UNIVERSITY OF LATVIA

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY

MATERIAL HOME-MAKING PRACTICES IN A CO-LIVING COMMUNITY: A CASE STUDY OF “VISKAĻI”

BACHELOR’S THESIS

Author: **Aiva Grudule**

Student no.: ag18073

Thesis supervisor: Mg. hum. Kārlis Lakševics

RĪGA 2024

Abstract

Home-making is a multilayered and ongoing process, comprised of an array of micro practices. The thesis explores the role of material home-making practices in the context of a co-living community and how they contribute to creating a sense of home in a shared environment. Privacy issues of communal living are also a significant focus. Guided by Daniel Miller's materiality theories, the study employs qualitative research methods, including semi-structured in-depth interviews and autophotography. The findings reveal that both individual and collective material home-making practices are essential in fostering a sense of home, highlighting the importance of privacy and personal agency of individuals, which can be exercised with the help of materiality and, if lacked, can stand in the way of creating an attachment to the space.

Keywords: home; home-making practices; materiality; co-living; private/public space; privacy

Anotācija

Māju veidošana ir daudzšķautņains un nepārtraukts process, kas sastāv no daudzām mikro-praksēm. Darbā tiek apskatīta materiālo māju veidošanas prakšu loma kopdzīves komūnas kontekstā un to pienesums māju sajūtas veidošanā koplietošanas vidē. Būtisks fokuss tiek vērsts arī uz privātumu kopmājošanas modelī. Balstoties uz Daniela Millera materialitātes teorijām, pētījumā tiek izmantotas kvalitatīvas pētījuma metodes, tostarp daļēji strukturētas padziļinātas intervijas un autofotogrāfija – pētījuma dalībnieku iesaiste savas vides fotoattēlu uzņemšanā. Pētījuma rezultāti liecina, ka gan individuālas, gan kolektīvas materiālas māju veidošanas prakses ir neatņemamas māju sajūtas uzturēšanā, uzsverot indivīdu privātuma un rīcībspējas nozīmi, kas var tikt īstenota ar materialitātes palīdzību, un kuras trūkums iemītniekiem var liegt veidot piesaisti telpai.

Atslēgvārdi: mājas; māju veidošanas prakses; materialitāte; kopmājošana; privāta/publiska telpa; privātums

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 5

1. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES 7

 1.1. Homes and the materiality of home-making 7

 1.2. Private space in a public environment 10

 1.3. Temporal dimensions of home 12

  1.3.1. Temporary dwellings 12

  1.3.2. Memories and materiality 13

  1.3.3. Future-making 13

2. METHODOLOGY 15

 2.1. Research questions 15

 2.2. Research methods 15

  2.2.1. Semi-structured interviews 16

  2.2.2. Autophotography 17

  2.2.3. Field notes, participant observation and informal interviewing 18

 2.3. Data processing 19

  2.3.1. Transcribing data 19

  2.3.2. Coding data 19

  2.3.3. Analyzing data 20

3. RESEARCH ETHICS AND POSITIONALITY 22

 3.1. Ethical considerations 22

 3.2. Researcher's positionality 23

 3.3. Challenges and limitations 24

4. DATA ANALYSIS 25

 4.1. Whispers of the walls: Spatial agency vs agency of the space 25

 4.2. Tangible comforts: Materiality of home explored 28

 4.3. Crafting home: Material home-making practices 33

4.3.1. Individual practices 34

4.3.2. Collective practices 36

4.3.3. Gendered homescapes 37

4.4. Personal sanctuaries: Negotiating boundaries in communal dwellings 39

4.5. Diverse meanings of home 40

CONCLUSIONS 44

REFERENCES 46

INTRODUCTION

Domestic spaces have long been a topic of interest amongst anthropologists, as they are imbued with symbolic meanings and closely interwoven with kinship systems. These spaces serve as key sites for cultural practices and expressions of individual identities. Homes are often the primary places where people learn to build relationships, or as stated by philosopher Gaston Bachelard (1994:4), “it is our first universe, a real cosmos in every sense of the word”. Homes do not merely exist as physical structures; they are consciously and subconsciously made and unmade by their inhabitants, with home-making being a complex and multilayered process. This thesis delves into one of the aspects of home-making: the material practices. The research is done in a specific setting: a co-living community where the question of private versus public space gives another dimension to the problem of home-making, and the community is located in a space which was originally created not for home-making but as a post-war military aviation institute, which in turn has made the inhabitants more consciously create their homes from the point of view of materiality.

In the year 2024 alternative living spaces are not very widespread in Latvia where the majority of people in urban areas like the capital city Riga live in apartment buildings and single-family homes. “Viskaļi” (along with a couple of student housing projects, like “SHED Co-living”[1]) at this time seems to be one of the largest active co-living projects in Riga. It opened its doors just a few years ago, in 2019, and since then has attracted close to 200 residents, of whom less than a half have created homes in this space, with the rest using their residences for professional needs. However, with the increasing awareness of changes in the world climate and shifting attitudes towards green living, sustainable living projects like “Viskaļi”, where the principles of circular economy are actively applied, are likely to gain significant popularity in the next couple of decades. Home-making within a co-living environment might become a norm in some circles, especially where the residents are not only considering sustainability but also enjoying the community aspect with all the possibilities it brings and the reduced living costs, compared to renting a private space.

There is a growing body of literature in social sciences considering different aspects of cohabitation and shared housing. The results are just as varied and nuanced as cohabitation itself can be. Young Australians in shared room housing struggle with limited autonomy (Nasreen & Ruming 2020), while older adults in Canada benefit from the companionship and

[1] https://shedcoliving.com/riga/

support received from their cohabitating peers (Martinez et al. 2020). This thesis aims to highlight the less explored nuances of communal residences by examining the materiality of home within the context of a co-living community.

My personal interest in the topic comes from a fascination with the materiality of homes. Undoubtedly the most important place in my life, to me home embodies the feelings of comfort, safety and freedom, and I have noticed the importance of even the smallest details when it comes to home-making: for example, how the temperature of the flooring against my bare feet or the placement of fridge magnets, gifted by friends and family, can impact the feeling of home. I set out to do this research to find out what home means and how it is made for others, while reflecting on my own ideas and experiences throughout the process.

The research question of this thesis is as follows: How does it come uninhabited spaces become lived-in homes through individual and collective material home-making practices? The question is discussed in more detail in the methodology part (subchapter 2.1.) of this paper.

The first part of this thesis is dedicated to the theoretical framework of the research, explaining the use of the main concepts, such as home, materiality and privacy, drawing both on ideas of prominent authors in anthropology and other social sciences, as well as my own interpretations and synthesis of them. Materiality is considered as a multifaceted concept, based on Daniel Miller's theories, encompassing more than the physical attributes of objects, and instead paying attention to the human experiences with material culture. The second chapter of the thesis considers methods used in the research, mainly in-depth interviews and autophotography, and the process of working with data. The third part of the thesis is dedicated to research ethics, author's and researcher's positionality and the challenges encountered in the field and in working with data. The fourth chapter consists of data analysis, touching upon such themes as the agency of the space, the materiality of homes, both the individual and the collective material home-making practices, the problem of private space in a communal living setting, the diverse meanings of home, as well as the gendered experiences of home-making as recounted by the research participants. The final part of this thesis contains conclusions from the data analysis and discussion, including ideas for potential future research.

1. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

Homes are context dependent and consist of multiple elements, the importance of each element varying for different individuals. For the purposes of this thesis, it will be useful to consider three theoretical aspects of home and home-making: the materiality of home, the interplay between private and public space, and a temporal perspective on home, examining dwelling processes in the context of time.

This part of the thesis will introduce the reader to the main theoretical concepts and ideas used in the paper and some of my own interpretations of them. First, I will touch upon the definition of "home" – the object and the setting of this entire research. I will show some of the ambiguities of the concepts that might seem self-explanatory at a first glance. Home-making practices and their meanings will be considered, as well as the materiality and agency of a home. Some attention must be paid to the field specific issue of negotiation of private space in a co-living environment. Finally, I will approach the topic of materiality of home from a temporal dimension, showing that homes are not fixed in time but rather teeming with past memories and future imaginaries.

1.1. Homes and the materiality of home-making

As is often the case with seemingly obvious concepts, "home" defies an easy definition. Because of the varied experiences of home and the differing degrees of attachment to places, the definition of this concept can be evasive and subjective. Even though some authors prefer a clear distinction between the terms "house" and "home", using one to describe the material form of homes and the other to denote the subjective perception of them (Grassi & Pozzi 2021, 115), I am somewhat skeptical of the strict division between the two. It is worth noting that the division between "house" and "home" in Latvian, my native language and the language used in the field, is somewhat ambiguous, and both can be described with the same word in the plural form: "mājas", which likely impacts the way I think of this concept.

Further on, I will look at the concept home in a more holistic manner, encompassing both the purely material aspects of home such as walls, windows, furniture, decorations etc., and also the less tangible aspects and nuances of materiality, including scents, atmosphere and memories of home. As Daniel Miller notes, in academic discourse it is hard to draw the line between what is or is not a "thing" – a dream, a video or a kiss might as well possess qualities of material culture (Miller 2005, 7). Looking at the concept of materiality through Miller's

perspective, instead of simply reducing it to physical objects, one must pay attention to the interplay between said objects and the human experiences, the symbolic meanings of artifacts and the social relations they shape and represent, therefore transcending the simplistic dualistic distinction between subjects and objects, materiality and immateriality.

Home in its material state is not just a space that people occupy, it is not simply a one whole entity. It is made of many small details, created across time by its residents and their social circles, possibly also changed and influenced by the previous inhabitants of the space and the environment in which it is located. Similarly to Miller's argument about clothing (Miller 2010), the home interior should not be interpreted as superficial, but can rather be analyzed as a mode of self-expression. Like clothing, it has a wide range of social functions, simultaneously representing the owner's identity and inviting others to a conversation, holding the potential for building social connections.

