1996; 1997; 2004; Kitchin & Dodge, 2011; Rose, 1999). Airbnb shows clear and rapid signs of use of its knowledge to create such norms, and to calibrate the social behavior of its guests and hosts, while offering an infrastructure to be friendly and accessible to the average user.

Alas, Airbnb excels and stands out, not because of its ability to encourage different kinds of social behavior, but because they represent a new and unprecedented penetration into the domestic space. Over the history of home consumption, and especially since the urban age, technology has been playing as a crucial actor in home dwelling, which has changed basic routines in the use of the domestic realm (Clarke, 2001; Madanipour, 2003; Tosi & Archer, 1980)..In the latest decades, technology was in front of fundamental trends in which home obtains more and more tools of communicating with the urban and global environments, to the point in which those environments develop into a space of their own, the virtual space, or the cyberspace, a space that over the last decades, or years, has become a place whose influence over the every-day of western societies, western economies, and urban dwelling, has just grown, reaching a reality in which virtual space replaced the physical one, in an infinite variety of issues and parts of the life of the user, or the consumer (Dijst, 2004; Schwanen, Dijst & Kwan, 2006; 2008; Carrasco, Hogan, Wellman & Miller, 2008)

Therefore, and in this frame, Airbnb, as found in this work, seems to be pushing the limits and potential of technological features to create substantive developments, not only in the already modified space of the urban and global market, but by attaining a foothold in the most domestic space, and more importantly, in the image and practice of the most intimate types of interactions. These macro observations, place Airbnb not only as a vital intersection of the three, perhaps, most crucial developments inside the urban sphere, but also as an indicator, of how those developments are due to continue their growing influence of the urban reality.

11.4 An emotional story

While the importance and the contribution of the this research to the studies of the urban, was displayed and concluded in the previous section, the story of Airbnb, was, first and foremost, in this line of work, the stories of the 145 participants from Lisbon, Milan, and Jerusalem. Stories that shed light and give unprecedented access to the domestic reality in those cities, and to the western and urban condition of current times. Sociologically, in this research, I wished to bring back the emotional research into the social and sociological work, by presenting an effective frame of interpretation to social behavior, and to social behavior which is practiced at home. The domestic space, it was argued and established, holds a unique set of norms, social behavior, and an emotional state, which were historically, and especially during the urban revolution, designed to provide what can be named as the 'domestic needs', and which were deprived and contradict the needs of the public and urban space, under the economic system (Hecht, 2001; King, 2013; Somerville, 1992; Clapham, 2005).

In the last decades, several and crucial modifications in the domestic realm could be indicated, in the present of technological, social, and economic trends. Alas, even if such trends have threatened and shaken the spatial, social and emotional borders between the public and the private, the inability of the urban space to change, under the capitalistic regime, has left home as an 'isolated' space that contains features which are necessary for the human condition and for the development of social identity (Miller, 1992; Perkins et al., 1998; Duyvendak, 2011); Moore, 2000). Airbnb, in this frame, must have been, in principal, a challenge to this spatial order.

Therefore, this research, has handled, throughout the findings' chapters, the subjective and abstract concepts of the 'meaning of home', and 'feeling at home'. And indeed, in the micro observation, home has been going through a multi-layered process, in which the SAH and their homes, are modified, conflicted, and often deprived of the very fundamental domestic needs, that are left unattended, or searched in other spatial situations. Interestingly enough, such a deprivation has been identified and practiced with unconscious processes, whose increased influence lead to a point of awareness, as SAH struggle to find small and eventually critical solutions, in the effort to merge between the new emotional state of the domestic space, or by creating an internal, yet insufficient separation and division between their Airbnb service and their home.

By observing and analyzing different chronological points and stages in the course of SAH in their work with Airbnb, it was possible to identify and understand the nuances of the natural gap

between the perception of the idealized home, and what home can actually provide, under the elusive title of 'meaning of home' (Tuan, 1977; 1979; Cieraad, 2012; Pink, 2004). Interestingly enough, the Airbnb service is placed in the very stitches between the idealized and practiced, which eventually determine the fashion in which SAH can, and are willing to cope with in the image of home which is changing, and to react upon that image. Therefore, the interpretation of SAH's reactions, leads to two main outcomes. First, it reveals the hierarchy of different domestic values and the fashion in which SAH are being triggered and habituated to protect or to renounce. Secondly, it reveals the implications which Airbnb imposes on the domestic space and of home dwelling.

