

Second Residence and Appropriation Process: Relations Between Subjects and Beach Houses

Haron Cardoso Fabre,¹ Viviane Kraieski de Assunção,² Maíra Longhinotti Felipe³ and Teresinha Maria Gonçalves⁴

¹ Department of Design, Universidade do Extremo Sul Catarinense

² Graduate Program of Environmental Science, Universidade do Extremo Sul Catarinense

³ Graduate Program of Architecture and Urbanism, Federal Universidade of Santa Catarina

⁴ Graduate Program of Environmental Science, Universidade do Extremo Sul Catarinense

Abstract

Balneário Rincão (State of Santa Catarina, Brazil) has been undergoing a major urbanization process due to the growing demand of the population for beaches in summer seasons. In this sense, this work analyzed the phenomenon of the second residence through the relationship of the subjects with their beach houses. The research is qualitative, exploratory, with semi-structured interviews and unsystematic observation. Eleven middle-class individuals aged 27-72 years participated in the study. The process of appropriation of the second residences was analyzed through the concepts of identification, personification, cultivation, sense of belonging, essential place and identity of the place. It was found that the subjects take ownership of the second residence and its use is strongly related to sociability and family and also to moments of leisure that often do not have in their primary residences in urban centers.

Keywords: space appropriation; Balneário Rincão; second residence.

1. Introduction

Historically, Brazil has been primarily occupied in its coastal areas, which has significantly contributed to the densification of cities close to the coast. This phenomenon began in Europe in the 18th century, and established itself in Brazil around the 20th century. The demand for these places increases from the actions of real estate capital, which appropriates coastal spaces and starts to explore the construction of second homes, producing changes in geographic space (Correa, 2016).

The definition of second residence in Brazil is complex due to the different forms it takes in different contexts (Silva, 2009). The research presented in this article intends to contribute to the understanding of this phenomenon from the relationship between the subjects and the places they inhabit. This perspective is explored by environmental psychology, a multidisciplinary area, which starts from the interrelationship between the physical environment (being it something natural or built by man) and the subjects (physically and behaviorally) (Melo, 1991). The environment influences human behavior, and this in turn ends up influencing the environment again, creating a kind of cycle (Felippe, 2010).

According to Bachelard (1989), the space in which one lives goes beyond the drawing space, the geometric

space, the physical space. In the author's words, "if we were asked what is the most precious benefit of the house, we would say: the house shelters the reverie, the house protects the dreamer, the house allows dreaming in peace. Only thoughts and experiences sanction human values" (Bachelard, 1989, p. 23). In this way, the place that a person occupies can be defined as his extension, in which the measures of the environment become his external measures (Bourdieu, 2013).

In this perspective, the house is not just a physical protection against invaders, losing the unique definition of shelter. Home comes to mean a family environment, a place of affection and satisfaction, and everything that is in or around it becomes home, especially the people who are part of it (Rybczynski, 2002).

Heimstra and McFarlin (1978) approach the environment as a multilevel system, which is always under the influence of each other: a room is located in a house, which is located in a city, within a state, in a nation, making part of a continent. In this way, the individual's behavior inside the room is under the influence of other existing levels. In addition, there are influences from other factors, such as the color and size of the room, the furniture present, which, depending on the usefulness or arrangement, can encourage a conversation or an action.

Günther, Pinheiro and Guzzo (2004) also explain that the position of a door (open or closed) and the individual's position (outside or inside) directly reflect on relationship issues. Even the way someone walks through it can show their current emotional state: someone annoyed who walks past and slams the door, or someone who opens the door slowly out of fear of upsetting someone. These observations show how people transmit their feelings to the home environment, and how it reveals them.

According to Eigner (2000), the family unit (family members) is intertwined with the house, because even if there are several people who live alone, most reside in their houses with their respective families. Therefore, family and home can be considered synonymous words. According to the author, in Ancient Rome, the family was not only composed of those who had blood or matrimonial ties, but also by all the people who frequented the environment of the house.

The concepts of home and home have undergone major changes over the years, but remain linked to the senses of well-being and comfort. The individual uses these spaces and their objects to build their references, with which they build their own world (Maynardes, 2016). Maynardes (2016) cites furniture as the main domestic transformers within a person's private life and, because they are produced by man, they transmit the way of thinking and acting.