People often have the opportunity to design at least some aspects of their own home, especially if it is a permanent residence, but homes are indirectly also made by others – visitors, family members, friends and distant acquaintances, or, in other words, through the relations with others (Pink et al. 2020, 15). Homes are ever-changing – objects, colors and other elements may enter the space for a short while or stay for good, often depending on our relationships with others, not only our aesthetics and individual tastes.

Tim Ingold argues that building and dwelling are two interwoven processes, continuous and interdependent: "Building, then, is a process that is continually going on, for as long as people dwell in an environment" (Ingold 2000, 188). The living space is more than a static background to the sometimes exciting and sometimes mundane lives of humans. Instead, with our presence and movements, the lived-in environment is constantly subject to change as we move objects from one place to another, making the space our own, an extension of ourselves. Ingold stresses the importance of the embodied engagement with the environment – the active participation in everyday practices to create one's surroundings. This environment building process, the continuous making and unmaking of home, can be viewed as one of the most obvious material home-making practices.

A typical modern Western home, as I look at it in this paper, has several levels of materiality. First, there are the physical borders encompassing the space, often immovable and integral to the structure: walls, floors, ceilings. Next, within this enclosed space there are large objects, movable but usually not moved, like heavy furniture and large electronic appliances. On the next level there are everyday objects that might or might not have a specific allocated

space within the home, they might be used and moved around regularly or somewhat forgotten by the residents of the home. The most subtle level in my understanding encompasses the aspects of materiality that are still present and felt but without tangible qualities, like the sweet thick scent of a burning incense stick or the sliver of sunshine on the carpet coming through a gap in the blinds. I will argue that each of these levels of materiality has an impact on the environment and the inhabitants of this environment.

Each single object within a person's home has a history. Some have a clear practical purpose; some are purely sentimental; some are both or serving some other function entirely. Each little trinket might be filled with memories and associations; they hold the potential for creating and cultivating social ties by being gifted or simply associated to another person in the resident's life. As Daniel Miller stresses in *The Comfort of Things* (2008), an ethnography of a hundred Londoners and their homes, it is absurd to assume that having or wanting to have things equals being materialistic or that having a close relationship with things equals not having meaningful relationships with people. On the contrary, Miller argues that "usually the closer our relationships are with objects, the closer our relationships are with people" (2008, 1). Each single object within a home is consciously chosen and displayed by the residents to express themselves, to create that special feeling of home. It is not a chaotic or random collection of unrelated objects. It is an extension of the person living amongst these objects.

Miller (2001, 1) likens material culture within a home to both one's appropriation of the larger world and the representation of it within one's private domain. The author has argued that home is actually "the single most important site for material culture studies" (ibid., 3), in much of his work showing how analyzing the material contents of homes can give a deeper insight not only in how people of the culture in question see and interpret the world, but also portray the complex social relationships of the inhabitants of these spaces, as well as their relationships with objects.

One of the field specific factors to consider in this research is the agency of both the physical space and the community of "Viskaļi". The space was previously used as a university faculty, originally built as an institute for military aviation, and it shows. The long empty halls, varied size auditoriums and bright ceiling lamps, characteristic of post-soviet era schools and offices, give the place quite a specific institutional feel. It is not hard to believe that the environment was not originally intended for dwelling. Yet, as I have observed throughout the fieldwork on numerous visits, the residents of the space have managed to create the feeling of home, especially within the private residences, by the clever use of elements of material culture.

Scholars of different fields have discussed the agency of space, some arguing that there is no such thing as an entirely objective, neutral and empty space (Lefebvre 1991). It seems clear that the spaces we dwell in are not powerless agents in the creation of our environment. As much as we make the space, the space can in return make, change, and impact us. Comparing the relatively short existence of human persons to the longevity of buildings and material culture in general, naturally some agency gets assigned to the more permanent actor (Miller 2018). While people are inevitably only temporary inhabitants, the structure itself can witness multiple generations and stay largely unchanged for decades.

It is likely that for many "Viskaļi" residents the room they now occupy was rather empty at first, both literally and figuratively, unlike it often is in the apartment renting market where most spaces hold the echoes of their previous inhabitants within their walls. If renting an apartment often means adjusting to the space and deciding what to change and what to keep, beginning residency at "Viskaļi" has given its first few dozens of residents the creative freedom to make an empty space their own. Empty in its physical sense, with no furniture or decorations, and figuratively empty of lived-in memories and the footprints of any former residents, yet not without agency of its own, having been utilized for a specific purpose before.

In the case of "Viskaļi" another aspect must be considered: the co-living situation and the commoning practices in the community, as they inevitably impact the everyday lives and homes of the individual residents. There is a difference in the degree of shared practices though, as the residents can choose their level of involvement in the community, and some do not use the shared spaces as much as others, for example, having installed some of the kitchen appliances in their private residences, reducing the need for a shared kitchen. Research on shared room housing has shown that housemates and roommates engage in shared home-making processes, and their social interpersonal relationships, especially conflicts, can restrict, if not completely stifle, the individual practices (Nasreen & Ruming 2020, 18).

1.2. Private space in a public environment

Before delving into the problem of private space, it should be noted that for the purposes of this thesis I have chosen to define "Viskaļi" as a co-living community instead of a co-housing or a shared housing project. As shown by comparative analysis, co-housing is characterized by multiple private homes with a small number of common facilities, completely managed by the tenants themselves, while co-living spaces are managed by a third party, typically have a lot of commoning areas and the private spaces are much smaller (Medar & Čurčić 2021) – these are main characteristics of my research field. Even though in some respects "Viskaļi" does remind

of a co-housing project, e.g. the tenants' active involvement in the design of the interior of the house, I will stick with the term "co-living" which in general seems to be more appropriate, so as not to confuse the reader any further.

Personally, I consider privacy to be an integral aspect of my home – for me it is an intimate space in which no others can come and go as they please. It embodies the safety, freedom and privacy I feel in no other space. My lived experience aligns with sociologist Ray Oldenburg's idea of home as the most important place in a person's life – a place of predictability which Oldenburg refers to as "the first place" out of three, the second being the workplace and the third being a combination of spaces with community-building functions, such places where people go to socialize, e.g. bars, bookshops, hair salons and so on (Oldenburg 1999). This theoretical strict division between the important places in a person's life becomes rather blurry considering the nature of "Viskaļi" where the private and the public can intersect, some residents may work from home and some, if not most, regularly spend their free time in communal spaces within the building doing exactly what Oldenburg attributed to third places only – building new relationships and strengthening existing social ties. Taking in account the specific setting of this research, I believe it would be futile to stick to specific academically predefined strict borders for what home is and can be, and instead it should be remembered that the perception of home is highly context dependent.

Individual residences could be seen as sanctuaries of privacy, agency, and autonomy, while the communal spaces in a co-living setting provide an opportunity for social interactions and community building. One way to look at these spaces could be with the help of Erving Goffman's definitions of backstage and frontstage in *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959: 112): while public spaces demand a performance, the private backstage allows the actor to relax and step out of character. This might well be the case in an apartment building, where one must politely smile and greet the neighbors in the staircase even after a long and hard day at work but can allow herself to drop the act the minute she crosses her private doorstep. What about a home where the borders between backstage and frontstage are not so clear, where a person is still in a public environment even while preparing dinner or while visiting the bathroom in the late hours of the night? While public and private might seem like mutually exclusive categories, the dichotomy starts to fall apart in a co-living environment. If privacy cannot be truly achieved solely through establishing physical borders, other practices might have to come in play, e.g. setting temporal boundaries such as quiet hours or using verbal and non-verbal cues to signalize the need for privacy.

Here I would like to briefly discuss a related aspect of domestic space regarding gender roles. In public discourse, private and public spheres have sometimes been equated with female and male controlled spaces, respectively, but qualitative historical and archeological research has shown that men and women in Deerfield, America have used space in ways that transcend this dichotomy as early as the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Rotman 2006). When it comes to the domestic space, both men and women are moving away from traditional gender roles across various European cultures too, as shown by Sarah Pink's (2004) research in Spain and England. More and more women work outside of the realm of home, while men's involvement in domestic labor is becoming increasingly normalized. Both genders are now able to exercise their agency in both public and private spheres, proving that home does not have to necessarily be a female dominated space.

1.3. Temporal dimensions of home

It seems likely that the degree of attachment to a place and thereby the practices of home-making are directly connected to temporal factors. For this reason, I thought important to include a subchapter on some of the temporal aspects of home and materiality.

1.3.1. Temporary dwellings

Alternative co-living projects such as "Viskaļi" could be perceived as a strictly temporary dwelling setting for its inhabitants, which might make one think that the attachment to the place would not be as pronounced as in privately owned housing. This is not necessarily the case, though, as the organization "Free Riga" has signed a contract with RTU (Riga Technical University, the original owner of "Viskaļi" building) for 25 years, technically providing the residents with an option to create relatively permanent homes within its walls for the foreseeable future. Yet, as was shown in my previous research on "Viskaļi", some residents still perceive this space as temporary and ascribe a liminal quality to it (Grudule 2023). The data analysis in the fourth chapter of this thesis provides my theories on the underlying reasons for these attitudes.

Research has shown that long-term residence is one of the main factors in creating a sense of home and attachment to a place, partly because the longer a person inhabits a space, the more time there is to imbue it with personal meanings and create memories, and also because longer residence creates stronger local social ties (Cuba and Hummon 1993, 115). This might differ in a place where residents often come and go within a few months, and only the core social group remains unchanged. At the same time, it could be argued that in a co-living

community, compared to individual housing, there is greater emphasis on actively forming strong interpersonal relationships, especially considering the collective home-making practices many residents engage in. This once again highlights the complexity of the chosen field of study for this paper.

