3 families for 3 homes. Trajectories and fates of single-family homes in informal Rome

Between 1945 and 1975, Rome’s population grew by almost 800,000 inhabitants, mostly the result of internal migration from southern and central rural regions. The booming housing demand associated with the demographic increase proved to be a challenge for a deeply unbalanced and inefficient local urban planning and a housing provision system. From the 1950s onward, a consistent component of this demand was oriented towards solutions provided by an expanding system of informal and illegal housing provision. The state – from the national government to the city administration – played a strategic role in the consolidation and perpetuation of such system through both passive inaction and proactive action. Starting with the 1960s, an array of planning and legislative decisions – whose most important episode is the 1985 amnesty, the so-called “Condono edilizio” – were mobilized to treat the phenomena while affirming a more inclusive although distorted understanding of legality and legitimacy in the realm of housing and planning. Drawing from the “housing pathways” approach (Clapham, 2005), the seminar addresses this vast nexus of issues from the point of view of the trajectory of three families who have actively participated to the informal housing system touching on key issues such as the relationship between urban informality and their migration projects, the mechanisms of self-promotion and self-design, the ways housing assets are being repurposed in the context of a changing family structures, real estate fiscal retrenchment of the state and a lasting economic crisis.