The house cannot be understood only in the functional scope, as stated by Gonçalves (2014, p. 85), because "the environment is the subject's concrete experience, in which he works, builds his house, makes his poetics, builds bonds, clings themselves, they feel they belong to that place" (Gonçalves, 2014, p. 28). The author lists six important concepts for the analysis of the subject in relation to his home: identification, personification, cultivation, sense of belonging, essential place and place identity (Table 1).

Table 1. Concepts about the house appropriation process

Concepts	Definitions
Identification	The identification process, which is the first step in the appropriation process, is evidenced by the way the subject organizes the house, bringing elements of their culture, when "outsiders", or elements of their life history, such as objects that resemble the different stages of life. And when arriving as an outsider in a place, it is necessary to sew an interaction process that, without identifying elements, becomes much more difficult (Gonçalves, 2014, p. 99).
Personification	This other phase of the appropriation process is being perceived and captured in the ways in which the person organizes the house. The personification process is evident in the photographs displayed in the portraits and in the decorative objects made by the resident himself (Gonçalves, 2014, p. 101).
Cultivation	To cultivate the symbolic house is to attribute to it places where the aesthetic and symbolic dimensions of subjectivity are manifested. Memory and conviviality are also cultivated in most of the houses visited (Gonçalves, 2014, p. 101-102).
Feeling belonging	Feeling belonging to a place is taking ownership of it, personifying it and cultivating it (Gonçalves, 2014, p. 102).
Essential place	A house with a soul does not do without the concrete building, the architect's layout, the engineer's calculation or the hand of the simple man who builds his own house. This is the envelope of the symbolic house (Gonçalves, 2014, p. 102).
Identity of place	The formation of the identity of place results from the appropriation of space. Its constitutive components are perception, memory and affection with the place. Perception drives the feeling of identification. The identity of place is understood as the feeling of owning and managing a space through habitual use or identification. A subject, by appropriating a place, over time leaves its mark and, by transforming it, starts a process of reappropriation with the environment, placing objects with which it identifies itself (Gonçalves, 2014, p. 103- 104).

Adapted from Gonçalves (2014, pp. 99-103).

In this way, the relationship between the subject and the environment is also understood in a way contrary to what is established by common sense: we belong to places, and not only they belong to us. Because there

is a connection established with the places we frequent, the concept of “being owned by” becomes less strong, as there is this mutual relationship between people and spaces (Freire & Vieira, 2006). In Claval's (2004) view, this relationship results from a subjectivity resulting from the human look at the environment. This look is present in landscapes, which express themselves as symbolic forms accumulated in our unconscious. “Perception is a fundamental factor for the evaluation of man with the space where he lives and how he views the outside world” (Melo, Lopes & Sampaio, 2014) From the perspective of the cited authors, affectivity, image, memory and landscape make up the content of the perception of space.

In this context, it presents itself as the locus of the research Balneário Rincão, located in the south of Santa Catarina. Officially recognized as a municipality in 2013, Rincão, as it is popularly called in the region, has an estimated population of 12,403 inhabitants and, in high season, during the summer, it reaches 150,000 people (IBGE, 2010). Thus, the objective of this work was to analyze the phenomenon of the second residence in Balneário Rincão (SC) through the relationship of the subjects with their beach houses. In this sense, the study presented here seeks to contribute to the understanding of how the subject appropriates the spaces in which he is inserted.

2. Methodological procedures

The research was carried out through a qualitative approach (Goldenberg, 2004). Data collection took place directly, through the use of semi-structured interviews, made from a predetermined script (Gaskell, 2002). The themes covered in the interviews concern the subjects' relationship with their second residence, ownership of the house, sense of belonging and personification. Eleven individuals were interviewed at the place of their second residence, corresponding to 11 family units, who spend the summer period (December to March) in Balneário Rincão, but maintain their residence in the urban environment. The Snowball methodology was used to carry out the interviews, in which a subject who has already been in contact with the researcher indicates another subject to be included in the sample (Dewes, 2013).

Photographic records of the houses were made by one of the researchers, in addition to unsystematic observation (Creswell, 2007). During the research, the details of the residence were carefully observed, such as the organization of the rooms, decorations and investments made by its residents, as well as the speeches of the research subjects (way of talking about their residence and the adjectives used). The observations were registered in a field diary.

All participants signed an Informed Consent Form and in this article their names were replaced by fictitious names in respect of their privacy.