1.3.2. Memories and materiality

As I have argued before, objects in themselves are context and time dependent, each imbued with its own past. Things do not just randomly appear in our homes: someone has to choose them, bring them and place them, and the residents of the house consciously choose to display or hide them, and create their meanings. Daniel Miller in his research has showed that it is possible to turn memories into object-like forms with the example of jewelry (Miller 2008). In this way, memories can be controlled by controlling the objects, e.g. moving them in or out of sight.

In Rachel Hurdley's book *Home, Materiality, Memory and Belonging* (2013) it is shown that people's homes can be viewed as repositories of memories, preserving the most precious of the objects (and memories associated with them) over time. In this sense, homes can be likened to museum collections, often carefully arranged and displayed. The value of the objects is not measurable in monetary terms, but entirely dependent on the subjective value of the memories associated with them.

1.3.3. Future-making

Some practices can be understood not only as home-making but also as future-making within the home, namely renovations and home improvements (Cook 2021) – practices that are done not only to make the space imbued with the current resident's character and make it feel more "homey" but also to improve the practical aspects such as insulation, lighting installation etc. These improvements are not usually borne out of close social relationships, and they do not travel with the inhabitants whenever they move to their next home, becoming a part of the space instead. As such, they can be seen as future-making practices in which not only the future of the individual is considered but also the future of the home itself and its potential future inhabitants.

In addition to home improvements, sustainability practices such as recycling, commoning and circular economy initiatives can also be seen as having a future-making goal. In this case, the focus extends beyond the individual, the house, or even the community, and it is the future of the world on a larger scale that is considered. Despite widespread awareness of

contemporary global climate change in the 21st century, a part of the population still hesitates to adopt new practices and make changes in their daily lives. In an individual household, it requires a conscious decision and definite steps to make these changes, but in a community where green living principles are already established, any individual is freed from the choice upon joining the community. The process of collective and positive future-making can serve as one more foundation stone of building strong social ties within the community.

In this chapter I have explored possible meanings of the main concepts used in this research, such as home, materiality and privacy. Drawing on ideas from prominent authors in anthropology of things, including Daniel Miller and Tim Ingold, I have argued that the materiality of home extends beyond a mere collection of objects; instead, it encompasses all aspects of domestic spaces that have social and personal meanings, reflecting the complex relationship between people and their lived-in environments. I have addressed the issue of private space within a co-living setting and paid attention to the temporal dimensions of home, establishing a theoretical foundation for the data analysis presented in the fourth chapter of this thesis.

2. METHODOLOGY

In the following chapter I will present the qualitative methods I have chosen for this research and explain my reasoning of that choice. I will introduce the main guiding research question, as well as the secondary question which helped me develop the interview guidelines and the code families and categories. I will also reflect on working with the data obtained in the field.

2.1. Research questions

The guiding question at the basis of the research is as follows: How does it come uninhabited spaces become lived-in homes through individual and collective material home-making practices? Daniel Miller's theories of materiality, with an emphasis on the relationship between people and objects as well as the agency of things, serve as the basic theoretical framework of this thesis, so here I would like to add the secondary research question: How does materiality assist in creating homes and negotiating private space within a co-living setting?

By posing both of these questions I am trying to draw attention to the key factors of my interest in the field and the distinctive characteristics of it: materiality and material home-making practices, the co-living setting which highlights the need for private space, the agency and the history of the building, and its impact on the individuals within it. I am hoping to show that the field I have chosen for conducting this research is a multifaceted and complex environment for home-making, and by conducting this research I am hoping to discover how the residents of "Viskaļi" manage to navigate home-making and how it might differ from (or maybe just the opposite – illustrate) the same processes elsewhere, including spaces familiar to any reader of this paper, like crowded apartment buildings in an urban setting or lonely homesteads deep in the countryside. Even though the field I have chosen is very specific, my hope is that the answers found in this research will give insight into social and cultural processes that can also be applied to wider contexts.

2.2. Research methods

The data gathered in this thesis has been collected mainly by two qualitative research methods: semi-structured interviews and a visual method called autophotography, in which "participants take photographs, choosing images and representations of themselves" (Noland 2006, 2). While interviews gave me deep insights into the research participants' understandings and lived experiences of home, autophotography was a useful visual tool that revealed more of

the material aspects of home and illustrated some of the things we had merely discussed verbally with the research participants during the interviews.

Additionally, the two forementioned research methods were complemented with field notes, participant observation and informal interviews, which are all described shortly below in one subchapter.

2.2.1. Semi-structured interviews

The main research method for data collection was semi-structured in-depth interviews with the permanent residents of "Viskaļi". This has always been my preferred method in anthropology because it possesses the best of both worlds: it can be flexible and unpredictable, at the same time giving logical structure to the conversation and providing the sense of control to the researcher. As Anne Galetta has aptly put it: "the semi-structured interview provides a repertoire of possibilities. It is sufficiently structured to address specific topics related to the phenomenon of study, while leaving space for participants to offer new meanings to the study focus" (2013, 24). These new meanings of home and home-making provided by my interlocutors, along with certain aspects of co-living that I had previously overlooked, have been incorporated in the data analysis part of this paper. This has added a new dimension to the thesis and offered valuable insights for me as a novice researcher. It highlighted the limitations of my written interview questions and revealed potential blind spots in the research, created by my lack of personal experience of home-making in an environment similar to my chosen field of study.

During the fieldwork I interviewed 7 individuals (5 women, 2 men) aged 35 to 57, all of whom at the time of the interview had lived in "Viskaļi" for between 8 months to nearly 3 years. Two of the participants lived with their respective romantic partners at the time of the interview, while the rest were the sole inhabitants of their residences. The interviews were conducted in Latvian (the native language of the participants) and most – 6 out of 7 – took place within the private residences of their respective inhabitants, providing me with an opportunity to experience their homes personally in an embodied way. The interviews were conducted between the 13th of March and 28th of April of 2024. With the permission of the research participants the interviews were audially recorded for later transcription. The total length of all 7 interview recordings together is over 6 hours and 15 minutes, the medium length of an interview being around 54 minutes. While I already had the contacts of a few residents before the fieldwork, later the so-called snowball sampling technique was used to find new research participants.

The interview guidelines consisted of four main blocks. The first part was introductory to get to know the participants better and help them feel more at ease in the conversation, as well as to discover how they had become inhabitants of "Viskaļi". The second question block concerned the home-making processes, materiality of home and the private space as the house inhabitants see and define it. This section explored the narratives of home, the histories of their residences and the possible futures, e.g. home improvements. The participants were invited to compare their current residence to past homes and define the differences, if any. We discussed the material aspects, routines and the most important material belongings which for them help make their private space a home.

The third part of the interview was dedicated to the public space within the setting of home – a characteristic of co-living projects where spaces like kitchens, hallways and bathrooms are often shared amongst multiple residents. Their opinions and visions for improvements were discussed in this part. The participants tried to define the border between their private space and the common space within the house. Here the agency of the building was also discussed, considering the fact "Viskaļi" was originally built as an institutional building and not as an apartment house.

The final interview block was dedicated to the concept of home and its varied definitions, associations with it and imaginaries of what a home is and what it can be. Here participants shared their feelings of what makes a place worthy of the title "home", their versions of ideal homes and their visions for their futures in "Viskaļi" – if and why the space they are inhabiting now will stay their home for longer. The interviews were concluded by giving the participants the option to add anything else they felt was important in the context of the interview and to expand on their ideas and lived realities of home that highlight the complexity of home-making processes within a co-living environment.

2.2.2. Autophotography

To be able to examine materiality from multiple angles in this research, I believed obtaining visual material from the research participants could be useful when illustrating their narratives, which is why I decided to try a method entirely new to me: autophotography. To be precise, my interlocutors were the ones to try it, as this is a method where the active agents are the research participants themselves and not the researcher.

The main benefit of using a visual method like autophotography is being able for the researcher to see and to show the reader the research participant's way of seeing the world

(Glaw et al. 2017, 2). In my experience of interviewing, I have encountered situations where the interlocutor is struggling to find the words to describe a feeling, an idea or a physical object. By offering the participants to show instead of verbally describe some of the things we were speaking of I gained not only a way of illustrating the materiality of homes to the reader of this paper but also a deeper insight into the material worlds of my interlocutors. By asking to take the photos and send them to me after the interviews without a strict time limit, I also provided the participants with opportunity to carefully think about their choice of objects to be photographed.

What I did was ask the participants to use their personal mobile phone cameras to take a couple of photos within their homes that show some of the objects which are important to them, and which best embody the character of their home. These are objects that in most cases have been a part of their home interior not only in the current residence but also before, things of sentimental and social value that travel with them wherever they go.

Some of the photographs I have gathered from my research participants are used as a visual tool to complement the written text and add qualitative value to the data gathered in interviews with the hopes of bringing an additional dimension to the data acquired in the field. Some of the photos I decided not to use in this paper, considering they contain personal elements that could make my research participants easily recognizable.

2.2.3. Field notes, participant observation and informal interviewing

To gather qualitative information on my personal experiences within the field I collected field notes. This method was used for noting down my main insights directly after the interviews, what I had seen in the homes of my interlocutors and how I felt entering and being in their space. These notes are what H. Russell Bernard refers to as field jottings (2017, 309) – short, somewhat chaotic key words written down to help remembering some of the things witnessed in the field, not lengthy and comprehensive descriptions of the researcher's experience.

Participant observation, described by Bernard as the foundation of cultural anthropology (ibid., 272), was another method used in the field. Even if most of the private spaces were not accessible to me, I was able to freely explore many of the communal spaces like hallways and kitchens where residents often pass through. I also had the opportunity to participate in a collective cleaning event that took place in the lobby of the ground floor. Furthermore, as I was invited inside the homes of the research participants for the interviews, I observed the

participants' engagement with their environment while listening to the life stories of their most cherished belongings.