That being said, and in light of these findings, it is possible to claim, that Airbnb does not, in any sense, endanger the idealized perception of home. If it did, as the collected evidence and stories show, the exhaustion rates would be lower, and the ASEP, as well as its turning and crucial point, would not be established. Alas, the reality of domestic needs provided by home, and their vulnerability against the backdrop of the Airbnb service, demonstrates a patterned but yet personal integration of Airbnb, into the lives of the SAH, which is mostly determined by the SAH's approach, financial needs, and their tendency to cope with the different actors and aspects of the service itself, from Airbnb as an actor with self-interests, to the presence and interactions with the guests.

As a conclusion to the above claims, Airbnb is eventually a trigger of a variety of domestic phenomena, which are known from different contexts, if of the 'working from home' phenomenon, familial instability, and other domestic and emotional situations, that literature has already acknowledged, such as the sense of prison, of fear, or of toxic and unsafe domesticity.

Such phenomena are extremely connected to gender issues, and to the place of the woman at home. And indeed, in Airbnb's initial stages, and in general, women are more likely to be threatened, or even be violated of their domestic confidence, or their sexual and physical comfort. Alas, and over time, women have shown a greater stamina in the Airbnb service, and mainly, in the ability to gain significant, even if temporal, agency, and thereby design a 'new home', in the perception and the practice of gender and social roles (Lindsey, 2015; Martin, 1990; Beal, 1994). Such patterns which were found, raise some exclamation marks, on the unexpected and unthought of possibilities in which technology can be harvested, for the very fundamental assumptions and perception of gender and gender equality. Possibilities that could turns the tables on the very capitalistic

mechanism that is shaped in the first place in the spatial and social order of the genders (Butler (2001; Welter, 1966; Matthews, 1989; Johnson, 2000).

The very limited and optimistic difference between genders, is displayed in its most vital and probably important aspect, of the emotional state and the emotional reaction of SAH, that were found extremely similar between the genders, with minor differences and nuances. In this research, the frame and the connection of emotions to social behavior was central, as a methodological and philosophical approach, and because of the undivided link between the concept of home and the nature of home which allows and supports a liberation of emotional expressions (Shields & Shields (2002; Denzin, 1984; Thoits, 1989). The understanding of the place of emotions in the sociological study, was the one that initiated and gave birth to a new perception, in which SAH act and react on the basis of their domestic 'feeling', instead of on their financial ambition, or any other reason that could support them in taking decisions, if in the earlier and more subtle stages, or at the turning point. In other words, their emotional state, in respect to the centrality of emotions at the domestic space, plays a key motivator of tacit and explicit reactions of SAH, that are required to adjust to a 'professional' emotional image. That professional image, was already well described in the work of Hochshild, 1979, 2012), but receives a new meaning in the frame of the Airbnb service.

A meaning which is discusses a story of difficulties to express emotions and therefore, letting the identity of SAH shape and evolve, under the important setting of home. Instead, what was found was a patterned movement, from comfort, naturality and domesticity, to emotions of fear, that, over time, develop and transform into shame and embarrassment, as the interaction and the presence of strangers at home turns and conflicts the domestic space with daily routines that are changed, reduced and shifted to other places.

The presence of those emotions, of embarrassment and shame, are due to be minimized and controlled as well, over time, and mainly after the turning point, in which these emotions are transformed into indifference, and carelessness. Emotions that are in the center of the movement of SAH to business and the tourism industry approaches, which reduce interaction, and drain the service of its social potential.

The effectiveness of using the emotional scheme to understand social behavior (Scheff, 1990; 2015; Goffman, 1967; 1978), was crucial, in fact, because of the centrality of emotions in the domestic space. Alas, by following that methodological approach, the importance of combining emotional search in other spaces could be suggested, which would allow other interpretations for

social behaviors, and the foreseeing of micro and macro trends in the future that developing and keep shaping a new social order.