The interviews were fully transcribed and, along with the records of observations, they were categorized. For this, the concepts developed by Gonçalves (2014) about the subject's relationship with his house were used as analysis categories: identification, personification, cultivation, sense of belonging, essential place and place identity (Table 1).

3. Results and discussion

Research participants are aged between 31 and 72 years old, are white, middle class, and most are professors or retired. Only two of those surveyed do not have children, but do have an affectionate

relationship. Of the rest, all have one to four children, and some of those surveyed have up to three grandchildren.

It is noteworthy that 10 of the 11 research subjects live in Criciúma and only one resides in another city in the south of Santa Catarina (Orleans), which highlights the relationship of distance present in the choice of the summer place (Assis, 2003). Criciúma is only about 30 km away from Balneário Rincão, and this fact was very present in the discourse of those surveyed. All were already visiting the city years before acquiring the houses, with the ease of access and proximity to their home town being the most mentioned characteristics when choosing a place for a second residence.

All research subjects claimed to have greater contact with the house during the high season, which runs from mid-November to March. Some of them use the beach house all year round, going once a month for cleaning and maintenance, or sporadically on weekends.

3.1 The subjects' relations with the second residence

Through the study, it was found that the beach house symbolizes, for the research participants, a place of family and leisure meeting, contributing to the strengthening of family ties and friendship. The subjects' mentions of the house as a space for rest and relaxation also suggest that the second residence can be considered a restorative environment. Restorative environments are defined as places that allow or promote a process of restoration, or better yet, the recovery of psychological, physiological and social resources in some way affected by everyday demands (Hartig, 2011). One of the theories that explain this process, the Attention Restoration Theory (Kaplan, 1995), defends, for example, that restorative environments have the characteristic of favoring a sense of distance from places and activities that generate stress and demands (distance). They also encourage a kind of effortless attention (fascination), offer enough to engage the mind (extension), and are highly compatible with the intended use of the individual in question (compatibility).

Next, some of the aspects that contribute to this characterization and to the understanding of the second residence appropriation process will be listed.

3.1.1 Identification

The process of identifying the environment is one of the main factors that encourage people to get along with their second home. This can be seen from the moment the resident starts to bring objects from their primary residence to the beach house, or else that they refer to their place of origin (Gonçalves, 2014).

Some characteristics of the residence of one of the study participants, here called Maria, make her attachment to the place evident, such as the presence of some ceramic pieces in the environments and some plants (Figure 1). The ceramic pieces were brought from her house in Criciúma to the beach house, as they were items that were part of her daily life at her residence, and are now present in her second. The clay filter is a piece that the resident claimed to have brought because she likes the water it provides a lot and reminds her of her childhood, as her grandmother had a similar filter, which gives the object a relationship with the family memory.



Figure 1. Photos taken from Maria's residence. Ceramic vase (1), clay filter (2) and wall decoration (3).

During the research, Gorete stated that he considers the house great as it is, as it has everything she needs. His residence has plenty of outdoor space for leisure, with a balcony in the front bedroom facing the lawn, and a garage with chairs, which leads to the back patio. It is a residence in which the presence of open doors is observed, which refer directly to the relationship of the resident individuals with outsiders, giving an air of welcome (Günther, Pinheiro and Guzzo, 2004). Internally, there is the presence of various decorations, such as flower vases, ceramic pots and picture frames that were brought by her from her home in Criciúma.

The amount of items (objects and decorations) found in the aforementioned beach houses shows that there is a concern to physically fill these places, so that they can more closely resemble the residents' preferences. However, they are not the only factors that help in the process, as there are cases in which the resident already has some connection with the house even before living in it.

Janete's beach house, for example, has been present in her life for decades, being part of her history and that of her family. The house in question has had the identity of the resident for years, and has everything the owner needs, as can be identified by her speech: "I want the same comfort as in my house in Criciúma. I only get to the beach with the key, because the rest has everything. I want comfort, for myself and for my family". Comfort refers to domesticity, referring to the individual's private life within their space (Rybczynski, 2002), and it can be noted that it is aligned with the desire to provide care not only for themselves, but also for family members.

As much as some interviewees take objects from the first to the second residence, the latter cannot be reduced to a warehouse for things that are no longer wanted. Objects contribute to an appropriation process, no longer having only an aesthetic and functional function, and become symbolic objects.