One final qualitative method I would like to mention is informal interviewing which was done mainly at the start of the fieldwork to create rapport with the potential research participants and later to strengthen the existing relationships between me and them, which is also the method's recommended use by Bernard (ibid., 163). Some of the participants felt more at ease the moment I turned off the recorder after our semi-structured interviews and only then started discussing some aspects of their home or the community which they might not be as happy with, but I was hesitant to note down these ideas as they seemed to purposefully be said after the recorded part of the conversations and some included sensitive details, even though the participants had full knowledge of me still in the role of a researcher. For this reason, private details of these parts of conversations will not be revealed in this thesis but might impact the data analysis indirectly.

2.3. Data processing

2.3.1. Transcribing data

As guaranteed to the research participants, I have personally transcribed all the conducted interviews without the use of any transcription software, but instead transcribing non-verbatim (omitting unimportant background noises and verbal pauses) by listening to the slowed down audio recordings and writing the text in *Microsoft Word*. The total number of pages transcribed is 67, the average number of pages per interview being approximately 9.5 pages.

All 7 interviews were conducted in Latvian. The full interview transcripts have not been translated into English, and instead only the quotes used in this thesis have been translated. All translation is done by me personally, trying to capture the meaning of the ideas of the research participants as accurately as possible.

2.3.2. Coding data

For coding data, the software *MAXQDA 2024* was used. Both interview transcripts and field notes were coded in this way. The data was coded using a mixed strategy, combining description-focused and interpretation-focused strategies (Adu 2019, 27-28).

In the coding process 6 main code categories emerged, with each divided in several smaller code groups. The categories are as follows:

- about the participants;
- materiality of home;
- agency of space;
- privacy;
- home-making practices;
- emotional aspects of home.

Additionally, another category was created for quotes *in vivo*, some of which are used later in the data analysis part of this thesis to illustrate the ideas of the research participants. Keeping in mind the research question of this thesis, the two biggest code families are "materiality of home" and "home-making practices".

In the first category, the past narratives of the research participants were coded, such as previous experiences with housing, the ways they have found out about "Viskaļi" and reasons for moving in, as well as their personal definitions of home. The second code group contains two large categories: materiality in the public space and in the private space, the latter being much larger, as it was discussed more. The ideas of the perfect home were also discussed and coded under this category.

The third category – the agency of space – emerged while coding the data, as it was not a topic explicitly asked about but rather a theme that was brought up by the research participants naturally in the conversation. In this category the personification and anthropomorphizing of the building or parts of it are also coded. The fourth category was devoted to the issue of privacy within the space, often mentioned by the participants. The next code family consists of two subgroups – the collective home-making practices and the individual ones. Under the latter, participants' gendered experiences with home-making have also been coded, as it came up unexpectedly in multiple interviews, both from the male and female perspective. The final code group contains different kinds of emotional aspects of home, including liminality, which appeared to be quite an emotional nuance when talking about home – as to why that might be the case will be discussed later in the data analysis section of the thesis.

2.3.3. Analyzing data

The data obtained in the field was analyzed after coding the interviews and the field notes. To help interpret the data and to find answers to the research questions, several strategies were utilized, including a grounded theory approach and narrative analysis. While a grounded theory approach helped to develop theories and ideas directly from the obtained data, narrative

analysis was useful in paying attention to the stories and making sense of the experiences shared by the research participants.

3. RESEARCH ETHICS AND POSITIONALITY

In this chapter I will discuss my positionality in the field and the ethical considerations on doing research in and about arguably the most private and intimate space – the home. Here I will also reflect on the limitations and complications encountered both before beginning the fieldwork and during it, as well as the challenges of working independently with a larger quantity of data for the first time.

3.1. Ethical considerations

Keeping in mind the fact that "Viskaļi" is not a very large community (at the time of writing this thesis, all together 180+ residents using the space (Biedrība "FREE RIGA", 2023) of which approximately 60 are permanent inhabitants living at "Viskaļi" full time), I had to take extra measures to protect the identities of my interlocutors. In this thesis I have given pseudonyms and excluded or slightly changed most personal details of the research participants. Even though I have included some of the photographs participants took within their own homes in this paper, I do not associate specific photos with specific interlocutors, using the pictures just as a visual insight in the materiality of home.

One of the most important rules when doing anthropological research is obtaining informed consent which was done not only before conducting the interviews but also during and after. I explained to each participant what I am going to do with the data and assured them of their anonymity in this paper and of their right to deduct or change anything that has been said during the interviews. I encouraged the participants to take photos only of things that they feel comfortable showing to me and to the potential readers of this paper, giving them agency in protecting their own anonymity as well.

Whenever I started communication with a new resident, I introduced myself as an anthropology student and explained my reasons for being in their building. As per Association of Social Anthropologists of the UK (or ASA) ethical guidelines, consent is one of the most important aspects of an ethical research, alongside with confidentiality and anonymity (ASA 2021). This is also the reason for my choice to only use as data the information that I have acquired with a clear informed consent on the participants' side.

All throughout fieldwork I was mindful of the fact that I am entering the private spaces of my interlocutors who have willingly invited me in their homes, and I tried to be as respectful

as possible. I am very thankful for people opening their homes to me, a complete stranger to most of the participants.

3.2. Researcher's positionality

As in any anthropological research, it is necessary to reflect on the researcher's positionality and be mindful about how it has impacted both the data gathered and the analysis of it. There are multiple aspects here to consider, and I will shortly go over them. First, I should mention that the field was not entirely unfamiliar to me. I have already done (admittedly, a very small scale) research in "Viskaļi" in autumn of 2023 when I was looking to explore the relationships of the residents, exchange networks and relatedness-making processes in the community (Grudule 2023). During the time of the fieldwork, I met and informally talked to several people, of whom some have also participated in the interviews for this paper. This in turn meant that they already had the image of me as an anthropology student in their minds, which facilitated the process of explaining my presence and goals for this research. The social bonds previously created and the previous involvement in the community also helped me in preparation for the fieldwork, as I already had a very good idea on how to reach potential participants. I also had already acquired practical knowledge on how to get to the building and the layout of the space, both inside the building and on the grounds of the territory.

I realize that my position as a 30-year-old Latvian woman helped me in gaining access to participants' homes. Per my assessment, my presence in their homes and the interview process itself felt nonthreatening and seemingly comfortable to the research participants. Speaking the same native language was also an enormous advantage when conducting interviews, being able to understand not only the things that are said verbatim, but also cultural references, slang phrases and other subtle, language specific nuances. My age was yet another factor working in my favor as many of the "Viskaļi" residents are also a part of the so-called millennial generation (born in the 1980's and first half of the 90's). Being 30 years old, I had no problems communicating with people close to my age as well as the residents in their 50's, who did not seem to view me as too young or too inexperienced to take seriously. I felt the advantages of my gender the most while talking to the female participants, usually after the semi-structured parts of the interviews, when we were bonding about some of our gendered experiences with home-making or the shared affection for collecting mementos.

It should also be acknowledged that my subjective experiences and preconceived notions of home and home-making have likely somewhat impacted the coding and data analysis processes. Even though I did not consciously create any hypotheses before going into the field,

on some subconscious level my own experience of home-making is what I expected to encounter in the interviews with the researcher participants. Admittedly, this did not happen. Even though there were only 7 interviews conducted, I met with a surprising variety of experiences and opinions which amazed me and have made me appreciate the science of anthropology even more.

3.3. Challenges and limitations

One of the challenges I encountered while approaching potential participants was their reluctance to agree to interviews and, at times, a direct rejection. While it is understandable that people can be uninterested in the topic, unwilling to discuss private matters with a stranger or simply be very busy and unable to find the time, it made the beginning of the fieldwork challenging and made me reconsider the way how I communicate the aim of the research. Multiple residents recommended other people they thought I should talk to instead of themselves, who they believed to be more experienced or more actively involved in the "Viskaļi" community. I assured them that I am only interested in their individual experiences and opinions, but not actually knowing the true reasons of some participants' choice not to talk to me, I did not push for interviews after receiving a rejection.

When it comes to the data obtained in the field, it should be considered that it may not be representative of the entire group of "Viskaļi" residents, because, as mentioned earlier, the interviews were conducted with 7 research participants aged 35 and above. Even though the data of the average age of residents is not publicly available, while walking around the building I often encountered people seemingly younger than 30 years old. This age group is not represented in the data that follows, quite possibly because of the snowball sampling recruitment technique that I used to find my research participants, and most people recommended other interviewees close to their age. Therefore, the results presented in the next section should not be overly generalized, as they specifically describe the lived experiences of my research participants. However, the tendencies and main conclusions may also be indicative of home-making processes beyond co-living settings.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

The data gathered in the field serves as the basis for the analysis following in this chapter. The next subchapters will explore the question of home from multiple angles. First, the collected data concerning the past and the agency of the house itself in the lives of its inhabitants will be overviewed. Next, I will look at the material aspects of homes of the research participants; how the space is used and divided with the help of materiality, the varying degrees of importance of tangible possessions, the objects that are the most important in creating the sense of home, and more.

The third subchapter will introduce the reader to the gendered experiences of home-making as recounted by the research participants and give an overview of the various material home-making practices – both individual and collective – encountered in the field, and the ways some of them might differ from practices common in privately owned housing. This will lead to the next subchapter, exploring the problem of private space in a communal dwelling situation; how the boundaries are created and perceived, and the importance of having privacy. The fifth and final subchapter in the data analysis part of this thesis will be dedicated to the various meanings of home, as narrated by the research participants themselves, still paying close attention to the framework of materiality.

