Places on Becoming

An Ethnographic Case Study of a Changing City and its Emerging Residential Environments

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To the homeless

To my father,

To my darling wife,
& our precious children

Sammanfattning

Några platser som tidigare prisats av många blir långsamt platser som ligger övergivna och får sociala problem medan andra som byggts med liknande avsikter och med likartad bebyggelse fortsätter att blomstra. Detta gäller särskilt många stora bostadsområden i Europa efter andra världskriget och många städer i det globala Södern. Stora bostadsområden har undersökts utförligt sedan de kom till i början av 1900-talet, men ofta ur ett disciplinärt perspektiv. Dessutom har undersökningarna ofta fokuserat på enskilda aspekter av dessa omgivningar. På så sätt har kunskapen om hur stora bostadsområden utvecklas som platser när de väl skapats och vilken roll som de boende spelar i denna process förblivit fragmentiserad och knappast användbar för effektiva insatser inom urban design och planering. Undersökningar särskilt under det senaste årtiondet, har börjat visa användbarheten av begreppet om plats som ett integrativt koncept i bostadsforskningen. Denna avhandling syftar till att bidra till tvärvetenskapliga diskussioner om stora bostadsområden genom att utnyttja teorier om utrymme och plats från vidsträckta fält inom social- och humanvetenskaperna och genom att använda antropologiska och historiska forskningsmetoder. Den forskar om de många sätt och medel genom vilka stora bostadsområden får sin materiella och sociala identitet som platser. Det viktigaste är att förstå hur de boende uppfattar, mottar och tillämpar dem och hur det bidrar till hur platserna utvecklas. Baserad på ett sådant begrepp om plats presenterar undersökningen en kritisk granskning av den nuvarande ombildningen av Addis Abeba och dess pågående storskaliga bostadsutveckling. De boendes sätt att uttrycka sina behov, önskningar och värderingar undersöks etnografiskt och i jämförelse med de sociopolitiska, historiska och spatiala ramar inom vilka de äger rum.

Undersökningens resultat presenteras i fyra akademiska artiklar som sedan sammanfattas och kopplas ihop till en inledande monografi. Varje artikel tar upp den viktigaste forskningsfrågan (t.ex. ”hur bostadsområden blir till”) från olika vinklar: Artikel I (Historia, Modernitet, och Skapandet av en afrikansk rumslighet) utforskar plats som en konstruktion av socio-historiska processer; Artikel II (socio-spatiala spänningar och interaktioner: En etnografi om bostadsrätter i Addis Abeba) och artikel III (Hemlöshet i stora bostadsområden?) utforskar plats som en samling rumsliga metoder och erfarenheter. Mer specifikt utforskar Artikel II hur politiska intentioner och folks förväntningar och deras vardagliga användningar av rymd, form och plats och Artikel III utforskar hur hem och platser formas som ett resultat av olika former av rumslig disposition, inom de ramar och de restriktioner som bestämts av hegemonisk rumslig praktik. Artikel IV (Hållbar urbanism: Att gå förbi neomodernistiska & neotraditionella bostadsstrategier) utforskar plats som en produkt av särskilt paradigm av urban design/planering.

Avhandlingens resultat visar att de viktigaste processerna som skapar platser av utrymmen ligger lagrade i det dialektiska förhållandet mellan större strukturer (dvs. sociala, ekonomiska, politiska och fysiska) och vardagliga rutiner för människor inom den byggda miljön. Resultaten visar också att detta förhållande har en stor förmedlande funktion i moderniteten. På så sätt ökar spänningent t.ex. inom den förstärkta moderniteten mellan det globala och det lokala, mellan makro och mikro, mellan struktur och verkan och i sista hand mellan utrymme och plats.Men viktigast av allt när modernitet söks som ett ändamål i sig, som i fallet med bostadsrätter i Addis Abeba, utvecklas ett ömtåligt (dvs. ytligt och paradoxalt) förhållande mellan stora platsers identitet och folks rutiner som man kunde se av de svaga känslor för platsen (eller tillgivenheten) bland bostadsrättsinnehavarna. En slutsats av urban design/planeringspraxis är insikten att plats (eller hemvist) är företrädesvis en process och inom ramen för moderniteten är urban förnyelse och platsskapande försök omstridda eftersom processen avbryts eller undviks. Baserat på resultaten, framhävs begränsningarna och möjligheterna för urban design eller planering. Det rekommenderas att teorierna om hur en plats blir till vilket innebär förståelse för plats som en öppen process och en rumslig erfarenhet för vanliga människor som den grundläggande aspekten på plats – borde vara den väsentliga grunden för insikt och rutin i platsskapandet. Ett reflexivt tänkande i praktik och teori föreslås, vilket innebär en metod som omprövar sina grundläggande premisser/teorier och erkänner kontextens betydelse. Några idéer om etnografisk design föreslås som ett sätt att främja sådana metoder.

Nyckelord: platser; platsskapande; Stora bostadsområden; etnografi; modernitet; bostadsrätter; Addis Abeba

Abstract

Some places which once were celebrated by many slowly become places of desolation and social problem while others built with similar intentions and forms continue to flourish. This is typically true of a number of large residential neighbourhoods of Post-World War II Europe and many cities of the global South. Large residential environments have been extensively studied since their emergence in the early 20th century, but often from disciplinary perspectives. Moreover, studies have often focused on singular aspects of these environments. Thus, knowledge of how large residential environments develop as places once created, and what the residents' role in this process is, remains fragmented and hardly usable for effective urban design/planning interventions. Studies, particularly in the last decade, have begun to show the usefulness of the notion of *place* as an integrative concept in housing research. This thesis aims to contribute to interdisciplinary discussions on large residential environments by drawing upon theories of *space* and *place* from vast fields of social and human sciences, and using anthropological and historical research methods. It explores the multiple ways and means that large residential environments gain their material and social identity as *places*. The main interest is to understand how the residents perceive, receive and appropriate living environment, and how that contributes to the *becoming* of the places. Based on such a notion of place, the study presents a critical review of the current transformation of Addis Ababa and its ongoing large-scale housing development. Residents' ways of articulating their needs, desires, and values are investigated ethnographically and in relation to the socio-political, historical and spatial contexts within which they are taking place.

The findings of the study are presented in four academic articles, and in an introductory essay. Each article addresses the main research question (i.e. "how *residential places become*") from different angles: Article I (History, Modernity and the Making of an African Spatiality) explores place as a construction of historical and socio-political *processes*; Article II (Socio-Spatial Tensions and Interactions: An Ethnography of Condominium Housing of Addis Ababa) and Article III (Home-looseness in Large Residential Environments?) explores place as an *assemblage* of multiple spatial practices and experiences. Article IV (Sustainable Urbanism: Moving Past Neo-Modernist & Neo-Traditionalist Housing Strategies) explores place as a *product* of particular urban design/planning paradigm.

The findings of the thesis show that the key processes that shape spaces into places are highly embedded in the dialectical relationship between larger structures (i.e. social, economic, political and physical) and the everyday practices of people within the built environment. The findings also show that this relationship is highly mediated by local experiences of modernity. Thus, for example, when modernity is sought as an end, as in the case of the condominium housing of Addis Ababa, a fragile and often paradoxical relationship develops between people and their places as could be seen by the weak senses of place or attachment among condominium residents. One implication for urban design/planning practice is the recognition that place (or the home-place) is predominantly a *process*, and in the context of modernity, placemaking is highly contested because the process is evaded and people's relationships with place overridden. Based on the findings, the limits and potentials of the urban design or planning are highlighted. It is recommended that theories of *place-becoming* – implying understanding of a place as an open-ended *process* and *spatial experiences* of ordinary people as the fundamental aspect of place – should be the integral basis of *placemaking* understanding and practice. D*esign ethnography* is suggested as a possible way to promote placemaking practices closer to the multiple experiences of ordinary people / residents.

Key Words: place; placemaking; large-scale housing; ethnography; modernity; condominiums; Addis Ababa

Preface & Acknowledgments

My journey to this doctoral research began long before I was enrolled to a PhD program at KTH. Perhaps the earliest root could be found in my early college years at the school of architecture at Addis Ababa University. Despite my high enthusiasm to architectural design and my belief in its capacity to influence the poor living condition of the community I live in, day after day I was being challenged by the fact that architecture, as thought and imagined in the school, was more commercially-affiliated than socially-burdened. Perhaps I would have put my feelings in different words than these at the time. Looking back, though, I recall why I enjoyed the only sociology course I took at my third year of the study more than all the design and urban planning courses I had before and after it. Despite the poor organization of the course, the exposure gave me a sense of purpose that I was lacking in the other courses. My years of study at the school of architecture were far from satisfying and when leaving the school after completing my five years study, I left with my unresolved conflicting emotions of fascination in design on one hand feelings of inability to be socially relevant on the other. I guess that explains why I took a different path than most of my classmates when I chose to work in an academic institution than going into the highly profiting business of design practice. Nevertheless, while keeping my feet in academia, from time to time I used to sneak out to work on architectural design projects.

