



DWELLING TOGETHER  
URBAN HOUSING, NEIGHBORLINESS AND MULTILOCAL HOMEMAKING

# 21.06. MULTISPECIES HOME-MAKING IN MIGRATION: TURKISH MIGRANTS IN GERMANY AND THEIR PLANT COMPANIONS

DR. HILAL ALKAN

This talk draws from the research I am conducting, which looks into the relationships different waves and generations of migrants from Turkey develop with the plants they grow and care for in Germany, in order to explore the significance of multispecies networks in the processes of migrant home-making. It finds inspiration in approaching the home as a constellation—as the location of day-to-day care activities, the sites of memories and longings, and as the sociopolitical entity that situates them within legislation and norms (Fabos and Brun 2015). It then argues that home-making, in all three senses, is never an individual or a single-species activity; it is performed and experienced in cooperation with the living beings other than the human. The relationships migrants have with their plants include elements of transborder traffic in plants, joint struggles of climactic adaptation, strong emotional attachments, identifications, nostalgic yearnings, attentive care, as well as pragmatic, utilitarian and purely aesthetic engagements. Each one of these elements have strong implications for the three dimensions of home-making: they instantiate hands on care, involve invocations of memories and require negotiations with authorities. Alongside the materialities of plant presence in migrant lives, different temporalities—circadian rhythms, seasonal changes, growth and reaction times, life spans—of human migrants and their plant companions add a second level of analysis that affect this constellation in overt and subtle ways.



Dr. Hilal Alkan is a researcher at Leibniz Zentrum Moderner Orient in Berlin. Her research centers around care and gift practices in various realms of social life. Her recent research is about the caring relations migrants form with the plants they grow and the plants that accompany them in the cities they settled.

**June 21st, 6-8pm at HU Berlin (in-person)  
room 315 (third floor) at IAAW, Invalidenstr. 118**

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