4.1. Whispers of the walls: Spatial agency vs agency of the space

The building in which "Viskaļi" community is located today was constructed in the middle of the 20th century (Lapsa 2020, 29). At first it was an institute of military aviation, and later became a Riga Technical University faculty of Mechanical Engineering, Transport and Aeronautics (Kušķe 2021). The building is rather huge: 15 000 square meters, and the length of it is 170 meters. It has 5 floors above ground and a spacious basement. The structure embodies the dramatic presence of brutalist architecture characteristic of post-war era soviet institutional buildings with its imposing gray facade. Hardly a place that visually reminds of home – at least for an unsuspecting passerby, looking from the outside in.

Photo 4.1.1. **"Viskaļi" building in 2020 (Viskaļi – Dzīves kvalitātes dizaina institūts, 2021)**

Even though from the outside the structure looks rather monolithic, the interior has traces of different architectural and artistic styles, starting with the specific 20th century brutalism, but also embodying nuances from soviet era institutional structures, 21st century renovation styles, modern street art and much more. Each floor has a long hallway running though the middle of it from one end of the building to the other, from which dozens of doors open, revealing spaces that used to be classrooms and offices but are now the homes, workplaces, and creative spaces of my interlocutors.

It comes as no surprise that the people living within these walls recognize and feel the agency of the building and are conscious of its past. Specifically, one of the participants mentioned that they do not trust the grounds around the house, as there are talks amongst the

residents that some time ago there has been a mercury spillage somewhere within the territory, and even though it is said that it has been taken care of, the mistrust in the past of the building lingers.

The soviet past, unsurprisingly, can be an unpleasant memory for many Latvian residents that have experienced it. Still, some remnants of it are inescapable in many places of the former USSR territory, especially when it comes to the architecture. This is the case in "Viskaļi" as well, even though in some parts of the interior it is gradually changing. Several of the research participants stressed the fact they had specifically chosen to live in the rooms which looked less like they used to in the soviet times. As put by Vija, discussing the choice of her specific residence upon moving in:

> *This was the one room that had repairs done at that time. […] There were other ones back then that looked horrible; the walls were bad, the windows old, but this one had* eiroremonts[2]*, so we thought we won't have to do much, we can just come and live here.*

A sense of trying to distance oneself from the remnants of the communist regime of the past is felt not only in the visual sense but in other aspects of home-making as well. One of the cornerstones of a cohabitation model such as "Viskaļi" is the collective maintenance and improvement of the environment shared by the members of the community. Even though it might seem logical that the group inhabiting the space would take care of the shared parts of the building, some of the participants felt a strong resistance to the notion of doing things together with other residents. They acknowledged that this avoidance most likely comes from the time of Soviet occupation and the collective farms which in their minds have effectively ruined the idea of 'working together' as something positive or voluntary.

Another aspect where the past use of the building strongly impacts the way it is seen and felt by its current residents is the interior of some of the shared spaces, such as bathrooms. While some of these areas have had improvements done, others have not changed much since the time when the building was still a university faculty. Vita explained how she had tried to make the space more homey by cleaning it up, adding a mirror and other small decorations in the bathroom, yet still it does not feel comfortable as a home should:

[2] *Eiroremonts* could be translated as "European-standard renovation": a term used in post-soviet space, denoting a type of renovation that is intended to meet European standards – home improvements such as double-glazed windows with plastic frames, laminate flooring, freshly painted walls, a shower stall in the bathroom, etc.

I feel good here [in the private residence] and fine in the kitchen, but the bathroom is a place where I remember that I am not at home. Especially if I have to go at night, then I find myself there wondering – where am I? What is this place? Am I in a hospital, am I in prison, am I in school? There is something there that I cannot accept.

This shows that in some situations, even if a resident is actively trying to control the environment with the means available to them by decorating and cleaning it, the space itself with its specific past and the obvious visual difference from what is used to be seen as a homey place takes some of the agency away from its residents, resisting the change. In turn the negative affect experienced by the inhabitants of the house stands in the way of their efforts to feel at home.

The large building was sometimes anthropomorphized in conversations, giving it a kind of agency through vibrant comparisons. For example, some participants likened the house to a living and breathing organism, mentioning how it seemed upset during the first few months of the housing project when it was still empty, dirty, and dark. They found that simply opening the windows to let the fresh air in and "let the house breathe" made a significant difference, and soon enough the house seemed to feel much better. Others compared the building to an egregore of energy: a powerful entity to which one must give something to receive something in return. This comparison can also be interpreted as a reflection of the circular economy model that is practiced within the community.

4.2. Tangible comforts: Materiality of home explored

Across the interviews I encountered a significant difference in the way materiality is perceived by the research participants. While for some it may be an obvious source of comfort and always present, others denied any attachment to material possessions whatsoever, explaining that material aspects play a minor role in the creation of their home. Instead, they identified immaterial sources as the foundation of their feeling of home, such as spiritual energy or the close relationships built within the community. This variety of attitudes in such a small sample of respondents underscore the aforementioned notion of home as contextually dependent and individually experienced by every single person.

A common theme for several participants was "Viskaļi" as a place for a new life, a new beginning of sorts, or an opportunity to 'restart'. It may have been an escape from a life they did not enjoy for various reasons – it lacked either fulfillment, purpose, happiness or the connections and relationships offered by the community. Specifically, two of the female

research participants admitted that they did not begin their new life in “Viskaļi” entirely by their own choice, instead, it was the unpleasant circumstances of their previous dwelling places and the affordable price of residences in “Viskaļi” that pushed them to take the huge leap and begin a new life in an entirely unfamiliar setting. This brave decision came with a price though – saying goodbye to the comforting familiarity of the homes they had made by themselves over many years that held a lot of memories. During the process of moving, some valued things had to be left behind, including objects with whom they had built a very deep and personal relationship. The involuntary moving process that these participants had to go through due to circumstances beyond their control has a degree of similarity to the life stories of individuals who have been forcefully displaced from their homes. In his research on refugee possessions (1999), David Parkin has argued that portable objects can take the place of interpersonal relationships in traumatic situations such as forceful displacement and social exclusion. Mementoes can help people structure their identity and narrate their life when everything else is lost. Losing the objects that hold such meanings can be extremely distressing.

Another reoccurring theme in nearly every interview was the importance of dividing the living space into dedicated zones, such as a corner for working, an area for rest and relaxation, and especially important was a designated space for storing the extra belongings which cannot be accommodated within the limited confines of this new home and are often still unpacked and in boxes, ready to be moved again. Here it is important to note that nearly all the research participants, save for one, described their previous homes as much more spacious, which also meant they had accumulated quite a lot of material belongings which were impossible to set out in the new home. The division of space is done in different practical and creative ways, for example, using large pieces of furniture, like bookshelves and wardrobes, or floor-to-ceiling curtains to separate the areas. Some residents even rent a two- or three-room spaces and use one of the small rooms as a storage closet. Vineta, who also uses one of her rented rooms as a storage space, put it this way:

> *I chose this residence because the layout of rooms is exactly what I needed; I can separate the storage space. [...] Dealing with all the things and boxes is extremely tiring. I saw that here I can create a space that is quiet, clean and calm.*

Photo 4.2.1. **A wardrobe dividing the living space.**

For some, there is a strong degree of attachment not to the material possessions themselves but to the social relationships they symbolize. Two of the participants expressed an almost identical attitude in this regard, stating that they do keep mementos given to them by their loved ones, even though they are burdened with these things and have no place or use for them, and actually would like to get rid of them. In these cases, the things in question are often kept unpacked and unseen, existing more as an idea than actual practical material objects.

The aversion to material objects on some degree and in different ways was present in several other interviews. For some, it is connected to the emotional weight of specific objects that might follow them, bringing along painful memories. Others expressed feeling exhausted of the amount of material possessions and of what was referred to as 'visual noise'. The trouble of arranging the space in a visually pleasant manner was compared to a game of Tetris or a puzzle where you have to push the pieces around so they would fit, yet somehow the game never seems to be done. As Vita put it:

> *As I was sorting out myself and sorting out my things, I realized that the less you have, the easier life is.*

An interesting phenomenon that at a first glance seems to contradict the aforementioned aversion to materiality was also often encountered in the conversations, and in several cases by the very same participants. Even though their living space is overcrowded with things, for some people it is very hard to let go even of the objects they themselves have deemed useless. There is a tendency to keep such objects still packed in boxes 'just in case' – but it is not entirely clear in case of what, as the participants themselves had a hard time putting it in words. The keeping of these 'useless' things that hold no obvious sentimental value and have no clear future use might be explained with many different reasons. It might be a way to avoid a wasteful lifestyle that would go against the sustainability goals of the community; it might be a desire to exert a degree of control of the environment or feel safe in this worrisome 'just in case' situation, especially to those people who have witnessed the shortages in the times of the Soviet occupation; it might symbolize some part of the residents' identity that they are not yet ready to let go of; or there might be an entirely different reason. This question leaves plenty of space for future research.

Before I turn to the material practices of home-making, I would like to pay attention to some of the categories of material objects that were most often mentioned in the interviews as providing the feeling of home, as they illustrate the tangible elements of the materiality of home that contribute to a sense of comfort and belonging. Nearly all the participants pointed out their house plant collections, some of which were quite impressive. It is not only the presence of nature that adds to the feeling of home but also the need to care for the plants and nurture them, seeing them grow and blossom. The plants, like many objects within the confined space, often each have a sentimental narrative of how they came to be a part of the collection.

Photo 4.2.2. **A collection of house plants.**

Yet another often mentioned category of important objects were books. The conscious decision to carry them along every time a person moves is very interesting, as it obviously complicates the moving process, and I believe it cannot be explained simply with a fondness for reading. Books are heavy and large, not to mention in most cases the specific books in question have already been read by their owners. I would argue that these are being kept mostly for sentimental reasons, as for some participants they were passed down from the previous generations, and for others the knowledge within the pages of these books serve as a source of comfort and guidance in uncertain times of their lives.