11.5 *'When one door closes…'* - Limitations and further research

'The De-domestication of home - The story of Airbnb', was designed and pursued as an international project, in which I have collected data and stories of 145 mini-cases in three cities of three countries in the course of 2.5 years. The project has supported and created connections and cooperation with scholars and universities in Italy, Portugal and Israel, under the supervision of the University of Milano-Bicocca, in Milan, and ISCTE, the academic institute in Lisbon, Portugal. Through these engines of support, I have succeeded to create a budget-time framework, which has provided me with the possibility to invest and create an understanding of the Airbnb phenomenon, which focuses on the particular situation of the Airbnb stay-at-home hosts. The research which is presented in this thesis, demanded the effort to demonstrate an induction of four levels and resolutions, from the resolution of the mini-cases, the hosts themselves, the case studies of the three cities, Airbnb as a whole, and finally, the technological and platform-based resolution, that has created empirical results concerning the domestic space, the every-day of the hosts, through urban contexts, and finally, the shape and meaning of a phenomenon, that aims to change the social order and the economic system, as a whole. Nonetheless, and while this research aims to create the most complete picture of the studied matter, it is important to note and discuss some key limitations of this line of work, while looking into possible relevant and contributing further studies.

First, is the very fact, that Airbnb is perhaps a social service, but in practice, it is a very solitary 'profession', in which physical encounters normally and usually take place between single hosts, couples or families, that host singles and couples. Therefore, the Airbnb service holds a very intimate practice, in the most private space of home. This very fact contains obvious difficulties as a study, in a work that aims to penetrate and reach into the very nuance and small details of the phenomenon. Indeed, the methodological design of the research, primarily aims to address the very fundamental efforts to access the field. The one-day ethnographic work in most of the mini-cases, therefore, has managed to capture the image of a home, and of a behavior, which was exclusively depended on my own ability to create contact in such a short time, while hosts could and at times indeed were in a very specific day in their lives, that does not necessarily represent the host, their,

routine, and even the most reflective presentation of home. That very limitation, in fact, addressed by the very formation of the research and its methods, that with completing methods, enabled the creation of a coherent and convincing narrative for each of the mini-cases. Alas, the importance of reaching a deeper penetration into the stories of the stay-at-home hosts must not be overlooked and thereby, it focuses and creates a broader view of different moments and different stages in the ASEP of the host. After all, the one-night ethnographic work, naturally managed to capture one such moment, in a random, yet important stage of the SAH. By conducting long-terms work, with Airbnb hosts, it would be possible to frame the SAH's timeline better, and thereby, include smaller events in the life of SAH, that eventually cause greater evolutions of the relationship of the host with Airbnb.

Secondly, one of the most concerning limitations of the research, was its nature of a budget based project, that allowed only a certain standard, a standard that is combined with the fact that many Airbnb hosts do not approve or do not accept one-night stays. The combination of the two limitations, severely reduced the sample from which I could eventually select mini-cases. This limitation, and unlike the previous one, was only partially solvable, as interviews were conducted regardless of the nightly rate of the listing, or the one-night limitation (as many interviewees indeed reported that they technically 'block' the ability to book one-night stays). In practice, and as it was previously emphasized, the 145 mini-cases which were finally collected, have managed to display, without any manipulation on my behalf, an outstanding diversity of the human condition, in a variety of variables, such as the composition of the host (single, couple, family), gender and sexual orientation, age, familial status, employment status and work type, socio-economic status, and types as sizes of houses. A diversity, that virtually includes almost the entire spectrum of the human condition in the urban sphere. Alas, in that sense, it could be fruitful to collect larger and quantitative amounts of data, that could create sharper patterns of the nature of the use of Airbnb, especially concerning the movement of agency from the host towards Airbnb.

Thirdly, the attention of this research, to other services, that compete directly or are part of other sectors, with an invasive orientation, was quite limited, and leaned on previous studies, along with the participants' own perception and perspective of the difference between services. Therefore, conducting further studies, which would create ethnographic, yet comparative exploration of a number of services, could (as the comparison between the case studies succeeded to achieve) lead

to new and contributive findings, on the fashion in which hosts choose their service of use, for their social, cultural, or economic ambitions.