Several years passed before I got the opportunity to do a supervised research on issues that I felt matter to society and that I can contribute to as a trained architect and urban planner. The opportunity came almost at the price of abandoning all possibilities of practicing architecture and completely engaging to prove that I am worth to be accepted for an assignment of such higher level as a doctoral study. The turning point came when, as a Master's student, I took a course in housing and human settlement with Professor Dick Urban Vestbro. His assessment of my performance at the end of the course became the anchor both for my enrolment to the doctoral study later and for him to be my first supervisor leading me the way. Had it not been for his belief in me, this study would not have been possible. I am deeply indebted to him. His exceptional support when writing my very first research proposal and his personal recommendation to International Development Research Center (IDRC), Canada were the keys that helped to secure the finance that I needed for my first year of study.

It was also Professor Dick Urban who led me to my official first supervisor Professor Inga Britt, when his position as an Emeritus would not allow him to formally take the main supervisor role himself. The academic support I got from them in the first two years of the study helped me to develop my research topic on large housing environments in the context of developing countries. It was a great privilege to have them as my supervisors at such an important phase of my study. Their inputs were quite distinct and naturally complementary. While Dick Urban's comments mainly focused on helping me develop a research that is theoretically founded and has societal values, Inga Britt's comments were more directed at the research approach and methods. Later when Associate Professor

Tigran Haas took over the role as a second supervisor, Inga Britt's comments widened to include all aspects of the research. With her support that continued to the end of this study, she became the most important person who positively influenced this research work. Besides her direct academic support, her commitment to getting me to the end was made visible especially when I was stuck at different stages of the study. A typical case is how she helped secure me an employment position when my study was just about to be cut short for lack of finance on the half way. I cannot thank you enough for being such a support. Tigran Haas's help was mainly on practical issues of facilitating my research and providing me the moral support I needed continuously. My conversations with him inspired me to explore some key themes of relevance to my study. One outcome of our regular academic conversation was a conference paper we wrote to the 2012 European Network of Housing Research's (ENHR's) conference in Toulouse and which later developed to an article that was published at Open House International journal.

Several other people played important roles in helping get this research work to this end. Professor Halina Dunin-Woyseth, from Oslo School of Architecture was the discussant in the final seminar. Her comments helped improve the structure of the text, refine the arguments, and above all, it helped me see the strengths and contributions of my work that I can uplift more. Andrew Byerley, from Department of Human Geography, Stockholm University, in his role as the discussant at the mid-seminar and through his rich doctoral thesis on a topic similar to mine, was a positive influence in my work by challenging me to raise the standard of my work and depth of my arguments. Professor Göran Cars did the final quality check of the text according to KTH standards. His comments particularly helped in the final trimming of the text. I thank you all for your contributions.

I take this opportunity to thank other people who were in one way or the other helpful in my endeavour to reach my goal. I have shared office space with colleagues who made the work environment a great place to work at. From the earliest to the current, I cannot pass without mentioning and thanking, Charlotta Fredriksson, Yuheng Li, Ying Yin and Bosse Bergman. Particularly Bosse Bergman has been more than an officemate. We had several academic conversations that I benefited a lot from. I thank him all for all his support to see me get to the end but more particularly for the exceptional support he provided in the most critical stage of my final work when I needed it most.

I would also like to thank all colleagues at KTH, but especially those in our lunch group, whose friendship was simply priceless.

I also thank staff at the Ethiopian Institute of Architecture, Building Construction and City Development (EiABC), Zegeye Chernet, Nebyou Yonas, Merid Girma, Dawit Benti, and Dr Elias Y Alemayehu who were kind to offer their time and share resources when I needed it. A number of people from the Addis Ababa Housing Development Project Office (AAHDPO), Ministry of Works and Urban Development (MWUD) and the Addis Ababa City Administration (AACA) facilitated my work particularly during my field studies in Addis Ababa.

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My parents, especially my father Gedamu Ejigu and my elder sister Martha G Ejigu have always been my greatest supports and inspiration before and during the course of this study. The last, but without a doubt, the most important person that made this work possible is my darling wife Tsion Wessenu whose support was without bounds – as a loving and supportive wife, as a wonderful mother to our children, and in her "unusual" role as my research assistant during my ethnographic field study. I cannot thank you enough in such a short acknowledgment.

Above all, I would like to take the opportunity to thank the author of life whose marvellous works science would never finish exploring. Your light in my spirit was the source of my energy and guidance all the way.

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Glossary/ Acronyms

AACG	Addis Ababa City Government
AAHDPO	Addis Ababa Housing Development Project Office
AARH	Agency for the Administration of Rental Housing
AAU	Addis Ababa University
Bet	(Amh/Geez) Home or house
Birr	(Amh) Ethiopian currency
Chika	(Amh) Mud and wood construction
Dergue	(Amh) also spelled *Derg,* is a military junta that ruled Ethiopia 1974 – 1991
Equub	(Amh) mutual savings association
EC	Ethiopian Calender
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
EPRDF	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front
ETV	Ethiopian Television
ETB	Ethiopian birr
GHP	Grand Housing Program
Iddir	(Amh) also spelled *idir, eddir, edir* is a voluntary burial association
IHDP	Integrated Housing Development Program
Ihadeg	(Amh) The ruling political coalition in Ethiopia, EPRDF (The Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front)
Kebele	(Amh) Local government, the smallest administrative unit
ORAAMP	Office of the Revision of the Addis Ababa Master Plan
MWUD	Ministry of Works and Urban Development
Sefer	(Amh) also spelled *safer* is equivalent to neighbourhood

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

In this section I will first give a brief background of the study which is partly intended to suggest the motivation for the thesis, but most importantly to define the problem field. I will then zoom-in on the specific problem which is the issue of large housing environments – that is to say, everyday life in these environments and the eventual development of the estates to become desirable or less desirable places. The aim and scope of the research are then indicated. And significance of the study as well as organization of the whole thesis are provided.

1.1 Background

When writer and activist Jane Jacobs wrote her famous book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* in 1961, she was motivated by her disappointment with the post-war America urban renewal and modernist urban planning practices, particularly the renewal led by Robert Moses in New York which, in her view, was destroying the lifeblood of the cities. A large part of her book is accordingly devoted to showing what actually gives cities their vitalities – or more precisely, *what aspects of* cities sustain everyday life and what happens when those are taken away, which in her view, was what "orthodox city planning" was doing. At a time when many American and European cities were swamped by large-scale, technocratic urban renewal and housing projects, Jacobs' view was quite revolutionary, and for those who were taken aback by the progressive models of modernist planning, a serious offence. Despite the persuasive arguments she makes, particularly about the importance of traditional urban forms and the everyday life they support, her thoughts were taken as "axiomatic and a-theoretical from a scientific perspective, because Jacobs speaks to common sense and experience" (Adhya, 2012). Obviously, in a time when even sociologists were striving to be "scientific" by positivistic inclinations in their studies, observation could not weigh much as a scientific method, not to mention Jacobs' lack of training either as a sociologist or as a city planner. Everyday life, in Jacobs' conception seems to be an end in itself that all designing and planning processes should endeavour to serve rather than bluntly try to carve.

A decade later, on 15th July, 1972, the award-winning Pruitt-Igoe housing development in St Louise was demolished. The housing was part of an urban renewal initiative to provide a decent living environment for the poor by replacing the "slums" they were living in. The project's televised demolition spurred one of "the most famous obituaries in 20th-century urbanism" (Madden, 2012) and Charles Jencks' declaration of the date as the symbolic "death of modern architecture" (Jencks, *et. al.*, 1977). While Pruitt-Igoe's failure was at the time by and large regarded as a failure of architecture, some historians and

urban theorists saw the failure not just as an architectural or urban one but that greater societal changes and issues of economics and politics, social policy and even management were greater evils than the building themselves (Bristol, 1991). And several decades after the incident, a debate continues about what really caused the neighbourhood to decline from its position as an icon of progress and an envied place of residence to an infamous neighbourhood of violence, neglect, vandalism and an uninhabitable place to live in less than a decade after its completion. Debates about the decline of similar large housing estates continue to revolve around the architecture of the buildings or as in the recent case of the Balzac housing tower in France, residents themselves are to blame.[1] Bringing more light to the story of Pruitt-Igoe and its likes, a multiple award winning documentary "The Pruitt-Igoe Myth: an Urban History" directed by Chad Freidrichs was screened in 2011. The documentary very well presents the other side of the story – the voice of the residents which received little attention at the time of the housing decline, and which largely remained invisible in the discourses of the "Pruitt-Igoe failure". The fact that the earliest residents were happy about their new home, and that they remain emotionally connected to their place long after it is demolished is in particular a story that is largely untold. Instead, images of "failed modernism" and "failed public housing" (particularly in the US.) are produced and reproduced based on the partially told story of Pruitt-Igoe and other similar projects Evidencing this image, in its Sunday 9 April 2006 publication *The Guardian* under the headline "Is modernism dangerous?", a debate is conducted in which, unsurprisingly, one critic asserts the claim that the "modernist movement caused more human misery than anything else in history". The question is, is such an assertion really fair? For architectural historian Florian Urban, the answer would probably be "not really". In a more recent work, Urban (2011) investigates the history of similar modernist houses in seven cities – Chicago, Paris, Berlin, Brasília, Mumbai, Moscow, and Shanghai. His findings show that the modernist vision to house the masses in serial blocks succeeded in certain contexts and failed in others. Such evidence puts a question mark on the validity of the "death of architectural modernism" and "failed modernist housing" theses. Moreover, they leave us wondering about what kind of arrangement, in Urban's expression, enabled "boxes to become palaces or cabins"?