Photo 4.2.3. **A bookshelf.**

Some of the other objects providing the feeling of home often mentioned were artworks, carpets, luminous objects such as lamps, strings of light and candles, gifts and other personal things of sentimental value, and any other objects with an important backstory. In two of the homes that I visited there were what the residents themselves called 'an altar', but these altars were very different in their contents and their use. While one had a more sacral imagery and was used for religious practices, the other was almost purely secular, consisting of objects unrelated to each other, including small gifts from the person's children, a candlestick, a photograph of a close relative and other small objects, each with its own significant story. This was an altar of relations, its purpose to honor the social bonds and personal relationships instead of a relationship to a deity.

4.3. Crafting home: Material home-making practices

Now I will introduce the reader to the home-making practices encountered in the field. I will begin with the individual practices that were discussed in more detail during interviews, and then turn to some of the collective practices, even though not all "Viskaļi" residents take part in these. I will also discuss how the context of co-living can impact or even stifle some practices individuals are used to and how this can correlate to their longing for more privacy. I will also pay attention to some practices specific to the female gender and how home-making in its material form is viewed as a gendered practice altogether by some of both male and female research participants.

4.3.1. Individual practices

The material home-making begins with the moment a person first steps foot into their new residence and starts to build the relationship with the home. The furnishing and decorating of the room are processes that are never really finished, as there is always room for more improvements. Every single one of my research participants had ideas and plans on how to improve their living space in the near future, demonstrating in practice what Tim Ingold (2000) theorized as building as a continuous process. Repairs and renovations are an important part of home-making especially in "Viskaļi" where the original appearance of the space is far from what most residents find cozy or homey. Vēsma recalled her residence looking abandoned the first time she entered it – a description conveying not only the literal emptiness and lack of furniture, but also the obvious lack of lived-in memories in the space.

While renovating, furnishing and decorating the space can be costly and is done infrequently, there are many practices of home-making people do in their day-to-day lives, some of which have become important rituals to reinforce the comfortable feeling of home. Some of these are common in every residence, such as cooking, eating and cleaning. Cooking and eating, which can be shared activities, are intimate rituals for some of my participants who strongly prefer to do them alone or with their respective romantic partners. Looking at Janet Carsten's findings on how feeding and shared consumption of food in Malay culture in Pulau Langkawi create bonds of relatedness (Carsten 1995), it comes as no surprise that the practice can be innately seen as intimate and associated with family only also in my chosen field of study.

I have argued that the space of home in some ways can be seen as an extension of the self. Vita stressed the importance of a clean and organized home, comparing taking care of the home environment to taking care of oneself. There have been studies done regarding the connection of wellbeing and orderliness of one's environment, and results show that a poor quality of housing, including the lack of cleanliness and orderliness, alongside other factors, can have a detrimental effect on a person's mental health (Holding et al. 2020). For some of my research participants, the process of cleaning and decluttering provides a sense of control not only over their immediate environment but also over their lives in a more general sense.

An often-mentioned motif regarding individual home-making practices was the importance of bringing elements of nature in the home. This manifests in many ways, starting with an obvious collection of houseplants and pets that are taken care of daily, but also by placing freshly cut flowers in vases, opening windows to let in the fresh air, using essential oils

to recreate the scents of nature, and placing a bed right next to a window or setting up a comfortable seat on the windowsill, so a view of the lake and trees is ever-present in the space. This yearning for nature also appeared when discussing the materials used in the interior of the residences. Both Vita and Valērija mentioned the importance of the material of the flooring: while natural materials like wood and parquet are favored for their pleasant feel under bare feet, synthetic materials like linoleum or vinyl tend to evoke negative feelings. This preference for natural elements can be encountered in many homes but is especially understandable in an environment not originally designed for dwelling which has the cold and uninviting look of an institutional building.

Another important part of home-making is managing the intangible elements of materiality, such as lighting, sound, temperature, and scents, all of which contribute to creating the gentle atmosphere of home. Every human sense is involved in the perception of the environment, and each of the residents employ their own preferred ways to create the sense of being at home. To name a few, installing lights much softer than the fluorescent ceiling lamps, burning incense and palo santo wood sticks, playing ambient or atmospheric music at low volume, and using electric heaters during colder months to provide a pleasant warmth are some of the ways to create the individual character of a home.

Not all individual practices residents were used to in their previous living situations can be kept up in the co-living environment. Some participants mentioned things they miss, like taking luxurious long showers or listening to music at a loud volume – things they cannot do anymore as the walls are rather thin and there can be a queue of shower-goers waiting behind them. Vija described having to get fully dressed in the middle of the night to visit the collective bathroom as a seemingly small, yet incredibly annoying detail that can shatter the sense of being at home. Another example was given by Valērija:

> *When I walk through the halls with my bathrobe and a face mask on, it can feel uncomfortable seeing neighbors and strangers. It is a challenge not to feel awkward.*

This demonstrates that although some personally important practices like self-care rituals can technically be maintained in the co-living environment, the constant presence of acquaintances and even strangers within the space seen as home creates a mental obstacle for feeling the freedom one would expect at home.

4.3.2. Collective practices

While individual practices are done mostly within one's own residence, the presence of community provides the opportunity for collective home-making practices in the shared space. Some are activities often done within families, for example, cooking and sharing of meals, cleaning, and maintaining the house, but these everyday practices have also been the basis of arguments within the community, especially in the early days of "Viskaļi". There have been situations when individual boundaries were crossed, such as borrowing items without permission or leaving shared spaces uncleaned. However, these occurrences have become rare due to ongoing discussions about boundaries and the continuous process of learning to coexist in a larger community.

A common practice in the community is the sharing of material objects: these can be food items, work tools and instruments, kitchen appliances, fitness equipment, boats and paddle boards, and more. Viesturs called this practice *multiplying* instead of *sharing*, as sharing implies dividing a thing among its users, while multiplying suggests that one and the same item can serve many purposes without losing any of its value or utility. This circular economy model is not only an opportunity for sustainability but also provides a sense of safety within the community. As put by Vineta, it is impossible to starve or be left without a much-needed thing in "Viskaļi", because there are always others ready to provide any item needed, as long as you ask for it.

Another collective home-making practice often brought up by the research participants was *talka* – a Latvian word without a direct equivalent in English which roughly translates to "collective work". A common practice in communities both big and small, it refers to voluntary coming together with the goal to accomplish a specific task, most often cleaning up a public area. *Talkas* are happening quite regularly in "Viskaļi" – once every few months – and usually take up the bigger part of a day. Normally a few dozen residents gather in one of the communal areas of the property, tasks such as cleaning and repairing are assigned, and people get to work, often chatting while doing it. The work usually ends in the evening with a shared meal and more conversations. This practice is another way of strengthening the community spirit, and the residents who perceive the entire territory of the house as their home believe participation is self-evident: they are simply improving their surroundings rather than doing a favor for anyone else.

Materiality can be used to provide moral support in hard times. For example, Valērija mentioned going through a difficult period of time related to a family member's illness and

noted how several other residents have offered their support, often in material form. Similarly, Vineta said this physical form of emotional support is something she engages in from both sides:

If the neighbors know that I am having a rough time or that I am feeling unwell for a longer period, they just knock on the door and bring me dinner or something else. It works both ways. If I know my neighbor is not doing well, if she's struggling with finances and can't afford something, I know where to put a couple of euros so she can find it.

This example illustrates how there is an ongoing reciprocity and a strong sense of gift culture within the community, which is an important building block in the creation of a shared home and the strengthening of social bonds.

4.3.3. Gendered homescapes

Although home is an important place for people regardless of their gender, it is often considered to be a feminine and nurturing space created by women (Mallet 2004, 75). This belief also appeared in my conversations with some of the residents of "Viskaļi", both male and female. Despite the fact that women nowadays are more and more often participating in paid employment outside of the realm of home, many everyday home-making practices are still seen as women's duty in the public opinion, including cleaning, cooking, taking care of houseplants, and so on. While it is quite tempting to look at this matter through a feminist lens and see home as a site of women's oppression, it is not the way my research participants have experienced it.

Viesturs explained the uneven division of domestic labor with the idea that women pay more attention to the visual aspects of an environment and often get more attached to the interior of a home, and accordingly want to invest more of their time and efforts in improving it. In this way, instead of viewing it as inequality, it can actually be seen as a way for women to exercise their agency and control over the home environment, as they do the tasks out of their own initiative and not out of a sense of duty. Some of the female participants expressed the satisfaction they gain from creating and controlling the environment around them, finding the power in the process rather liberating. Vita believed that the ability to create beauty and comfort in the realm of home is almost exclusively a female talent.

Photo 4.3.3.1. **A teddy bear resting on a bed.**

While touching upon the subject of gendered activities, it ought to be mentioned that in "Viskaļi" there are several exclusively female collective practices, one of them being a dedicated event to an exchange of used clothes and jewelry, and another – a "women's circle" or a "witches' circle". The latter is a general term for different kinds of activities, like card readings, anger rituals, rounds of sharing not unlike in group therapy, and so on. Valērija defined these practices as strictly for women and as a way to create a safe space among the female residents of the building. This in turn serves to facilitate stronger feelings of community amongst the women and allow them to express themselves freely without the male gaze, offering a form of empowerment. The existence of these practices highlights the fact there is a need for gender-specific spaces in co-living communities where privacy can be an issue.

4.4. Personal sanctuaries: Negotiating boundaries in communal dwellings

The need for private space, a common phenomenon in Latvian culture, amongst many others, is highlighted in a close-knit co-living community. In our conversations both the house itself was compared to a single entity, and also the residents of the home were called a "unified organism" by multiple participants, ascribing an almost magical quality to the bonds that are shared by the inhabitants. Valters put it this way:

> *You can actually feel it here. If something goes wrong for someone at one end of the building, the others start to feel it too. The mood is the same across the house.*

However, not all residents perceive the same bond with either the building or the community. Some have drawn a very strict mental boundary between their own private space and the rest of the house, this border most often located right at the doorstep of their respective residences. Most participants admitted they classify only their personal space as *home*, and the rest of the house does not fall into the same category, not unlike it often is for inhabitants of shared apartment buildings.