Finally, this research, at first, has found the guest to be as a useful source, as they have the ability to play as 'authentic' informants, which would reduce the dependency of the research on the researcher as a sole and crucial part of a two-parties interaction. Alas, the ability to reach guests, and the concern of hosts to deliver contacts of former guests[182], together with the limitation of time, has put an end to this ambition. In order to overcome this limitation, it could be, that a collaboration with Airbnb (or any other studied service), could be fruitful, by adding more angles to the stories and narratives of the hosts[183].

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[182] The effort of collect interviews with guests took place until the 2nd stage of the research, which was conducted in Milan. The unwillingness of hosts to assist in finding guests, was accompanied by the very fact, that the ones who were willing to deliver names, have naturally provided the names of guests with whom a relationship was established in one way or another, and they all could be seen as 'acquaintances' or 'friends', leading to a somewhat homogenic and non-representative sample of guests, and therefore, the idea had been waved after conducting seven such interviews, that were not used for this research.

[183] As a calculated decision, Airbnb as an organization, did not take an official part of this research. That decision was taken as part of the methodological decision to complete a full image of the stay-at-home host, through the eyes of the hosts themselves, or by observing and creating a rich narrative of every host's story. Nonetheless, Airbnb was informed of my role as a researcher, primarily to avoid suspicion due to my untypical consumption patterns of consecutive one-night stays.

"...Goodbye, old friend, my paranoia

We'll meet again someday

Life is running out

I guess I had enough, I need to go now

I used to live in a house of glass

Where no one comes or goes

Watching life outside

I used to stand behind the door And hope the wind won't blow

And mess my fears around

It took me so long to find out where they're hiding"[184]

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[184] Written by Aviv Geffen. Performed by Blackfield. From the song: *'Glass House'*. From the album: *'Welcome to my DNA'* (2011).

Final Conclusions

i.   The Pathology of the Airbnb Phenomenon

The Airbnb phenomenon is the result of technological developments, that supported the rise of social economics, such as the 'sharing economy' and the platform economy, that allow and deliver a solution to an increasing demand under the urban tourism, of 'authentic' and local experiences of the city. This research was focused on a particular aspect of this phenomenon, by exploring the coping of hosts, who host where they live. The research was methodologically based on the importance and the essence of home, in the conceptual, practical, and emotional meaning of home, while placing the emotional state of the hosts at the center of the research, as a key facilitator of social behavior. Therefore, the research question that was developed, aimed to explore – **How does the Airbnb hosting experience influence the emotional state of stay-at-home hosts, and their practical and sentimental approach towards their home?**

To answer this research question, a mixed-method approach was taken, in order to build a four-level resolution induction, starting from the host, to the city, Airbnb, and finally, the technological and platform-based services. The research was conducted as an international project, which allowed this four-level resolution, by collecting 145 mini-cases (hosts), and by focusing on three cities in three countries. Milan, Italy, Lisbon, Portugal, and Jerusalem, Israel. The research combined covert and overt ethnography, in-depth interviews, as well as some main methodological methods, with other complementary methods, such as digital ethnography, text examination, basic quantitative data, and finally, visual and experimental methods.

Research findings display a six-layer process in which hosts experience actors and factors within the Airbnb service, that shapes the approach and behavior of the host in a chronological order, as the rhythm of guests increases, and leads the host to perform a significant change, of the every-day, and, or, in the domestic space. Among this six-layer process, it is important to note the context and motivation of the hosts who enter and choose Airbnb as a financial, social or cultural option, the presence and the imagination of the presence of the guests at home, the actual interaction with the guests, the technological features and intentional behavior of Airbnb, the expectations and types of guests arriving at home, and the minor and significant functional and structural changes of home. The accumulation of those aspects leads to a disruptive dwelling at home and sense of home, and it reduces the ability of the hosts to consume to fulfil their domestic needs at home. As

a result, the natural gap between the idealized perception of home to what home can eventually provide, increases, as hosts search for a solution for their home deprivation in and outside of home.