Much has been written about modernism and its perceived and inherent fallacies both in the context of cities of global South and global North. Thus, the intention in this doctoral study is not to add to the volume of literature on the subject but, in light of new developments in urban theory, to seek new ways of looking at the (local) forces and processes of large renewal and housing programmes and the subsequent formations and transformations of places. In this regard, it is worth noting new developments in urban theories of modernity that are taking a different path than submitting to Eurocentric conceptions of modernity and development that give the full ownership to the West.

[1] The "International Herald Tribune," in its Wednesday, September 7, 2011 issue reports the story of a troubled residential complex of 4000 units in a suburb of Paris. Balzac, built in the 1960s, according to residents was once a "magnificent" and "convivial" place where neighbours left their doors open and competed to outdo one another with balcony flower arrangements. Officials blame and even warn residents for the failure. The bulldozing of the towers is taking place following the then Interior Minister, Nicholas Sarkozy's decision to "clean" the place up in 2005.

Particularly in the context of Africa, works by a group of scholars, such as Mbembe and Nuttall (2004), Robinson (2006), Roy (2009) and Pieterse (2010, 2011), could be cited as exemplary in their attempts to conceptualize and enhance new ways of studying African cities as ordinary cities in their own rights. In these works, the realization of modernity grounded in the complex and subjective experience of Africans is emphasized. It is also argued that 'the importance of the lived dynamics of everyday life as knowledge registers providing more enhanced understanding of the ordinariness of African cities than what aggregate statistical representations could provide (Pieterse 2011).

The need for more academic investigations about how large residential places come into being may be argued firstly in relation to reported mixed results of success and failure of the developments in different contexts (Urban, 2012). But it can also be argued in relation to the continued implementation of similar controversial models of design and planning particularly in the global South and the prevalence of seemingly unstoppable political, economic and technological forces that continue to fuel the desire for grand and universal solutions (Watson, 2009). Not few find it easy to downsize the question by putting the whole blame on states or designers/planners. Challenging the enduring narrative that sees modernist public housing as a towing examples of state overreach, Madden (2012) argues 'when the topic is public housing, one invariably encounters the position that it was doomed from the beginning by misguided sociology and unnatural design principles. This argument rarely receives the scrutiny that it deserves' (p 377).

In fields of studies such as geography, sociology, and anthropology, there is a wealth of knowledge (both theoretical and methodological) about social conditions and processes that contribute to the making of places. Large residential environments have been studied as places, as could be seen, for example, in discussions of gentrification, segregation, stereotyping, loss of places or placelessness. Discussions of place and placemaking in urban design seem, however, seem to exclusively focus on public spaces and rarely make the connection between theories of place and housing. Suggesting similar tendencies in the practice, only few architects today find a housing project fascinating compared to, for example, the large majority, who enjoy working with public spaces or commercial buildings on a regular basis. One may observe how rarely the star architects of our time are cited for their successful housing projects, whereas they are frequently invited to produce and reproduce iconic buildings and structures in different contexts and scales.

1.2 Aim and Scope of the thesis

The thesis aims to contribute to the body of knowledge about large residential environments – i.e. how they are produced and develop as places. A central part of the investigation involves assessing the gap (or the matching) between grandiose visions and practices of the state (or of planners/designers) and peoples' aspirations, their everyday practices, and ways of meaning making. A second objective is to investigate how ordinary people, in their everyday life engagements contribute to the making of their places. the ways that peoples' positive role in the development of their environment could be identified, and enhanced in the design/planning and revitalization of particularly large

residential environments. By place, I mean meaningful locale (or setting) that the residents can identify and attach themselves with. At a context level, this particular inquiry will consider the social, cultural, and historical settings that shape the process. A study of context would thus mean historical contexts, local customs, cultural and social values that interfere with people's relationship with their physical and social environment. The main spatial focus is at scale which may be equated to the neighbourhood or the residential segment of a neighbourhood. The main research questions are:

(1) How do places become?

(2) What is the role of ordinary people in the making of places?

Of particular interest are peoples' micro- spatial practices, perceptions and behaviours. In the exploration, I work with empirical questions such as:

- How do people associate themselves with their residential environment?
- What are their perceptions of 'modern'? …of 'home'?
- How do they appropriate shared spaces and uses in it?
- What are peoples' ways of fulfilling their needs and desires in the built environment?

The questions are addressed through a study of selected condominium neighbourhoods in Addis Ababa which are studied ethnographically and as case studies (which in the research design is described as "an ethnographic case study", Section 3.2). As in many other countries, Ethiopia has tried to solve the problem of housing shortages during the process of rapid urbanization through what could be compared to a Western modernist housing model. An ambitious government programme for the provision of 'Low-cost Condominium Housing', in recent years, has resulted in the production of several thousand walk-up apartments in the city of Addis Ababa alone. About two hundred thousand condominium units have already been built nationally. Condominium housing, besides addressing the housing shortage, is considered part of an urban modernization programme that the city has been heavily engaged in since the turn of the century when the national economy began to develop. Since, its inception in 2004, many traditional neighbourhoods that provided homes to several thousand households have been demolished to give way to large urban renewal projects and the freestanding condominium blocks that are quickly filling the city. Understanding peoples' perceptions and views calls for some form of conversation with the people. Therefore, apart from desk reviews and observations, interviews are carried out with the residents about the housing area covering mainly shared spaces but partly also private spaces.

1.3 Significance of the Study

The declining liveability of many post-war neighbourhoods primarily due to social instabilities and disparities, are serious challenges to the sustainable development of cities in Europe and globally. In many cities of Europe these neighbourhoods constitute a substantial part of the housing stock. It is predicted that urban renewal in the form of the large-scale restructuring of Post-War neighbourhoods will form the main part of future

development programs in many European cities in the coming decades (URBAN-NET, 2010). The socially and physically declining conditions of these neighbourhoods, in recent years, have received tremendous attention in academia and political discussions. The conventional, rational solution to the problem has varied from upgrading the physical conditions of the estates to introducing new social policies and services in order to revive the social conditions of the places, as well as from privatization of the estates to demolishing them all together. Particularly in recent years, while improving the physical conditions of the environment is by and large thought of as the wisdom to solve both the physical and social problems of these estates, in many cities changing the tenure condition of the residential units to private or mixed type is also increasingly considered as an alternative solution. The result in many cases has been far from satisfying, once again revealing a knowledge gap as to how these places develop and how life functions in them. This thesis could be seen as one among many works aspiring to contribute to this knowledge gap. Apart from assisting in the search for solutions that benefit the users of the places, it can be estimated that the study of large residential estates as places can also benefit developers and cities at large in valuation work.

Obviously, this study is not unique whether in terms of theoretic focus or the phenomenon it looks into. And yet, it has its own peculiarities.

> Since the 1990s, interest in place (as opposed to space) has surged across a spectrum of social science disciplines including planning. But the empirical focus has been chiefly on cities along the Atlantic Rim even as vast new areas in Asia, Africa, and Latin America were undergoing accelerated urbanization (Friedmann, 2010:1).

Most of all, most studies on the subject of large housing environments were conducted years after the housing areas in question were developed. Substantial history and the memory of the early years of the estates and life in them are often lost over the years that accurate accounts of early experiences are impossible to achieve. The young age of the condominium housing programme of Addis Ababa, coupled with its consistent building form, make it a valuable case for studying the process that incites residents' responses towards identifying themselves with and thus adapting to or dissociating from and thus abandoning their housing environment over time.

Interestingly, like their counterparts in other countries, the condominiums of Ethiopia are introduced as remedial to existing "deteriorating" housing conditions, housing shortage problems in times of rapid urbanization; they represent social objectives largely directed at transforming the living conditions of the low-income or the working class; they are large-scale; they are highly subsidized; they are government provided and are centrally produced; they are motivated by a rationale for social goals and utopian visions for the 'modern', "slum" free city. On the basis of such similarities, an article in *Metro,* the popular Swedish free newspaper, in its 30 March 2011 issue (pp.18–19), under a heading "Ett miljonprogram tar form i Addis Ababa", likens the ongoing housing program of Ethiopia to the Swedish Million-Homes program of the 1960s and 1970s.