An important aspect that sets "Viskaļi" apart from a typical apartment building is the fact that most residents do not have a private bathroom or a kitchen within their residence but instead share these spaces with multiple neighbors, so consequently these normally intimate spaces fall outside their own imagined borders of home. This can create an issue of privacy. Vija described the uncomfortable lack of privacy as tiresome, specifically mentioning situations related to the shared spaces, like having to walk through a hallway to get to the bathroom while having a cold and feeling unwell, feeling like she has to look representable in the likely event of meeting someone on the way.

Despite the lack of privacy in the shared spaces, or possibly exactly because of it, the individually set boundaries of private residences are highly respected and followed by all members of the community. In this way, a degree of privacy is achieved through ongoing communication instead of material practices. As explained by Vija:

> *It seems like here your private space is respected even more than in a normal apartment building. Because here, this is your only space, everything else is shared, but at least when you close your doors people leave you alone.*

The need for privacy can be felt in varying degrees. While some "Viskaļi" residents prefer spending their evenings behind closed doors, undisturbed by other members of the

community, others may literally leave their doors open for most times of the day and perceive any guests that might enter uninvited as an obvious part of the communal lifestyle. The latter group are the residents that totally identify with the community and see themselves as a part of it, while others may perceive "Viskaļi" rather as an apartment building and create their own private bubble behind closed doors.

Even though the idea of co-living is well liked by most residents, almost every one of the research participants expressed the idea of their current residence being a liminal stage in their lives – a point in-between more permanent homes. The lack of privacy and agency in "Viskaļi" is one of the main reasons as for why the place is seen as only a temporary dwelling – residents feel incapable of creating a permanent and stable home in an environment they are unable to control. Thus, while some residents fully enjoy and revel in the numerous opportunities offered by the house, its territory and the community, others experience a deep emotional longing for a place of their own. They feel that having a private space and the freedom it provides is essential to their wellbeing, something they find lacking in their current residence.

4.5. Diverse meanings of home

Humans are complex creatures, both individually and as a group. Although it might feel like we instinctively understand what home is and what characterizes the feeling of being at home, it is a difficult task to clearly define it and put it into words. Yet, this is exactly what I asked my research participants to do, and their answers, while somewhat different, shared the core ideas. It was clear that simply providing basic shelter does not qualify a place as as home – this concept demands much more.

One of the most important prerequisites of feeling at home, according to my research participants, is the personal agency: being able to shape and change the environment according to one's needs and desires, being able to decide who and when is allowed to enter, being able to make all the decisions regarding both the material and the intangible aspects of home. A person must feel in control of the environment to feel relaxed and free.

> *If I'm not happy with something and I cannot change it, how can I live there? A home is a place you can change the way you need it.*

The agency that should be felt at home was juxtaposed with the lack of agency in other spaces – both public environments and other people's homes, where there are rules to follow and expectations to meet. Home is seen as a personal territory where a person can establish their

own rules and even subject others to them, giving them not only a sense of agency but also total control.

The importance of materiality directly also appeared in the definitions of home. Having the personal belongings around oneself creates a sense of comfort and familiarity that is integral to feeling at home. The exact objects that can create this feeling differ from one person to another, but some of the examples mentioned by the participants were candles, photographs of their children, religious icons, a favorite mug and a coffee pot, plants, and other either sentimental or practical things that can provide a physical or emotional comfort.

Another key material aspect of feeling at home highlighted by the participants was the visual appearance of a space. It is so much more difficult to feel at home in a place that is visually displeasing or confusing. This once again brings us back to the importance of personal agency: if the space looks wrong in any way to its inhabitant, there must be the option to change it to create the sense of home. Alongside with the visual appearance such qualities as spaciousness within the home and the presence of nature were highlighted. The physical lack of space and the narrowness of their residences was one of the most disliked factors when spoken about the participants' current homes in "Viskaļi".

Often mentioned was the importance of privacy within a home, as explored in the previous subchapter. This goes hand in hand with other aspects brought up by the participants, such as safety, peace, predictability, freedom, and the feeling of being protected – all of these can hardly exist if there is a lack of privacy. Residents cannot fully engage in individual home-making practices, like the personalization of their entire living space or intimate meal preparation, in a co-living environment where dozens of people must coexist.

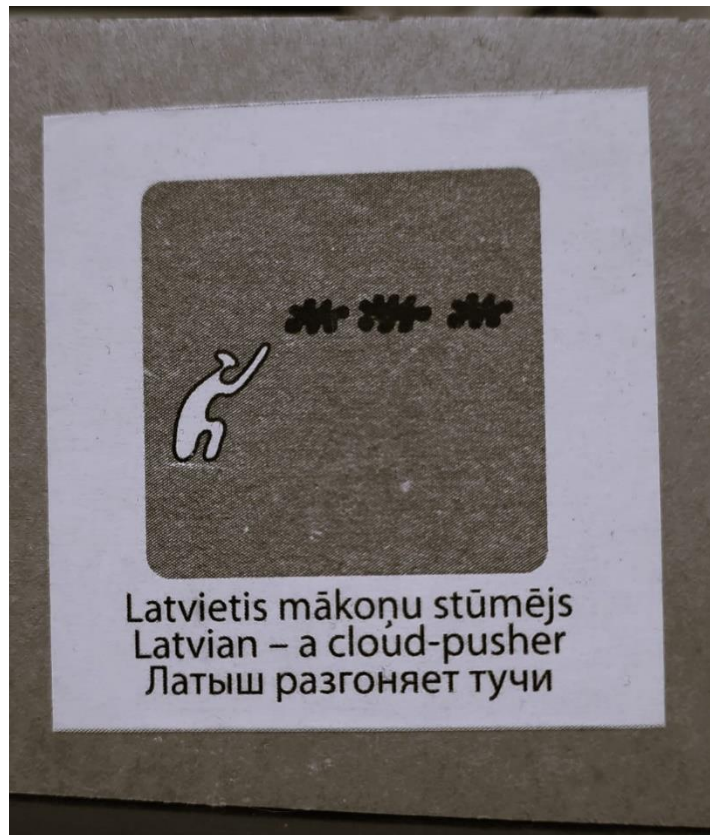

Photo 4.5.1. **A decoration. A cloud pusher – a Latvian idiom meaning a daydreamer, a person who spends their time fantasizing rather than focusing on practical activities.**

Even though the participants' definitions of home have differing nuances, they share the core ideas: alongside materiality and the comforts of familiar possessions, people most desire feelings of privacy, safety, and personal agency to truly feel at home. Each of these, and especially the latter, can be achieved and expressed through the materiality of home.

"The ache for home lives in all of us. The safe place where we can go as we are and not be questioned."

– Maya Angelou, *All God's Children Need Traveling Shoes*

In this chapter I have paid attention to several aspects of materiality of home and home-making, beginning with the outermost part of a home – that is, the literal physical boundaries of walls and the structure of the building itself, showing the importance of not only the interior and the present state of a home, but also the past and the character of the infrastructure, as it inevitably impacts the lives of people living inside of it. The chapter continued with an overview of the ways materiality is conceived and interpreted by the research participants, going in-depth

with the home-making practices noticed and encountered in the field, both individual and collective, as well as the perception of the role of gender in home-making.

As the co-living context was an integral part of this research, a subchapter was devoted to the particularities of securing a private space within a communal dwelling situation, showing that the boundaries of private space are individualized and can affect the home-making practices, as residents must learn to balance their personal needs and wants with the context of the communal setting. The data analysis chapter was concluded with a look at the meanings and definitions of home the research participants narrated in our shared conversations, showing that materiality is often if not directly the most important part of home, then at least a relevant aspect through giving the agency and control over their surroundings craved by many.

CONCLUSIONS

The data analysis shows that both individual and collective home-making practices serve the residents of "Viskaļi" as ways to create and maintain a sense of home within the shared co-living environment. The initial creation of the private home environment is done primarily with the help of material culture. By painting the walls, installing different light objects, bringing in furniture and adding sentimental personal objects, such as photographs of loved ones, religious iconography, favorite books and coffee mugs, the space is being set up to create the sense of comfort, familiarity, and ease: all the characteristics of home. Intangible aspects such as lighting, pleasant smells and ambient music in the background are also employed to add to the individual character of the space.

The presence of nature is often essential to the feeling of home. House plants, freshly cut flowers, pets, the natural smells of essential oils, wooden floors and furniture, even the view of trees and the lake outside the window – all of these elements help soften the harshness of the industrial architecture of the monolithic building of "Viskaļi" and create an environment more gentle and pleasant, more easily perceived as home.

Being a part of a community can help build the sense of home through collective practices such as sharing of material objects, having meals together and the reciprocal exchange of different kinds of gifts, but the co-living environment can also affect the attachment to home in a negative way by stifling or restricting some of the individual home-making practices residents might be used to doing as part of their daily rituals. The complicated nature of private versus public space creates a need to balance residents' individual needs with the context of the community.

The interviews reveal that privacy is a crucial part of feeling at home, and if it is compromised, residents may struggle to engage in individual home-making practices, therefore preventing the formation of a deep personal connection with the space. This in turn makes them perceive the current residence more as a liminal dwelling place instead of a permanent and stable home. The research did not show any conclusive evidence of materiality being employed in the negotiations of private space, rather, this is done by constant communication and the cultivation of mutual respect among the residents.

Not only privacy, but also personal agency is a prerequisite to create a sense of home in the chosen dwelling space. One of the main ways this agency is exercised is through material

culture: by arranging and changing the lived environment according to personal preferences. While residents of "Viskaļi" do have the ability to set up and decorate their individual spaces, decisions on shared spaces such as kitchens and bathrooms are made either collectively or by some individuals, taking the agency away from others. Logically, in a place inhabited by dozens of people it is impossible to match the tastes of every single one, leaving some residents dissatisfied.