The on-going terminology of this work, as presented in the findings' chapters, discusses a chronological patterned disassembly and assembly of home, which is reflected the participants own reports, along with a visible and analyzed sequence of events, that could often be portrayed as negative[185]. Alas, during this research, I was careful to avoid such an impression, that might, wrongly, present the author's own opinion and judgment of values, while misconducting in criticism of Airbnb's modus operandi.

In reality, and as a personal reflection, Airbnb does display a problematic gap between its marketing strategy and the nature of the service itself. Inasmuch as it is possible to imagine the same service, and a more open platform, that uses the technological tools it possesses, to bring people closer together, and to support the sociality that the Airbnb service, in fact, brings, but under a strict and wearing setting, that eventually pushes hosts out of the system, and of a community that never had the chance to become a valid and 'real' actor in the Airbnb service.

That being said, Airbnb is entitled to the actions it has taken and still takes, as a private company, that choses this particular path exactly, in order to avoid the trust in other services such as Couchsurfing, that failed because of their struggle to create a capitalistic system which could sustain their operation in the dynamic and developing world of the tourism and urban tourism market.

Furthermore, the data that has been collected, tells a story of positive, and even life-time experiences that the Airbnb stay-at-home hosts collect, even if very rarely along their hosting experiences. Experiences that enrich and challenge the hosts' perception, assumptions and knowledge about the world, and the very diverse and unique nature of different cultures. Such experiences disclose the fact that in theory and in practice, Airbnb is a conflicting and a fascinating phenomenon, that has the potential to create unusual collaborations and encounters, in the space that could potentially allow their deepening and flustering, all in while, over time, hosts are more aware to their discomfort, which limits the service and drains it from its meaning. Therefore, it is crucial to perceive the contribution of this research, not as a deep and critical observation of Airbnb

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[185] For this claim, it is important to mention one main exception, which was presented in the 9th chapter of findings – *'sleeping with the enemy'*. In this chapter I indeed claim for a positive gender-related outcome of the use of Airbnb, in the image of agency and self-design of the perception and use of home by female hosts.

per se, but of the potential of different processes, in the social and urban market, and technological realm, to shape new norms and new spaces, that might disrupt, and might advance the design and image of the social order.

ii.   The Plague that Brought Us Back Home

As displayed along the introductive chapter of this text, one of the main intentions of this research, if not the most desired one, was a 'calling' to bring back the domestic space into the academic and public debate. A debate that seemed to be forgotten, in the realm of urban studies. The fundamentality of home to the development of identity and social identity, to the establishment of gender roles and gender equality, and finally, the crucial role of home itself to the possibility of the creation of the urban and public space to its current settings, did not meet or was reflect in the attention to the domestic space, by the public or by literature.

One of the symbols which I have used during my 'tour' of conferences, that dealt with the importance of home to the gender situation, was the Israeli version for a global and feminist protest against inequality and violence against women, and the slogan – 'Ani Shovetet' ('I am striking' – with the Hebrew gender-oriented female suffix), that called for a national strike of women at their work place, to emphasize the importance of the labor of women and the participation of women in the social realm. That slogan seemed to me almost too symbolic to the current discussion of home, as the strike, obviously referred to the urban space and the labor market. No one, not even women themselves, could even imagine, that women would resist to do their domestic duties, which are constructed as almost 'sacred' and undebatable. All in while, it is home that is statistically and objectively, the most dangerous, and therefore, the most unequal space for women. A space that has done the most effective work, in excluding woman from the urban space.

The protest poster – 'I am a woman, I am striking (in black – a state of emergency)

All in while, my call for a debate of the domestic has received a surprising twist, in the image of the global and yet on-going pandemic of the Corona virus (Covid-19), that created and still creates outstanding and historical changes in the image of trends that are due to change our perception of the urban sphere, and of the social order. At a first glance, the Corona pandemic, that has burst way after the beginning of the writing period of this text, has pulled the rug from under the entire thesis and endangered its relevancy, as Airbnb is hardly operating nowadays, as the entire global tourism market, as well as other infinite markets and sectors, is struggling to survive[186].