There are some features that make the condominiums of Ethiopia different from modernist housing in the West which the programme attempted to modify to meet local conditions. The condominiums of Ethiopia for example, meet some of the physical (building form) qualities that critics of modernist planning demanded: they are low and medium rise blocks rather than high rise towers; they are largely inner city phenomena rather than suburban clusters; they attempt to respond to cultural requirements, for example, by proposing communal blocks to accommodate traditional activities. For the engaged architects, these modifications are good enough to distinguish condominium blocks from "failed" modernist blocks in other countries. Whether the basic tenets and principle of the programme are different from their compatriots in the other countries is doubtful. And yet, this architectural twist from the highly criticized monolithic, flat-roofed modernist building form (which more or less became an 'international style') and the different context within which the housing programme was implemented itself makes the condominium housing of Ethiopia an interesting case to study.

Certainly, my inherent interest in the way of life in these housing estates which began to grow after my period as a guest in one of the condominium units back in 2007 has a central place for my choice to work on it as my main case. But the more I studied it, the more reasons I found why this case could be relevant to a wider audience than those within the country. With the emerging practice of privatization (may be appropriate to say 'condominiumization') of public apartments in Sweden and other European countries, condominium housing represents the future of multi-family housing. With some limitations due to its context, the condominium housing of Addis Ababa will hold its relevance as a test case for those in their early stage of 'condominiumizing' programmes, and in the future as a case for comparative studies. Its relevance also holds for the many nations of the global South and emerging economies which have not given up their ambitions for similar mass housing programmes. This is without mentioning that the condominium housing programme of Ethiopia is included in the UN-Habitat's 2006 best practice Database (UN-Habitat – website).[2]

The magnitude of the programme has won the attention of a number of national and international media over the years. It has also motivated public and academic discussions. Despite concerns among academics over the appropriateness of this housing model, however, not many studies have been carried out on it from an urban design/planning point of view. The intensity of the phenomenon of the large scale restructuring of the city has increasingly motivated a few official studies to discuss the overall technical performance of the buildings or issues of affordability (AAHDPO, 2005; CRDA, 2007; UN-Habitat, 2007). A growing volume of academic studies on condominium housing in recent years are graduate study papers that make rather general assessments of the housing programme (e.g. Bisrat, 2008; Routh, 2006; Abiy, 2006). The one exception in this regard could be Nebyou's thesis, 2007, which attempts to make an evaluation of the residents' living

[2] http://www.unhabitat.org:80/bestpractices/2006/bestlist.asp?order=CityTownVillage, *accessed 21 August, 2009.* For unknown reasons this entry was later removed.

condition'. During the course of this study, another publication by UN-Habitat (2010) was added to the list.

1.4 Organization of the thesis

The thesis consists of a *cover essay* (formally called at KTH as *introductory and concluding monograph)* that is followed by *four articles*. The monograph presents the theoretical and methodological research frameworks as well as the concluding discussion based on the findings of the four articles, whereas the articles present the empirical material and the findings of the study.

The actual writing of the thesis was very much influenced by the combined methodology employed in the overall research – i.e. case study and ethnography – often in the thesis known as the 'ethnographic case study'. Most often, I moved between the *context* and the *content* in carrying out the study and the writing of the thesis. Indicating this process, the first draft of Article II was written during my ethnographic field study, whereas Article I, which very much discusses the socio-political context, was written over a wider period of time during the course of the study. The way they are organized in this thesis does not, however, follow the order of their writing. Instead, they are organized to help reading beginning with a wider context first (Article I) and zooming into specifics (Article II and III), and finally zooming out in Articles IV.

Each article explores the making/becoming of places from different angles: Article I (History, Modernity and the Making of an African Spatiality) discusses place as a construction of *historical experiences* and social-political *processes*; Article II (Socio-Spatial Tensions and Interactions: An Ethnography of Condominium Housing of Addis Ababa) and Article III (Home-looseness in Large Residential Environments?) explores place as an *assemblage* of multiple spatial practices and experiences. Or more specifically, Article II (Socio-Spatial Tensions and Interactions) explores place as *experienced/lived in* space defined by micro- socio-spatial practices of the people; Article III (Home-looseness in Large Residential Environments?) explores place as *home*; and Article IV (Sustainable Urbanism: Moving Past neo-Modernist & neo-Traditionalist Housing Strategies) explores place as a *product* of particular urban design/planning paradigm. Here condominium housing is compared with another modernist/post-modernist practice in a different context, the HOPE IV housing programme of the USA.

The significance of each angle of analysis in terms of meeting the objectives of the research, and the links joining the contribution of each article, is presented in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1 The Common Thread – the main thesis and connections between the articles

The thread running through the articles can be seen in the three strands that constitute it:

- A Theory: *The becoming of place* investigated in the ordinariness of cities and of everyday life and within social, cultural and political contexts
- The Case: *Condominium housing of Addis Ababa*
- Umbrella Method: *An Ethnography Case Study*

	Main Aim/Objective	**Approach**	**Key Theories**	**Contribution to main thesis**
Article I	Discussing the historical, cultural and socio-political conditions that contributed to the distinctive experience of modernity and to the subsequent rise of condominiums of Addis Ababa	Historical review Ethnographic data (supplementary)	Ordinariness Modernities	Places as constructed by historically rooted socio-political processes and practices Modernity's mediating role in the making/becoming of places
Article II	Examining the interactive relationship between residents' way of life and the spatial organization and spatial quality of condominium housing	Ethnographic case study	Socio-spatial dialectics Appropriation	Subjective desires, expectations & motivations that partly arise from limitations influence residents' use of spaces and neighbourly relations, and ultimately the becoming of the place
Article III	Exploring how large residential estates (un)become home-places in relation to processes involving hegemonic production of spaces and residents' everyday spatial practices	Ethnographic case study	Home-place Power Appropriation Assemblage	*Home* develops in relation to set of conditions/ negotiations between hegemonic spatial production & everyday life, privacy & communality, ownership & tenancy, vision of ideal home & possibilities for appropriation
Article IV	Evaluating neo-modernist and neo-traditionalist urban design/planning paradigms in terms of their responsiveness to contexts that matter to place	Theory critique (through comparison of cases) Ethnographic data (supplementary)	Sustainable urbanism Neo-Modernism Neo-Traditionalism	Place as a *product* of a particular ideological paradigm

CHAPTER 2 THEORETIC BACKGROUND

The main research questions of the study – How do places become? And, what is the role of ordinary people in such becoming? – presuppose an established relationship between people and their environment. It will be necessary here to scrutinize this assertion, and in the process show the theoretic departure in this work. I will, thus, first undertake a brief review of the literature on people-environment relationships. Each word "people" and "environment" could mean many things as well as the relationship between them. Hence, this discussion is vital, not only from the point of showing the nature of the relationship, but also from the point of framing what aspects and scales of this relationship the study is concerned with. *Place* is the central theme of this thesis. Therefore, it deserves particular attention here. What is of interest for this review is how *place* has been theorized in fields of studies that have a particular interest in place – which, in my view, puts urban design and human geography at the top of the list. Thus the section on "Space, place, placemaking" in the chapter aims to review the notions of *space* and *place* within these two fields of knowledge. 'Placemaking'[3], 'place identity', 'sense of place', 'place attachment' are among the most common references to place, and are suggestive of how place is understood in these fields. But not to fall into repetitive and endless discussion, I avoid presenting them separately.

In connection to the thematic focus of the research – i.e. large housing environments, the chapter addresses two additional issues of theoretical relevance to the thesis. One concerns the concept of *home,* which I will discuss and theorize as a distinct kind of *place*. The other concerns the issue of 'modernism', which I consider a less useful concept here than 'modernity', since my main interest is in ordinary people and their ways of sensing and making places, rather than on the architects and their aesthetic aspirations, to which 'modernism' generally refers. 'Modernity' is understood as a wider concept that is expressed through people's changing behaviours, actions and social relations as well as the architects'/planners' cultural realms of thinking as they both belong to a shared social world. Even when so, modernism and modernity are inseparable as they are both interrelated aspects of the modern world, thus 'the history of modernism cannot be written without the history of the concept of modernity (and vice versa)' (Lefebvre, 1996:2). And yet, the relationship that exists between them could be an antagonistic one. According to Lefebvre, for example, modernism corresponds to the 'certainty and arrogance' of the modernization project and modernity to 'questions, and critical

[3] The word 'placemaking' is also written as 'place-making' and 'place making' by different authors in different traditions. The meaning however is similar in all three ways of writing.

reflection'. In discussing modernity, it will be appropriate to be aware of its distinctions with modernism.