3.1.2 Personification

The concept of personification is proof that the person has appropriated the house and puts his marks, his presence on it, through decorative objects or family portraits. The identification takes place through an

intuitive psychological process, emotional of feeling good in that place, of wanting to stay there. The personification can be observed through objects that are significant to the individual, the personification gives space to belongings created or customized by the resident himself and his family (Gonçalves, 2014). For a better understanding, let's go back to Marcio's house.

The personification of the place is evident when faced with the puzzle frame made by him and his son. It is an object for hobby purposes, made by the resident himself with the help of someone very close, framed and displayed in his beach house as a decoration, which makes the environment much more familiar, given the history behind the decoration. The customized table (that is customized based on your preferences) is another object that refers to the same concept, since in both cases they are decorations with a high symbolic load (Figure 2). In this way, objects contribute to the construction of an emotionally satisfying environment. According to Gonçalves (2014), the objects that are created and displayed by the user as decoration of the house personify the place by presenting the shape desired by the resident.



Figure 2. Objects of importance found in Marcio's house. Table (1) and frame (2) made by him.

At Gorete's house, there are plenty of vases and ceramic pieces, some with a marine theme typical of the coastal region, as well as paintings. Both decorations were painted by herself, which makes her sentimental attachment to her house very evident, personified through her own or personalized items.

Other decorative items that personify the environment are the photographs in picture frames (Gonçalves, 2014), which were observed in the homes of the research subjects, mostly portraits of family members in decorated picture frames and with words of affection.

In Rosane's house, the changes made over the years were the construction of an additional bathroom, the renovation of a bedroom to accommodate one more person, in addition to the construction of a garage, items that are important for the well-being of the residents. This addition shows how the place, even with its existing value, was still physically customized to be more functional and comfortable, because as stated by Heimstra and McFarlin (1978), the size of an environment and its furniture influence conversations and interactions between people. Furniture is another factor that contributes to this, and as observed throughout the research, several changes in beach homes have as a component some furniture purchased or modified. The personification of these environments (often referred to as personalization) shows how the identity of subjects and their environments are united into a single thing, which differs from other spaces. As seen, Maynardes (2016) places furniture as transmitting agents of man's way of thinking and acting, and that is why they are great transformers of these spaces. Thus, even though the residences surveyed have

characteristics in common, such as rooms with the same functions, they continue to be different from each other.

3.1.3 Cultivation

The care that a resident has for his space, and their attitudes towards this care, generate a feeling present in the homes known as “cultivation” (Gonçalves, 2014). The resident cultivates their tastes and habits around the house, and in some cases, they literally cultivate there, as we will observe below.

Marcio, for example, shows sympathy for his house in Rincão, mainly because it serves as a means of socializing with his family. The house in question has several physical modifications, which, as mentioned above, did not save expenses, all of them thinking about the comfort of his wife and daughter, as well as his friends who visit him. A cultivation of leisure spaces is identified, so that they can be better used.

Janete's house is a large house, with a large living room, five bedrooms, bathrooms and laundry area. When asked about the size of the house, she replied: “I have two children, and since they are very young, their friends often come to the house. In the beginning, it had few rooms. Due to the number of people it used to attend and even slept, we decided to increase it. Today the house has room for all the children, and even for my mother, who is 92 years old”. It is possible to observe that the main factor responsible for the changes in the house over the years was the cultivating of a family environment that symbolizes, for everyone, a feeling of welcome.

One of the main characteristics of Marcos' house is the cultivation present in different ways in the environment, which can be understood as a phenomenon in which the places manifest attributes and elements of aesthetic and symbolic dimensions, generated by the resident (Gonçalves, 2014). A great example of this is the deck he built to receive friends and family during leisure time. Marcos considers this one of his favorite parts of the residence, and says that he intends to build a house and a swimming pool in the future.

Maynardes (2016) states that residences are historically divided into: social area, intimate area and service area. The latter, focused on family relationships and the reception of guests, is present today in environments created especially to interact with visitors, such as the pool table. This shows how the second home plays a strong role in the enjoyment of free time and reception, especially when the owner is willing to invest for this purpose.

It is clear that there is a concern to keep beach houses cozy, designed to accommodate several family members and provide habits that residents end up not being able to carry out in their primary homes. Maria, for example, has two daughters who will always spend time at the house with her grandchildren and sons-in-law, which is why she has installed several hammocks in the garage, as she wants everyone to feel good in her home.