Alas, while Airbnb has become, at least temporarily, irrelevant, the unique and unprecedented means, to defeat the unknown and illusive nature of the disease, has brought the domestic space to be again central in the public debate, and it has already initiated numerous calls for studies on home. At the very beginning of the pandemic, and its outstanding implications, feminist movements knew and were right to predict the potential of home as more dangerous than ever, as violent and abusive situations would be magnified due to the imposed lockdown that forced people to stay at home for days, weeks and even months, and which resulted in mental and psychological breakdowns, along with a new necessity to create an effective production while working from home, and the disruptions of countless social phenomena and social behaviors and norms.

Therefore, and in the presence of the new rise of the domestic space, this research can be seen as an introductive and suggestive approach to the meaning and practice of home in our current days, towards a deeper, holistic understanding of what home was, and what home might become.

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[186] Airbnb is currently focusing on attracting reporters and media staff who cover the news from all over the world, and especially in the burning and raging situation in the United states, under the explosion of the pandemic in America, and what has turned to be a historical burst of protests all over the country, triggered by the avoidable and outraging murder of George Floyd by the American police force, which is being shaped as a new stage in the historical resistance of African American citizens to the outstanding inequality, and mainly to the tracking of the criminal path for young African Americans, as described so well in the work of Alice Goffman (2014), among many others.

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Appendices

Appendix No.1: outline for the semi-structure interview

The interview is divided to five content worlds: technical information, Practicing the Airbnb platform, interacting with other users, home, and city.

A. Technical information

1. Nationality
2. gender
3. Age
4. Employment
5. Family status
6. Location of the house
7. Size of the house
8. Number of rooms
9. "free rooms"
10. Name of the ICT application
11. Seniority in the ICT application
12. Approximate number of guests so far
13. Average income from the ICT application

B. Practicing ICT

1. How did you first hear about the Airbnb platform?
2. What were your motives then?
3. What did you think about that idea at the time?
4. What are your motives now?
5. What is your opinion on this arrangement?
6. Can you describe the process of engaging in the website as a host? What do you need to do?
7. Did you have any concerns or hopes when you started using the website? Like what? How did they change over time?
8. Can you please share one story of an interaction with the platform?

9. Can you please share one or more stories of a strange or non-typical use that you remember well of the platform?

C. Interactions with other users

1. Do you normally talk with other hosts? How frequently, about what?
2. How concerned were you when meeting people you don't know?
3. Do you think that meeting new people is what makes you use the platform or that it what makes you feel like you want to stop using the platform? How come?
4. Did you ever stayed in touch with a guests after his/her visiting? In what manner? What was the type of the relationship?
5. How strongly do you interact with guests coming to your home? Do you spend time with them?
6. What do you usually talk about? Do you remember any interesting stories for such interaction?
7. How is the interaction usually on the first days? How it is in the last ones?
8. Do you remember any special comments from guests after leaving? In or out of the platform?
9. Did it ever happened that a person left before time? Why did it happen?
10. Do you see differences between female guests and male guests? In what way?
11. Where do people usually come from? Do you see difference in the way people interact with you from time to time?

D. Home

1. How does it feel to share your home? Do you feel comfortable doing so?
2. Can you describe the arrangement in the house regarding the different rooms? How this arrangement was established?
3. How do you explain guests this arrangement?
4. What are the rules of the house? How do you explain them to the guests? How do they react?
5. Do you think that some people might not understanding or not accepting some of those rules, and so there are problems? Do you think people do not stay at your place because of those rules?

6. Are there any spaces guests are not allowed to get in? which ones and how do you force such rule?

7. What are the shared spaces in the house? Did you spend some thoughts defining them? Can you walk me thorough it?

8. Does the kitchen is public? How does it work out? How guests using it? What do you think about that?

9. What about the salon? Do you feel guests are using this shared space? How? What do you think about that?

10. Do the guests have separated bathroom (toilets? Shower?), if not, how do you manage that space? Do you suffer sometimes from any kind of problems?

11. Did you ever feel that people coming into your house using the house or its rooms in a way you cannot accept? Can you give me some example of what and what did you do?

12. Can you describe what is home to you? What does the sentence, to feel like home say to you? Is there such a thing?

13. When I say to "feel like home", does it remind you a home from the past? Can you describe it? Are your using of the Airbnb service change what you feel about your home?