There are more reasons why the issue of modernity became such an important concern in this research. One reason has to do with the deficiency of understanding about modernity in architectural/planning discourses. In relation to this, the architectural theorist Rem Koolhaas (1995) admits, following the failed promises of modernism '… a massive crater in our understanding of modernity and modernization.' From a similar line of argument Heynen (1999) shows how the twentieth-century architectural/planning thinking developed rather independently of the rich tradition of critical theories concerning modernity and modernism, such as those developed by the Frankfurt School. He speaks of:

> "[…] the gap between the discourse of the modern movement on the one hand and cultural theories of modernity such as those of the Frankfurt School on the other. If one realizes for instance that Ernst May (the architect behind Das Neue Frankfurt) and Theodor Adorno were both working in the same city during the same period (Frankfurt in the late 1920s), it seems rather strange that there are no traces of any intellectual exchange between them" (*Ibid.*, p.2).

The troubling fact, according to Heynen, is that even recent developments in architecture are being made without taking these critical positions into consideration. Thus, the need to revisit theoretic developments on modernity for proper engagement is not a matter of dispute.

2.1 People–Environment Relationships

The relationship between people and the environment has been common-sense knowledge perhaps for centuries. But it began to be of particular scientific interest during the late 19th and early 20th century when industrialization was dramatically altering the conditions of life. At the time, the common assumption was that social processes and spatial form are casually related, therefore, by changing the spatial form it is possible to transform social conditions. This *deterministic* view was later disproved after it was shown that many environments built with high social objectives such as greater social interaction, happiness and security did not fulfil their promises. Partly as a reaction to this, since 1960s and 1970s in what was most commonly called 'Man-Environment Studies,' many researches were devoted to studying this relationship from an interdisciplinary perspective. This field of study 'differs from traditional design fields in stressing man, including his social and psychological environment' and 'while basing its knowledge of people on the findings and approaches of a number of social and behavioural sciences, it differs from them by its stress on the physical environment' (Rapoport, 1977:1). Since then, many theories have been put forward by researchers working at the borders of the disciplines of sociology, psychology, and design. Rapoport, who may be regarded as one of the pioneers within this field of study, lists three of the questions that were asked by those researchers who were interested in setting human criteria for design based on the understanding of man-environment interaction: (1) How do people shape their environment – which characteristics of people, as individuals or groups are relevant to the shaping of particular environments? (2) How and to what extent does the physical

environment affect people, i.e., how important is the designed environment and in which contexts? (3) What mechanisms link people and environments in a two-way interaction? It could be seen in research today that these same questions continue to motivate man-environment studies. The current research is a similar search to these questions but predominantly focused on the last one.

How precisely was the man-environment relationship, then understood? What models and approaches were employed in order to investigate it? In his examination of the development of 'man-environment' studies, Altman (1973), both as a witness and participant in the field, discusses four 'models of man' that were adopted: (1) the 'mechanistic model', with man viewed primarily as part of a complex man-machine system, and emphasis placed on performance-related behaviours; (2) 'a perceptual-cognitive-motivational model', with man conceived of as an internal, subjective, inside-the-head processor. (3) 'behavioural model', which places emphasis on overt behaviour (or 'overt transactions between man and his physical environment') rather than internal psychological processes; (4) 'an ecological-social systems model', which conceives of man-environment events as

> involving: (a) several behavioural levels, e.g., subjective internal processes, overt verbal, nonverbal and environmental behaviours, which (b) function as a coherent system of interrelated, substitutable and complementary behaviours and (c) where there is a mutual relationship between environment and behaviour, each influencing and shaping the other, (d) in a dynamic time-linked sense (p.110).

And asserting that no single model is complete, Altman argues the 'ecological-social-systems model' holds 'considerable promise for understanding man-environment relations' as:

> (1) it treats *man and environments as the central units*, not men alone or environments alone; (2) it holds the potential for bridging between the approaches of practitioners and researchers. That is, it calls for scientists *to synthesize separate behavioural events into total organismic units* and calls for practitioners to examine social processes in an analytic fashion; (3) its emphasis on *multi-level behaviours* brings together several areas of the behavioural and social sciences; and (4) it views man-environment relations in a way which stresses *flexibility of environments and active organisms shaping environments* (Altman, 1973:111, emphasis added).

While this categorization may be limited to what interested psychologists within the 'man-environment' studies, which Altman belonged to, it evidences the interdisciplinary research interest that was developing at the time, and the gradual development of understanding about the nature of relationship between man and the environment. But, most of all, particularly the argument for the 'ecological-social systems model' highlights some of the fundamental conceptual bases of the man-environment researches, which could be summarized as: *singularity*, *mutual interactiveness*, *multi-level* nature and *flexibility* of the man-environment relationship. The four models, on the other hand, suggest the basic *levels* of interaction between man and the environment. Partly complying to this categories and ordering them from inside-out, Rapoport (1977) distinguished between the behavioural environment (where the action or behavioural

response takes place), the perceptual environment (which people are conscious about and to which they give symbolic meaning), operational environment (within which people work or live and which affects them), and the geographical environment (that is the greater physical environment). In light of this, the four models Altman discussed could be read as representing similar organization based on levels in which the centre is the acting space of the mechanical-man who behaves based on internal psychological processes, and at the very outer layer is the space of the social and ecological system.

Furthermore, each level is suggestive of the approaches that could be employed for the investigation. For example, the individual behaviour which is predominantly acted out in the context of a set of needs, preferences and values of an individual could be approached from an environmental psychological perspective. The social system which is expressed through social relations, social norms, values and social practices and behaviours, could be dealt with from sociological and cultural perspectives. By exploring residents' behaviours within and as conditioned by social, physical, and political contexts, my research lies at the crossing point of these perspectives. And, because of my primary interest in spontaneous interactions and relations that develop in connection with other processes than on rational choices and planned actions, my study off-sets cognitive perspectives and is more drawn to social and cultural perspectives.

Certainly much has been added to this knowledge in the decades that followed. The research themes listed at the webpage (accessed, 14.3.2013) of the *International Association for People-Environment Studies (IAPS)* [4] are suggestive of the development in the man-environment study and what has been achieved with these inquiries particularly in relation to the knowledge they generated for design or planning purpose. Among the listed themes are: spatial cognition and way finding; experiences in … residences, public buildings and public spaces; social use of space: crowding, privacy, territoriality, personal space; meaning of built environments; and theories of place, place attachment, and place identity. These themes hint at what aspects of the man–built-environment relationship are considered important today. It could be seen, for example, that *cognition*, *perception*, *experience*, *use* and *meaning* are given weight, and that *place* is a subject of theoretic interest as a link between people and environment.

In this stream of people-environment studies, the predominant emphasis has been on built and natural environments and the individual, while the social and socio-cultural environments in which all these elements operate have been peripheral aspects. The dominant thinking is based on humanistic perspectives where human behaviour and experience is central, unlike in to constructivist perspectives, where the effect of larger structures is emphasized. In this sense, whether it is man or the environment (i.e. the built and social) that should be considered more prominent in shifting the two-way relationship

[4] Since its official founding in 1981, *IAPS* has represented what may be considered the mainstream interdisciplinary discussions forum on people-environment studies on the international stage. The list is directly taken from the official webpage of the *IAPS*. The intellectual exchange in the forum has been targeted at 'the transactions and interrelationships between people and their socio-physical surroundings (including built and natural environments) and the relation of this field to other social and biological sciences and to the environmental professions.'

is a philosophical and practical challenge that remains difficult to resolve. Suggesting this challenge in practice, for example, in deciding how to distribute investments in revitalization programmes, there still exist tensions between whether the focus should be on the building renovation or on the social support. There is also uncertainty as to who should be the focus – the individual or the community.

Certain discussions within sociology and human and cultural geography have shed useful light on some of these philosophical challenges. Based on the understanding of *mutual interactiveness* as in man-environment studies, sociologists have attempted to elaborate the relationship between the individual and the social environment, as seen, for example, in Giddens' (1984) theory of 'agency and structure' and in Bourdieu's (1991) notions of 'habitus' and 'field'. In his conception of 'duality of structure' (1984), Giddens underlines an ongoing reciprocal relationship between structure and agency in which structural circumstances provide the means to reproduce social practices, and when social practices are reproduced they perpetuate the structure, making it a social reality in a new historical moment. In Bourdieu's work, the agency structure issue translates into a concern for the relationship between habitus and field. Bourdieu considered the *habitus* as an internalized mental or cognitive structure through which people deal with the social world. In his view,

> The habitus both produces, and is produced by, the society. The *field* is a network of relations among objective positions. The structure of the field serves to constrain agents, whether they are individuals or collectivities. The field conditions the habitus, and the habitus constitutes the field. Thus, there is a dialectical relationship between habitus and field (as cited in Ritzer 2011:225).

Thus, Bourdieu's attempt was to reconcile structure and agency by showing how external structures are internalised into the habitus, while the actions of the agent externalise interactions between actors into the social relationships in the field.

