

## **Morphology and kinship dynamics of Autoconstruction in Ciudad Nezahualcoyotl: From single family housing to multifamily compounds**

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Autoconstruction is the predominant mode through which urban workers have procured housing in modern Mexico City. Since the 1970's, theorists have examined the growth of such neighborhoods at the intersection of formal and informal practices, focusing on the role this "progressive housing" plays in household strategies for weathering successive economic crises. Ciudad Nezahuacoyotl, established in the 1940's at the beginning of Mexico's industrialization boom and built over generations by families who arrived from the provinces to work in the growing megalopolis, is a classic example. Based on a mixed-methods study of 20 houses and the families who built them, we examine the primary morphological patterns and their relationship to kinship dynamics through time. New phases of construction are triggered by external economic or demographic events that give rise to the establishment of new domestic units, eventually forming multifamily compounds whose morphology is shaped both by material constraints and by the interplay between cultural principles of privacy and *convivencia*.

Now home to a third generation of inhabitants, some of these houses are entering a new phase in their life cycle, as they transition from a collective family investment to a potential source of rental income.

*La Neza*, once a peripheral neighborhood, is also in transition into a new centrality. We consider the implications of these patterns for a long-term analysis of autoconstruction dynamics in the megalopolis.