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HOUSED by CHOICE, HOUSED by FORCE - Homes, Conflicts and Conflicting Interests

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Architecture_MPS, University of Cyprus; Cyprus Institute

Abstract / Initial Proposal Form:

1. Paper / Proposal Title: The Genie should be out of the Bottle: Understanding the Mystery of Housing Production in Contemporary Turkey

2. Format: Written Paper

Written paper / verbal presentation / screening / short film / other – please specify

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5. University or Company Affiliation: Political Science Department, York University, Canada

6. Abstract (300 words):

Housing question is more than what is seen on the surface. It is more than a source of rant and easy money, and the crazy projects of the neoliberal governments. It is more

than a thing which is exchangeable in the realm of equivalences. It's more than a fictitious capital or a stock which can be bought and sold in the market place. This paper argues that housing is "a special kind of commodity": It is a social relationship that is dominated by the capitalist relations of production. The mystery of the housing as a commodity is determined by the historical, institutional and structural conditions. On the one hand, housing production is dependent on the general laws of capital accumulation at the most abstract level; on the other hand, it is historically mediated within particular social formations. Understanding the mechanisms how the house-building sector gets mediated through different phases of capital accumulation and different forms of state is important to capture the "real concrete," that is, production of housing as a commodity, formation of house-building industry and its transformation into the real-estate sector.

This paper claims that mass housing production is not a thing itself. It explores mass housing production in contemporary Turkey through an analysis of the restructuring processes of the state, capital accumulation and class relations. On the basis of my PhD fieldwork research in Turkey, this paper puts forward a critical approach to the conflicting and authoritative role of Turkish State in enabling housing market after the neoliberal turn in 1980s.

7. Author(s) Biography (200 words maximum for all authors):

York University, political science department, TORONTO, ON, CANADA

Ph.D. in Political Science, 9/11- in progress

Dissertation Title: The 'Benevolent Hand' of the Turkish State: Housing Development Agency (TOKI), State Restructuring and Capital Accumulation in Turkey

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