Despite these developments in theory, however, much of the approach to place finds itself in schisms of people–environment, agency–structure, and subject–object. Going beyond Gidden's 'structuration theory' and Bourdieu's 'habitus', Blokland (2008), based on Tilly's relational sociology, proposes a 'relational perspective' of place as a way to overcome the structure-agency schism and as an alternative to structuralist and humanistic views. She argues,

> relational analyses – […] and ethnography, in particular, facilitates this – do not begin with essences on either level, but favour bonds over essences: social life consists of interactions between social locations (individuals, institutions, neighbourhoods…) and social locations emerge from interactions (Blokland, 2008:34).

2.2 Space, Place, Placemaking

It will be worth addressing here one key question of relevance to the research questions: "what is place?" And "what is its relation to space – the common object of architectural/ planning engagements?" A cross-disciplinary investigation on the subject reveals some key differences between theories of place in architectural/planning fields

and in the other fields of social science and humanities. Theories of place arising from phenomenology emphasize the specificity of the individual's spatial experience and the idea of the *'genius loci'* or the unique spirit of the place (Norberg-Schulz, 1980; Seamon, 2000). Greatly influenced by Heidegger's philosophic writing (1951), Norberg-Schulz's "Genius loci: The Phenomenology of Architecture", (1980) serves as one of the earliest and most pivotal works for phenomenological understanding of space/place among architectural researchers. An important thesis of this text regards phenomenology's potential in architecture as the ability to make the environment meaningful through the creation of specific places. The architect's task is to 'enclose', to mark or differentiate a place within a space. Contemporary architectural thinking in academia (and only slightly in practice) draws much of its conceptions of space and place from this phenomenological understanding (Groat & Wang, 2002). Nesbitt (1996:29) for example, indicates that 'in the postmodern period, the bodily and unconscious connection to architecture has again become an object of study for some theorists through phenomenology'.

On the other hand, human geographers consider place as 'a particular form of space, one that is created through acts of naming as well as the distinctive activities and imaginings associated with particular spaces' (Hubbard & Kitchin, *eds*., 2010:5). Thus, *meaning*, somewhat like an added value, is what distinguishes space or a geographic locale from place. Therefore, the emphasis has often been on how places are created through personal attachment as well as the shared forms of meaning production. Concepts such as *placelessness* and *non-place* have been developed so as to suggest the loss of unique meanings of specific locations in contemporary society. The particular difference between Norberg-Schulz's conception of place and geographers' conception of it lies in how the space is produced or *constructed*.

Henry Lefebvre's "The Production of Space" (1974/91) is perhaps the most important contribution to the understanding of space and place. Lefebvre's conception of space has been the basis of the theorization of place by subsequent sociologists and geographers (e.g. Soja, 1980; Harvey, 1989). In particular, his assertion of 'social space' is closely related to place (Creswell, 2004). Arguing that '(social) space is a (social) product' Levebvre (1974/91) shows how the space produced 'also serves as a tool of thought and of action; that in addition to being a means of production it is also a means of control, and hence of domination, of power' (p26). By adding (social), he shows that space could not be understood only as being physical. He then blames the thinking in urbanism for being 'deterministic' and goes on to claim that 'spatial practice regulates life – it does not create it. Space has no power 'in itself' (p. 358). He then analyses urban space in terms of the 'perceived space' of everyday life, the 'conceived space' of the people who plan, control and manage it, and the 'lived space' of the people who imagine new ways of living in it. Thus, in the Lefebvrean sense, social processes are not to be analysed apart from the space as within the space, but as associated and continuously attached to it. While there seem to be similarities between the Lefebvrean view of 'lived space' and phenomenological views of 'spatial experiences', there are also fine contrasts between them. The phenomenological view of place emphasizes subjectivity and the individual's

sensual experiences and gives the duty of placemaking through design to the phenomenologist environmental designer. In a first-person phenomenological inquiry, the researcher uses her own first-hand experiences of the phenomenon as a basis for examining its specific characteristics and qualities (Seamon, 2000). The Lefebvrean view of place, however, identifies people – i.e. primarily those who use it, but also those who 'conceive' it, which in formal systems includes the architects and planners – as the key actors of placemaking.

Socio-spatial Dialectics

Influenced by the Cartesian mode of thought, architectural and planning discourses most commonly treat the social and the spatial as separate entities (Stanek, 2012). While this attitude may also have been common among classical sociologists, with what is known as 'the spatial turn' in social theory, the idea of the socio-spatial '*dialectic'* has been introduced as an anti-thesis to the problematic of *dichotomy*. Edward Soya (1980), for example, criticizes Marxist understanding of space for its failure to appreciate the essentially *dialectical* character of the relationship between social and spatial structures. He argues, "instead of sensitively probing the mix of opposition, unity, and contradiction which defines the social-spatial dialectic, attention has too often been drawn to the empty question of which causes which, or to endless arguments about pre-eminence (p 208)." Re-asserting Lefebvre's claim that "space is not a scientific object removed from ideology and politics" (p. 210), Soja reminds us to be careful in using the adjective "spatial" – not to evoke an image of a context for society – its container – rather than a structure created by society.

To address the problematic nature of place and its relationship to space Merrifield (1993) suggests what he describes as 'space-place reconciliation' – a dialectical interpretation of place, as opposed to a Cartesian view of socio-spatial reality.

Likewise, Dovey (2010) argues that, instead of making 'a false choice' between place as pre-given verses place as socially constructed, attempts should be made to establish a new position that 'cuts across the sociality–spatiality and subject–object divide' (p. 6). He bases his argument on sociological texts, such as those by Lefebvre & Massey to show that sociality and spatiality are constructed recursively. Taking these sociological understanding further, he endeavours to formulate a theory of *place* as an 'inextricably intertwined knot of spatiality and sociality' (p. 6*).* He then advocates Deluzian notion of *becoming-in-the-world* as a replacement for the Heideggerian ontology of *being-in-the-world* and based on it a 'provisional ontology of *place-as-becoming'* implying 'a break with static, fixed, closed and dangerously essentialist notions of place' (p. 6). As a theory framework, he argues for the 'conception of *place as a territorialized assemblage, defined by connections rather than essences*' (p. 7, emphasis added). He also suggests Bourdieu's concept of 'the *habitus* as an embodied world', as a replacement for the subjectivity-objectivity and people-environment divides. These ideas of inseparable socio-spatiality are analogous to earlier theories of 'singularity' of the man–environment.

Such a conception of interconnected realms may further complicate investigation of place, but provide a framework for a more realistic understanding of place.

Place within Space: The 'Spatial-Triad'

The inseparable relation between space and place, and the idea that place is a particular kind of space with meaning suggests that understanding place requires an understanding of space. In this regard, Lefevbre's (1991) theory of 'space' as 'socially constructed' has been recognized as fundamental to understanding space and place (e.g. Merriefield, 1993; Stanek, 2011). The primary concern for Lefebvre in writing his book *The Production of Space* was the expansion of Capitalism through spatial production. In his view, space served the capitalist system and the class structure within capitalist economic system to reproduce itself. He thus thought that Marxi theory should shift its focus from the means of production to the production of space. Lefebvre (1991) also saw everyday life as a place where capitalism survives and reproduces itself. He introduces his idea of a 'triad' (or 'spatial triad' as coined by Soja, 1980), to demonstrate how this reproduction happens. The 'triad' has three components: *perceived*, *conceived*, and *lived* space, and translates into "spatial terms" resulting in the second triad of *spatial practices*, *representations of space*, and *spaces of representation* (Table 2.1). The problem under capitalism, according to Lefebvre, is that primacy is given to the conceived which subsumes both the lived and perceived spaces.

Like Soja and Massey, and many other geographers, Harvey is also highly influenced by Lefebvre *(Knox, 2006)*. Based on Lefebvre's 'triads', Harvey develops a 'grid' of 'spatial practices' (Table 2.1). This 'matrix is useful in focusing our attention on the dialectical interplay between experience, perception and imagination; and in clarifying the relationship between distanciation and the appropriation, domination and production of places' (Knox, 2006:199). *Accessibility and distanciation* refer to the role of the friction of distance in human affairs. Distanciation is a measure of the degree to which the friction of space has been overcome so as to accommodate social interaction (Harvey, 1989:222 as cited in Knox, 2006:199). The *appropriation of space* refers to the way in which space is occupied by individuals, social groups, activities, and objects. The *domination of space* refers to the way in which the organization and production of spaces and places can be controlled by powerful individuals or groups through private property laws, zoning ordinances, restrictive covenants, gates (and implied gates), etc. The *production of space* refers to the way in which new systems of territorial organization, land use, transport and communications, etc., (actual or imagined) arise, along with new ways of representing them (Knox, 2006:199-200).

