



Economy and Society >

Volume 43, 2014 - [Issue 3](#)

1,091 | 18

Views | CrossRef citations to date | Altmetric

0

Original Articles

Improvising a market, making a model: social housing policy in Chile

Ignacio Farías

Pages 346-369 | Published online: 21 Jul 2014

Cite this article

<https://doi.org/10.1080/03085147.2014.881596>



Sample our
Social Sciences
Journals



>> **Sign in here** to start your access
to the latest two volumes for 14 days

Full Article

Figures & data

References

Citations

Metrics

Reprints & Permissions

Read this article

Share

Abstract

This paper explores processes of market creation in Chile, firstly, in the 1980s as a market for social housing was initially introduced and, 30 years later, as existing market arrangements were adapted to organize housing reconstruction after the 2010 earthquake. Looking in detail at these two cases, this paper describes a type of relationship between economics and economic processes which deviates significantly from the currently widely discussed performativity of economics. Instead, a process of economic improvisation is identified that involves the composition of market arrangements without a pre-existing economic theory or model of the economic processes at stake. Improvisation, as this paper shows, is a key under-theorized element of neoliberal transformation processes in Chile and elsewhere, and crucial to understanding neoliberal action in critical moments. The paper also proposes

distinguishing different modes of economic improvisation and how these become economic models.

Keywords:

marketization

improvisation

performativity

governmentality

housing

disasters

 View correction statement:

[Corrigendum](#)

Funding

This research has been funded by WZB Berlin Social Science Center.

Notes

1 This study is part of a larger research project focusing on different policy instruments, governmental arrangements and urban projects introduced in the context of the reconstruction process, for which more than 80 state officials, expert professionals and citizen representatives have been interviewed. Research has been carried out in 2010, 2012 and 2013 with the help of three assistants, William Osorio, Sabine Biedermann and Patricio Flores.

Additional information

Funding

Funding: This research has been funded by WZB Berlin Social Science Center.

Notes on contributors

Ignacio Farías is a senior research fellow at the WZB Berlin Social Science Center and research associate of ICSO, Universidad Diego Portales, Chile. He has been a visiting scholar at Harvard University (2013), Goldsmiths College, University of London (2010) and New York University (2007). His main research interests are in the fields of urban studies, science and technology studies and cultural sociology. He has done extensive research on urban disasters and reconstruction processes, urban consumption and tourism, as well as the creative sectors of urban economies. He is co-editor of *Urban assemblages: How actor-network theory changes urban studies* (Routledge, 2008) and author of papers in journals, including *Sociological Review*, *European Journal of Social Theory*, *Space and Culture*, *CITY* and *Mobilities*.

Related Research Data

[Rhetoric in the Language of Real Estate Marketing](#)

Source: Housing Studies

[The Profession and Vocation of Politics](#)

Source: Unknown Repository

[Market technologies and the pragmatics of prices](#)

Source: Economy and Society

[The Birth of Biopolitics](#)

Source: Unknown Repository

[Calculated Affection? Charting the Complex Economy of Home Purchase](#)

Source: Housing Studies

[The work of economics: how a discipline makes its world](#)

Source: European Journal of Sociology

[Victims of the Chilean Miracle](#)

Source: Unknown Repository

[Power, Ideology and the Washington Consensus: The Development and Spread of](#)

Related research

People also read

Recommended articles

Cited by
18

Information for

[Authors](#)

[R&D professionals](#)

[Editors](#)

[Librarians](#)

[Societies](#)

Opportunities

[Reprints and e-prints](#)

[Advertising solutions](#)

[Accelerated publication](#)

[Corporate access solutions](#)

Open access

[Overview](#)

[Open journals](#)

[Open Select](#)

[Dove Medical Press](#)

[F1000Research](#)

Help and information

[Help and contact](#)

[Newsroom](#)

[All journals](#)

[Books](#)

Keep up to date

Register to receive personalised research and resources by email



Sign me up



Copyright © 2026 Informa UK Limited [Privacy policy](#) [Cookies](#) [Terms & conditions](#)

[Accessibility](#)

 Taylor and Francis Group

Registered in England & Wales No. 01072954
5 Howick Place | London | SW1P 1WG