A similar concern can be observed in Paulo's residence, as the process of cultivating the environment is evident in the changes made to it: the house was bought ready-made, but the back was built after a while, and has a bedroom and a bathroom that were designed for your children to use. The house became something more, a familiar environment that inspires affection (Rybczynski, 2002). Investments like those made by the resident, with the objective of pleasing their families, are in line with this idea, in which the people present in the house are fundamental for the environment to become a home.

These cases are examples of the link between leisure and sociability (Simmel, 2006), and portray its importance for the construction of the environment of the second home. Thus, cultivating the environment is closely linked to cultivating family ties.



Figure 3. Plants and trees in the external area of Marcos' residence. Banana tree (1), decorative vase (2), passion fruit tree (3) and planter on the deck (4).

The amount of plants present in Marcos' house is another striking feature of his second home. He says that he loves planting, and he even cultivates some banana and passion fruit in the backyard (Figure 3), a habit he doesn't have in Criciúma. This characteristic makes evident the way in which his secondary residence allows Marcos to use it to carry out personal tasks that he does not carry out in his primary house and which give the place a lively appearance, according to his taste. In Paulo's house, the presence of vegetation in the environment was also observed: grass, trees, small and medium-sized plants, as well as a vegetable garden with vegetables he had planted.

Machado (2000) highlights that the therapeutic environment is provided by the coastal region, enabling a break from everyday practices, where the person behaves in ways that are different from those occasional ways within the urban space. Ppanek (1995) states that nowadays people are surrounded by artificial environments that inhibit our organic senses, which are replaced by unnatural things. As the researched person lives in an apartment in his city, it is noticeable that the cultivation of space becomes something so present and special for him, since the secondary residence allows for something that does not exist in the first one. Barbosa and Costa (2012) report that, with population growth and the expansion of urban areas that increasingly take up more space, people's contact with nature is reduced, and consequently characteristics such as clean air, drinking water and the calm provided by the natural environment become rare. The need to be in contact with this environment was highlighted by Assunção and Conceição (2018)

in a survey carried out with residents of buildings in a neighborhood in Criciúma, who reported that their trips to the beach are intended to be closer to nature.

In addition, the proximity and care he has with his garden make it clear how the external environment of his home is also personified and symbolizes his personal space. Paulo spent a good part of his life working in the fields, and now he has part of his history personified in his planting and cultivation habits.

3.1.4 Sense of belonging

This feeling can be understood as a result of the previous ones: when there is identification, personification and the environment is cultivated, the resident starts to feel part of it, ceasing to be a stranger in that place, and vice versa (Gonçalves, 2014). During the research, it can be seen from the residents' speeches how their secondary residences reflect this feeling.

A point to be highlighted in the research was the Christmas decoration that was being placed in Maria's beach house. She stated that she really likes the Christmas season, and that's why she has the habit of decorating, but she doesn't do it at her house in Criciúma, only at the beach house. It is evident how this is a very symbolic place for her, as the feeling of belonging is so strong that she chooses to give priority to her second home when it comes to decoration.

Talking to Janete, and observing the objects and rooms of the second residence, it is possible to see how she takes care so that her house is a safe haven for the family. In conversation with her husband, they already thought about getting rid of it, but when they stop to think that the house has a history since their father-in-law and also the strong contact that their children have had since they were little, and that so many stories have already been built there, they promptly give up on the sale. Her daughter comments that the house was bought from her grandfather and that her father feels a sense of ownership for it. It also remembers being the meeting place for uncles, cousins, family. It is interesting to highlight here the sentimental importance that the house has, due to its past. As Bachelard (1989) states, it is customary to keep memories of old homes and whenever a new one is acquired, childhood memories arise that bring with them a feeling of protection. In this case, it can be seen that the house is the possible setting for several happy memories of the researched person, which makes the residence a valuable place.

Thus, it is observed how the environment of the beach house, over time, comes to have a prominent value in relation to the habits of the owner, who prefers to create a pleasant environment in the second home, which at this point is possibly so receptive when its primary.

3.1.5 Essential place

The concept of essential place starts to be identified in homes from the moment the previous processes are present, even if in more subtle ways. This is because the essential place is the definition of the symbolic house, which starts to mean something more, which goes beyond the physical construction (Gonçalves, 2014).