Table 2.1 The spatial 'triad' (based on Lefebvre's 'spatial triad', 1991 and Soja's 'trialectics', 1980) Source: Harvey (1989b) pp. 220-221 (as citied in Knox, 2006:200)

	Accessibility and distanciation	Appropriation and use of space	Domination and control of space	Production of space
Material spatial practices (experience)	Flows of goods, money, people, labour, power, information, etc.; transport and communications systems; market and urban hierarchies; agglomeration	Land uses and built environments; social spaces and other 'turf' designations; social networks of communication and mutual aid	Private property in land; state and administrative divisions of space; exclusive communities and neighbourhoods; exclusionary zoning and other forms of social control (policing and surveillance)	Production of physical infrastructures (transport and communications; built environments; land clearance, etc.); territorial organization of social infrastructures (formal and informal)
Representations of space (perception)	Social, psychological and physical measures of distance; map making; theories of the 'friction of distance' (principle of least effort, social physics, range of good, central place and other forms of location theory)	Personal space; mental maps of occupied space; spatial hierarchies; symbolic representation of spaces; spatial 'discourses'	Forbidden spaces; 'territorial imperatives'; community; regional cultures; nationalism; geopolitics; hierarchies	New systems of mapping, visual representation, communication, etc.; new artistic and architectural 'discourses'; semiotics
Spaces of representation (imagination)	Attraction/repulsion; distance/desire; access/denial; transcendence 'medium is the message'	Familiarity; hearth and home; open places; places of popular spectacle (streets, squares, markets); iconography and graffiti, advertising	Unfamiliarity; spaces of fear; property and possession; monumentality and constructed spaces of ritual; symbolic barriers and symbolic capital; construction of 'tradition'; spaces of repression	Utopian plans; imaginary landscapes; science fiction ontologies and space; artists' sketches; mythologies of space and place; poetics of space; spaces of desire

Source: Harvey (1989b) pp. 220–221.

Lefebvre's notion of space has also been useful in anthropological studies of place. Low and Lawerence-Zúniga (2003) for example, quote Setha Low (2000) to distinguish

> between the physical and symbolic aspects of urban space by defining s*ocial production* as the processes responsible for the material creation of space, as they combine social, economic, ideological, and technological factors, while the *social construction* as 'the experience of space through which peoples' social exchanges, memories, images and daily use of the material setting transform it and give it meaning (Low & Lawrence-Zuniga, 2003:20).

From the definitions, it is possible to see that 'social production' corresponds to 'space' while 'social construction' corresponds to place. Or in other words the tension between 'social production' and 'social construction' is analogous to the tension between space and place.

Place and Placemaking

In academic discourses, place, Gr. *topos,* is often defined by its components and attributes. In an attempt to define place Relph (1976), for example, identifies physical setting, activities, and meaning as the key components of place. Agnew (1987) suggests location (fixed geographic co-ordinates), locale (material, physical, visual form), and sense of place (subjectivity, emotional attachment, and people's relationships) as fundamental and

interrelated aspects of place. These understandings form the basis of theories of place particularly in human and social geography (e.g. Cresswell, 2004; Knox & Pinch, 2010; Gieryn, 2000). Partly building on these thoughts but highlighting the centrality of people in the making of meaning, the urban theorists Fainstein & Campbell (2011) argue that urban space gains meaning by a process involving highly interrelated and mutually reinforcing factors – 'activities carried within the space, the characteristics of people who occupy it, the form given to it by its physical structures, and the perceptions with which people regard it' (p 10). Thus, placemaking is everyone's job – local residents as well as official planners (Friedmann, 2010). Highlighting how people contribute to the making of places Knox (2011) shows that:

> people generate meanings about objects, buildings and spaces through routinized, recursive behaviours and practices in their particular lifeworlds, the taken-for-granted context for their everyday living. Often this carries over into a collective and self-conscious 'structure of feeling', including the 'affective' dimension of feelings, emotions and moods evoked as a result of the experiences and memories that people associate with a particular place (Knox, 2011:174).

Cresswell, (2004) defines place as *a way of understanding the world*, and as an outcome of *processes and practices*. Gupta & Ferguson (1992) give an example of how placemaking is corporately carried out, but where states play the central role:

> ...Discussions of nationalism make it clear that states play a crucial role in the popular politics of placemaking and in the creation of naturalized links between places and peoples. But it is important to note that state ideologies are far from being the only point at which the imagination of place is politicized (Gupta & Ferguson, 1992:12).

Place (or sense of place) is also described as outward-looking, defined by multiple identities and histories, and its character comes from connections and interactions rather than from original sources and enclosing boundaries (Massey, 1992 as referred in Dovey, 2010). To elaborate how place identities /or meanings form and stabilize, Deluze's theory of 'becoming' whereby place is understood as open – in a state of change, has been important (cf. Beyerley, 2005; Dovey, 2010).

The concept of place has been very important to urban design practice and theory in relation to its central theme *placemaking*. The primary aim of placemaking practices is 'to create places in cities that can invite greater interaction among people, while fostering healthier and more economically viable communities' (Madden, 2011:654). The notion of placemaking has thus been associated with the idea of *community*, or *community development*. Placemaking has generally focused on the creation of public spaces for everyday life. With increasing awareness of the importance of the use of spaces, recent approaches in placemaking involve observations and interviews with users of a particular public space in order to discover how they use the space, their perceptions of it, and how they think it can be improved. This information is then used as a basis of common vision for that place and for the eventual designing of the place. The success of the work is then measured by the intensity, variety, and changing use of the places. Although the idea that "spaces" become "places" by way of use is an implicitly recognized thought in placemaking practices, its theoretical formulation within urban design remains weak and

is easily dominated by humanistic perspectives that see space as essentially subjectively defined through experience – be it visual or sensual. These limitations have prompted some academics to look for ways to advance understanding of place in urban design and planning (e.g. Dovey, 1999, 2010; Easthope, 2004; Arefi & Triantafillou, 2005; Friedmann, 2010).

For example, Dovey, in a series of works (1999, 2005, and 2010) tries to build a theory of place relevant to design practice based on key sociological texts. Combining them with architectural approaches, he then attempts to apply his theories to a number of real-life case studies and design/planning proposals (see: Dovey, Woodcock, & Wood, 2009; Dovey & Raharjo, 2010). For example, drawing on three intellectual paradigms – spatial syntax analysis, discourse analysis, and phenomenology – and appropriating multiple methods and knowledge from diverse fields of study, Dovey (1999) endeavours to demonstrate how places could be studied in more diverse ways. While there had been attempts by others to study places with either or a combination of these paradigms, Dovey's contribution is different in his attempt to find the cutting edge of theory between fields of thought that have otherwise been distant from each other. Dovey (1999, 2010) also attempts to make, the often complex theories of power in sociological and political circles, accessible for use in architectural scrutiny. With examples and using theories, he shows how space literally and discursively 'frames' power relations (1999). And it is 'through both these literal and discursive framings that the built environment mediates, constructs, and reproduces power relations (p. 1).' People often take the built environment for granted. 'This relegation of built form to the unquestioned frame is the key to its relations to power' (p. 2), he argues. He relates this with Bourdieu's concept of 'complicitous silence' of place as a framework to life that is the source of its deepest associations with power.

And yet, the key contribution of the text in relation to agency–structure debates is the distinctions he makes between what he describes as 'power over' (control of the action of other) and 'power to' (a capacity to achieve desired ends) – i.e. power as a relationship between people and power as capacity. Historically, theories of power have been limited to the political sciences where national and regional issues are discussed. Dovey's notion/s of power crosses paradigmatic divides – it highlight aspects of Gidden's 'structuration theory' emphasizing dialectical relation between 'structure' and 'agency' and establishes fundamental understandings about social relations that are of relevance to power processes; it also emphasizes micro-power theories (proposed by Foucault) without losing touch with macro-scale perspectives, as well as his (Foucault's) theory of subjective power which goes beyond issues of power along professional divides, whereby in society some gain higher grounds to exercising power over others compared to some others. Going beyond these theories, and drawing on Deleuze (particularly his notion of *desire*) and De Landa (his notion of *assemblage*), Dovey (2010) builds his theory of 'place as assemblage' in which he argues that all places are *assemblages* whose very properties come from the interactions between parts.

Challenging narrow perspectives of place in urban planning and design thinking, Arefi and Triantafillou (2005:75-82) identify four ontological constructs of pedagogy of place,

which the authors argue, could advance urban design and planning when combined: (1) *'place as a set of visual attributes'*, which implies the 'syntax that makes the city' is visually comprehensible or as Kevin Lynch writes, the 'image of the city'. It also includes the discourse on urban visual excitement, and 'contradictions and complexity' as described by Venturi. (2) *'Place as product'*, which refers to the architectural typology and urban morphology. Here place is explained through its spatial characteristics (or as a set of reproducible ideas for creating a specific spatial entity). It is typified in Aldo Rossi's 'urban artefact' that changes and produces changes in a city's physical structure. Not merely functional, it is a 'mental and physical construct' with the 'aesthetic quality of significant form'. (3) *'Place as process'*, which implies the social and cultural production of place. The concept brings together the various aspects (spatial, social, economic, political, and cultural) that make place a function of events in time. Edward Soja's 'critical spatial perspective in contemporary social theory and analysis' and David Harvey's ideas of uneven development and political economy of place, as well as people as diverse as Henri Lefebvre, Rem Koolhas and Manuel Castells, all discuss place as a process. (4) *'Place as meaning'* which includes all the intangible, unquantifiable qualities of place like myths, territoriality, liveability and wellbeing. Harvey Cox's 'sense of place', Amos Rapaport's 'meaning of the built environment' and Christian Norberg-Shulz's discussions on 'intention' and 'phenomenology' all treat place as meaning. It also covers Christopher Day's ideas of the 'spirit' and healing aspects of environment.