A brief look at the role of gender in the home-making process reveals that even though the realm of home and its upkeep is often assumed to be a woman's responsibility or even duty, it does not necessarily mean that it is an expression of gender oppression: it is possible to view it as another way for women to exercise their agency by controlling their immediate environment and creating the home they wish to live in.

Living in a communal setting requires being able to adapt to at least a degree of publicness within the living environment, as there are always other people present in the shared spaces and behind thin walls. For the residents mentally prepared for these circumstances, life in a community does not create serious issues, and instead provides opportunities for new social relationships and even professional collaborations.

As mentioned in the introduction of this thesis, alternative living models are not yet very popular in Latvia, but "Viskaļi", despite encountering some hurdles like the rise of the pandemic in its first year, has proven to be a sustainable and well-liked project, now having almost all of the available residences occupied. A microcosm of broader societal norms and values, this community has for the second time proven to be a productive ground for anthropological research. Future studies could delve deeper into not only the home-making practices but also the community building processes and their effect on individual identities to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how cohabitation in a large community affects individuals. I also believe that long-term research within a similar community could offer profound insights, highlighting the changes of residents' relationships with their living environments as they spend more time in them and can create a deeper sense of attachment to the space they inhabit.

REFERENCES

Adu, Philip. "Understanding the Art of Coding Qualitative Data" in *A Step-By-Step Guide to Qualitative Data Coding*. New York: Routledge, 2019.

Association of Social Anthropologists of the UK (ASA). *Ethical Guidelines for Good Research Practice*. 2021. Last viewed on 01.03.2024 at https://www.theasa.org/ethics/

Bachelard, Gaston. *The Poetics of Space: The Classic Look at How We Experience Intimate Places*. Boston, Massachusetts: Beacon Press, 1994.

Bernard, Harvey Russell. *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, 6th ed. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017.

Biedrība "FREE RIGA". "Par Viskaļiem." *Viskaļi*. 2023. Last viewed on 20.05.2024. https://viskali.lv/par-viskaliem/.

Carsten, Janet. "The Substance of Kinship and the Heat of the Hearth: Feeding, Personhood, and Relatedness among Malays in Pulau Langkawi." *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 22, No. 2, 1995: 223-241.

Cook, Julia. "Understanding Home Renovation as a Material Future-Making Practice." *Sociology* 55, no. 2, 2021: 384–399. https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038520954689.

Cuba, Lee, and David M. Hummon. "A Place to Call Home: Identification with Dwelling, Community, and Region." *The Sociological Quarterly* 34, no. 1, 1993: 111–131. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4121561.

Galletta, Anne. *Mastering the Semi-Structured Interview and Beyond: From Research Design to Analysis and Publication*. New York: New York University Press, 2013.

Glaw, Xanthe, Kerry Inder, Ashley Kable, and Michael Hazelton. "Visual Methodologies in Qualitative Research: Autophotography and Photo Elicitation Applied to Mental Health Research." *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 16, no. 1, 2017: 1–8. https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406917748215.

Grudule, Aiva. *Mājas kā vienlaikus privāta un publiska dzīves telpa, caur kuru tiek konstruēta sasaistība.* Fieldwork report, University of Latvia, 2023.

Goffman, Erving. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. 2nd ed. Garden City, New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1959.

Holding, Eleanor, Lindsay Blank, Mary Crowder, Edward Ferrari, Elizabeth Goyder. "Exploring the relationship between housing concerns, mental health and wellbeing: a qualitative study of social housing tenants." *Journal of Public Health*, Volume 42, Issue 3, 2020: 231–238.

Hurdley, Rachel. *Home, Materiality, Memory and Belonging: Keeping Culture*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.

Ingold, Tim. "Building, Dwelling, Living: How Animals and People Make Themselves at Home in the World." In *The Perception of the Environment*, 172–188. London: Routledge, 2000.

Kušķe, Baiba. "Biedrība 'Free Riga' izveidojusi dzīves kvalitātes dizaina institūtu 'Viskaļi' Čiekurkalnā." LR1 / LSM, May 14, 2021. Last viewed on 20.04.2024 at https://lr1.lsm.lv/lv/raksts/labriit/biedriba-free-riga-izveidojusi-dzives-kvalitates-dizaina-institu.a144145/.

Lapsa, Rūta, comp. *RTU Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, Transport and Aeronautics. Yearbook 2020.* RTU Press, 2020.

Lefebvre, Henri. *The Production of Space*. Oxford & Cambridge: Blackwell, 1991.

Mallett, Shelley. "Understanding Home: A Critical Review of the Literature." *The Sociological Review*, 52(1), 2004: 62-89.

Martinez, Laura et al. "More Than Just a Room: A Scoping Review of the Impact of Homesharing for Older Adults." *Innovation in Aging* vol. 4., 2020. doi:10.1093/geroni/igaa011

Medar, Katarina, and Aleksandra Čurčić. "Cohousing and Coliving: Comparative Analysis of Two Alternative Housing Typologies by Reviewing Contemporary Trends." *Facta Universitatis: Architecture and Civil Engineering* 19, no. 1, 2021: 81–92. https://doi.org/10.2298/fuace210329007m.

Miller, Daniel, ed. "Behind Closed Doors" in *Home Possessions: Material Culture Behind Closed Doors*. Oxford, New York: Berg, 2001: 1-19.

Miller, Daniel, ed. "Materiality: An Introduction" in *Materiality*. Duke University Press, 2005: 1-50.

Miller, Daniel. "Possessions: Ghosts as Estate Agents." UCL Anthropology, July 11, 2018. Last viewed on 17.05.2024. https://www.ucl.ac.uk/anthropology/people/academic-and-teaching-staff/daniel-miller/possessions.

Miller, Daniel. *Stuff*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010.

Miller, Daniel. *The Comfort of Things*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2008.

Nasreen, Zahra, and Kristian J. Ruming. "Shared Room Housing and Home: Unpacking the Home-making Practices of Shared Room Tenants in Sydney, Australia." *Housing, Theory and Society*, 2020: 1-21. DOI: 10.1080/14036096.2020.1717597.

Noland, Carey M. "Auto-photography as Research Practice: Identity and Self-esteem Research." *Journal of Research Practice*, 2(1), Article M1, 2006.

Oldenburg, Ray. *The Great Good Place*, 2nd ed. New York: Da Capo Press, 1999.

Parkin, David. "Mementoes as Transitional Objects in Human Displacement." *Journal of Material Culture*, 4(3), 1999: 303-320. https://doi.org/10.1177/135918359900400304

Pink, Sarah. *Home Truths: Gender, Domestic Objects and Everyday Life*. Oxford, New York: Berg, 2004.

Pink, Sarah, Kerstin Leder Mackley, Roxana Morosanu, Val Mitchell, and Tracy Bhamra. *Making Homes: Ethnography and Design*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020.

Pozzi, Giacomo, and Paolo Grassi. "The Anatomy of Houses: Materialities of Being at Home". *Anuac* 10 (2), 2021: 111-28. https://doi.org/10.7340/anuac2239-625X-3869.

Rotman, Deborah L. "Separate Spheres?: Beyond the Dichotomies of Domesticity." *Current Anthropology* 47, no. 4. 2006: 666–74. https://doi.org/10.1086/506286.

Viskaļi - Dzīves kvalitātes dizaina institūts. "Viskaļi" building in 2020. April 17, 2021. Photograph. Facebook. https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=101873778712575&set=a.101831522050134.

DOKUMENTĀRĀ LAPA

Bakalaura darbs „Materiālas māju veidošanas prakses kopmājošanas kopienā: "Viskaļu" gadījuma izpēte" (nosaukums angļu valodā: "Material Home-making Practices in a Co-living Community: A case study of "Viskaļi"") izstrādāts LU Sociālo zinātņu fakultātē.

Ar savu parakstu apliecinu, ka pētījums veikts patstāvīgi, izmantoti tikai tajā norādītie informācijas avoti un iesniegtā darba elektroniskā kopija atbilst izdrukai.

Darba apjoms (no ievada līdz secinājumiem ieskaitot) ir 91 451 rakstzīmes (ieskaitot intervālus, bet neieskaitot zemsvītras atsauces).

Autors: Aiva Grudule

Rekomendēju/nerekomendēju darbu aizstāvēšanai.

Vadītājs: Mg.hum. Kārlis Lakševics

03.06.2024.

Recenzents: Mg.hum. Māra Neikena

Darbs iesniegts Antropoloģijas studiju nodaļā 03.06.2024.

Dekāna pilnvarotā persona: metodiķe Margarita Lutere

Darbs aizstāvēts bakalaura gala pārbaudījuma komisijas sēdē

10.06.2024. prot. Nr. ____

Komisijas sekretāre: Māra Neikena

The bachelor's thesis with the title „Material Home-making Practices in a Co-living Community: A case study of "Viskaļi"" ("Materiālas māju veidošanas prakses kopmājošanas kopienā: "Viskaļu" gadījuma izpēte" in Latvian) was produced at the University of Latvia's Faculty of Social Sciences.

I hereby confirm that the research was conducted independently and only the referenced resources have been used. Further, electronic copy is identical to the submitted printed copy of the thesis.

The length of the thesis (from introduction till conclusions) is 91 451 characters, including spaces and excluding footnotes).

Author: Aiva Grudule

I hereby confirm that I recommend this thesis for defense:

Supervisor: Mg.hum. Kārlis Lakševics

03.06.2024.

Reviewer: Mg.hum. Māra Neikena

The thesis was submitted at the Department of Anthropology 03.06.2024.

Person authorized by the dean: study coordinator Margarita Lutere

The thesis was defended on 10.06.2024.

Defense commission protocol No. _____

Defense commission secretary: lecturer Māra Neikena