This feeling can be seen when we look at Janete's home. She says that, from the beginning, the relationship with her house was strong. As she used to go to the beach with her friends and family to spend the day or the weekend, she promptly "fell in love" with the region and, consequently, with her second home.

Paulo, for example, pointed out that the front area is the favorite place in her beach house, as she likes to sit and watch the movement in the neighborhood. The approximation that the researched person has with the house, the care, in addition to the desire to live in it in the future, shows that Paulo has a great affection for the house, which in turn carries his identity. Sartori, Coronel and Vieira (2016), in a study on retirement decisions, found that most of their respondents intend to move to another city in the future. With the increase in free time, smaller and calmer cities end up becoming potential targets at the time of retirement. Oliveira and Cortês (2010) find that the beach environment is a place that encourages social and leisure practices for seniors, which can contribute to improving the quality of life. It is understood, then, that retirement is linked to this change in reality, in which beach environments are highlighted for being an escape from the old routine, both for temporary periods (weekends) and for a permanent change. Eizirik and Bassols (2012) state that, although there is a large number of elderly people who end up living the third age alone, the majority who obtained favorable results in their personal and professional life reinforce leisure and interaction with the family at this stage of life. Therefore, greater meaning is given to family ties.

Paulo is a resident who, in addition to having a very strong feeling for his second home, also has the same feeling of belonging to the beach of Balneário Rincão, which was part of its history and contributed to its development, as already seen.

It is possible to notice that, over time, the second home gains new intangible values as its owner appropriates it. The material goods that help in the processes portrayed above, at this point, are no longer remembered only for their physical characteristics, but also symbolic, as part of the affective environment. It is no longer just a place of rest, as it is an integral part of the resident's life.

3.1.6 Place identity

The identity of the place is the last of the concepts that can be identified in a secondary residence, as it is the result of a harmony between different feelings, such as personification, identification, symbolism, etc. From the moment a connection is established between the resident and his house, which has its objects and all its personality in it, it considers that the place is complete, with its identity (Gonçalves, 2014).

As mentioned above, Gorete considers comfort as the main quality of a home, and it was possible to see that his beach residence delivers what is necessary for that. When asked about changes, she immediately stated that she would not change anything in her home, as she likes it the way it is, and added that she intends to move to the same in the future, as she believes that the beach offers adequate infrastructure.

The identity of the environment ends up manifesting itself in several ways, as we can see in Marcos' house: his kitchen is custom-made, and has several decorative artifacts that demonstrate the affection that exists in the place. In the area in front of the house, he has placed lounging chairs, as he claims he loves to sit and watch the street while he rests. Characteristics like these allow us to perceive the feeling of tranquility in the house, which is also present in Marcos' speech, who stated that when he is at the beach house, he is at peace.

Maria stated that her husband (already retired) spends more time at the beach house than at her house in Criciúma. The decorations of the house and the actions of the resident to keep the place cozy allow us to visualize how she has an attachment to the house, as well as an identity that reflects her feelings. This

process takes time because, as in the case of João, who put grass in the yard, added the sub-floor, increased the height of the house, renovated and also painted it, everything was done over the years. The identity of the place is gradually taking the shape desired by the resident.

This is a concept that is very clear due to the satisfaction that the resident has for attending their residence, in addition to enjoying receiving people in this personal environment. During the questions, it was possible to notice how there is an emotion in their answers, often given with a smile on their face, gestures and accompanied by the act of showing their rooms and the decoration present in them. It can be seen, therefore, that the second residence, in addition to their material existence, is also symbolically built by them.

5. Conclusion

The second residence presents itself as a phenomenon that goes beyond material possession, being part of the process of constitution of the subjectivity of its residents. This could be seen through the method used in the research, which was important to understand the process of appropriation of the second residence by the subjects involved, and its intense relationship with the house. Thus, beach houses can serve as a subsidy for the creation of quality of life devices, which can give them the characteristics of a restorative environment. The relationship of the research subjects with their homes - analyzed here through the concepts of identification, personification, cultivation, sense of belonging, essential place and place identity, developed by Gonçalves (2014) - points to an appropriation process related to the needs of strengthening family ties, leisure and rest. In this way, the materiality of the house acquires symbolic importance, participating in the constitution of subjects and their relationships. There is still a long way to go in discussions on social representation and urban planning, in addition to the design of more humanized policies that promote a more sustainable living environment.

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