E. City

1. Did you always live in this city? Since when?

2. What do you think about this city? What makes it different from others in your opinion?

3. What do you think about your neighborhoods? Your neighbors? Do they know you are a hosting using the Airbnb platform? What do they think about it to your knowledge?

4. When guests come, do you help them to know the city? in which ways? How do you describe the city?

5. Do you think they are getting a different look on the city because of you? Because they are not in a hotel? Why is that so?

6. How much do you see your home as part of the city? can you explain that?

7. How much do you see the city as part of your home? Can you explain that?

8. How does Airbnb to your opinion change the city? in which aspects?

9. Do you think this service is good to the city?

10. What is the city in your opinion? The citizens? Part of them? Please explain that…

Appendix No.2: visual methods

A. 'Mental homes'

Hosts who were interviewed were requested to draw their home. To do so, they were given with a pencil case with color pencils and markers, and a few blank pages. Host were given complete freedom in their drawing, to create a realistic image of their home, a symbolic one, or any other choice that would represent for them their specific home. In the end of the exercise, hosts were requested to select two items (objects) that in their perspective, are the most important for home sensation. During the exercises, they were supported to explain and talk about their decisions and work of art. All exercises were recorded by a video camera, for a later examination.
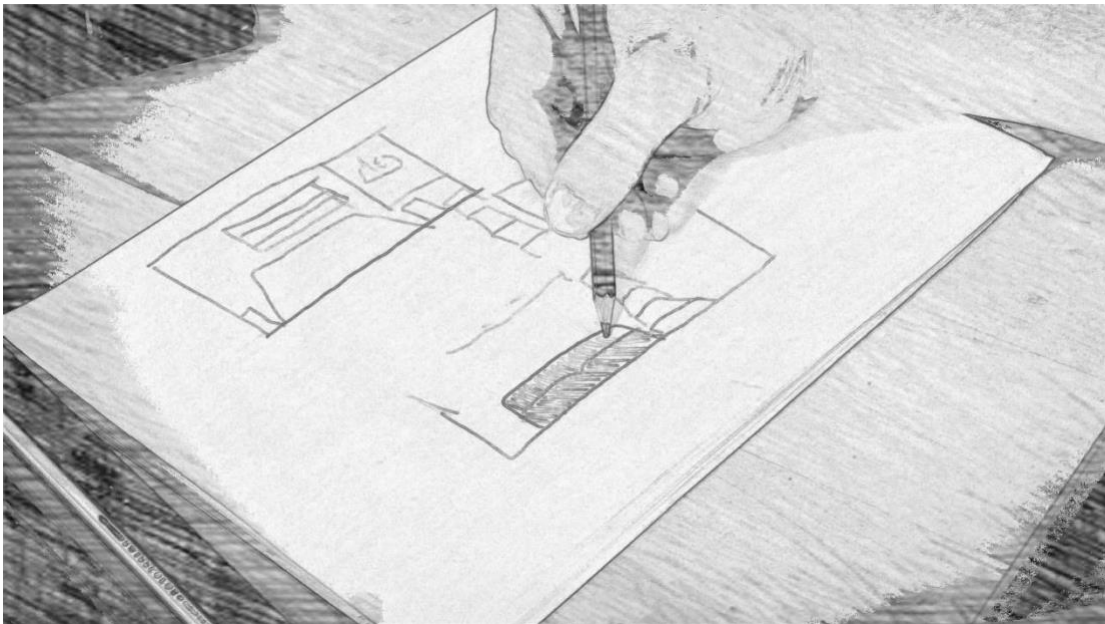
B. 'Mental maps'

Hosts who were interviewed were requested to draw a map in which their home is its center. To do so, they were given with a pencil case with color pencils and markers, and a few blank pages. Host were given complete freedom in their drawing, to create a realistic image of their home, a symbolic one, or any other choice that would represent for them their everyday routine outside home. The hosts were supported to specify the importance of each location they choose to draw, the road to it, and the fashion to get to it (walk, bike, car, public transportation, etc.) During the exercises, they were supported to explain and talk about their decisions and work of art. All exercises were recorded by a video camera, for a later examination.