These categories not only suggest the multiple dimensions of place and the multiple ways space becomes place, but also remind us of the limitations in approaches and the possibility for theoretical improvement in urban design and planning thinking.

2.3 The Home-place

In urban studies, a distinction has long been made between notions of 'house' and 'home'. While 'home' has an implicit reference to place, 'house' is essentially related to the physical object and its location. This categorization has, however been criticized, based on the grounds that the process of constructing the house itself, like in the case of most informal settlements could be regarded as part of the home-making process (cf. Kellett & Moore, 2003) Despite the broad scale it may represent (such as the individual housing unit, the neighbourhood and the city), the 'home' is often discussed in relation to a narrower scale of the individual housing unit. However, the experience of home is often considered as a static container rather than as an open process (Rapoport, 1995). Thus the need for more explicit conceptualization of home as a place is evident. Some earlier attempts in this regard include Heidegger (1975), Dovey (1985), Lawrence (1987), Rapoport (1995), Dupuis & Thorns (1998) and more recent examples include Moore (2000, 2003), Easthope (2004), Mallett (2004), Dayaratne & Kellett (2008), Reinders & Van Der Land (2008), and Robertson (2013).

Heidegger provides the basic theory that helped to understand home as a kind of place related to one's *ontology of being*. To show this, Heidegger, in his ground-breaking work "Building, Dwelling, and Thinking", 1975, first challenges the common view that relates building and dwelling as means and end. The means–end schema, according to him,

blocks our view of essential relations (p. 144). Heidegger goes back to the Old English and High German roots of the word to demonstrate that the term 'dwelling' describes the way that mortal people are on earth, and that it is a verb which conveys a sense of continuous being which unites the human subjects with their environment. Accordingly, he argues that building belongs to dwelling. This view of 'dwelling' as the ideal kind of authentic existence offers the basis to conceptualize the home as a fundamental place of being and a kind of metaphor for place in general.

Home is also described as a kind of place, signified by an *ontological security*. Dupuis & Thorns (1998) argue that ontological security is maintained when the following four conditions are met (p 29):

> (i) home is the site of constancy in the social and material environment.
> (ii) home is a spatial context in which the day to day routines of human existence are performed.
> (iii) home is a site where people feel most in control of their lives because they feel free from the surveillance that is part of the contemporary world.
> (iv) home is a secure base around which identities are constructed.

Mallett (2004) describes home as *haven*, or as a refuge – a place where people can retreat and relax. Related to this view is the idea of home as private (*cf.* Dovey, 1985).

The common understanding in several texts distinguishes 'home' from house in that the former is a relationship – an experienced meaning (Dovey, 1985; Lawrence, 1987). With the rise of the modern movement in architecture and planning and mass-produced housing, however, the house began to be conceived as a 'machine-for-living-in', a piece of technology (Dovey, 1985). Dovey introduces the word 'homelessness' to refer to the loss of a deep connection between people and the home place. The notion of 'homelessness' pictures the 'home' as:

> an integrative schema that is at once the bonding of person and place and, a set of connections between the experience of dwelling and the wider spatial, temporal, and sociocultural context within which it emerges. Home orients us and connects us with the past, the future, the physical environment, and our social world. (Dovey, 1985:9)

This formation is useful, but does not fully capture the dynamic process through which the home-place comes into being. To complement the understanding of home as *connectedness*, Dovey, suggests a view as *dialectics* – i.e. the home as spatial dialectics, social dialectics and dialectics of appropriation, the most important of which is the last according to him. The *spatial dialectics* is firstly 'a dialectic between inside and outside' (p 10), but it also conceives the home as a place of 'security within an insecure world', a place of certainty within doubt', 'a familiar place in it strange world', 'a sacred place in a profane world' (p 10) 'a place of autonomy and power in an increasingly heteronomous world where others make the rules' (p 10). The home as *social dialectics* emphasises the 'negotiation and representation of identity through the oppositions of self/other, identity/community, and private/ public' (p 10). The idea of *dialectics of appropriation* draws on Heidegger's phenomenological view of the home as a mode of being-in-the-world. The *dialectics of appropriation* is then the 'process through which we take aspects

of our world into our being and are in turn taken by our world (p 11). Indicating how this exchange takes place, Dovey argues:

> it is through our engagement—with the world, our dwelling, embodying both caring and taking, that the world discloses itself. As we open ourselves to the world of things and places we bring them meaning, and at the same time these things and places lend meaning to our sense of identity. (Dovey, 1985:11)

Like Dovey, Easthope (2004) recognizes the strong connection between place and people's identities. But, she makes a distinction between two kinds of relationship between people and their place: *rootedness* and a *sense of place* (or topophilia). She describes 'rootedness' as being 'at home' in an unselfconscious way, while 'sense of place' is a 'conscious appreciation of place' (p 137).

The notion of home, or home-making as a *process* is introduced to indicate that people through building, appropriation and interaction create their home, and in the process of which they simultaneously form their identity and find their sense of inclusion (Dovey, 1985; Kellett & Moore, 2003; Dayaratne & Kellett, 2008).

Home is also described as 'a complex entity that defines and is defined by cultural, socio-demographic, psychological, political, and economic factors' (Lawrence, 1987:155). Arguing that the relationship between these factors is reciprocal, Lawrence calls for 'a dual historical perspective' that 'explicitly relates the long-term architectural and social history of housing units in specific localities to those short-term processes concerning the construction, decoration, and maintenance of homes by particular households or individuals' (Lawrence 1987:156). This gives a useful theoretical perspective to investigate the condominiums of Addis Ababa both as an ongoing place/home-making process and as a place/home being experienced.

2.4 Forms and Spaces of Modernity

In his seminal work *All That is Solid Melts into Air, the Experience of Modernity*, the American philosopher Marshal Berman (1982) gives one of the most recognized illustrations of modernity among sociologists. Defining the individual's experience of modernity, he writes:

> To be modern is to find ourselves in an environment that promises us adventure, power, joy, growth, transformation of ourselves and the world—and, at the same time, that threatens to destroy everything we have, everything we know, everything we are. Modern experiences and environments cut across all boundaries… in this sense, modernity can be said to unite all mankind. But it is a paradoxical unity, a unity of disunity: it pours us all into a maelstrom of perpetual disintegration and renewal, of struggle and contradiction, of ambiguity and anguish (p15).

A key feature of 'modernity', according to Berman's expression is the flow as well as the conflict between self the society and between the established and the new. The flow is also captured in Gidden's (1990) metaphor of modernity as a 'juggernaut' to describe the dynamics in an advanced stage of modernity—radical, high, or late modernity:

> a runaway engine of enormous power which, collectively as human beings, we can drive to some extent but which also threatens to rush out of our control and which could rend itself

> asunder. The juggernaut crushes those who resist it, and while it sometimes seems to have a steady path, there are times when it veers away erratically in directions we cannot foresee. The ride is by no means wholly unpleasant or unrewarding; it can often be exhilarating and charged with hopeful anticipation. But, so long as the institutions of modernity endure, we shall never be able to control completely either the path or the pace of the journey. In turn, we shall never be able to feel entirely secure, because the terrain across which it runs is fraught with risks of high consequence. (Giddens, 1990:139)

The idea of modernity as a 'juggernaut', however, does not fit well with Giddens's emphasis on the power of the agent. The consistency of this representation of modernity as a 'juggernaut' with his theory of 'structuration' has thus been questioned (Ritzer, 2011). But, above all, this form of modernity does not describe all the stages or levels of modernity as Giddens also attempts to essentially associate it with 'late modernity'. The view of modernity as periodized or as having different expressions in different stages of its development is shared by many (e.g. Calinescu, 1987; Berman, 1982). For example, Calinescu identifies what he calls the 'five faces of modernity': modernism, avant-garde, decadence, kitsch and postmodernism. Such a treatment of modernity as an epoch is also common in much of the architectural literature (Nesbitt, 1996). Foucault (1984) considers modernity not so much as an epoch or a period, but as an 'attitude' which he describes as '…a mode of relating to contemporary reality; a voluntary choice made by certain people; … a way of thinking and feeling; a way too, of acting and behaving that at one and the same time marks a relation of belonging and presents itself as a task. A little no doubt, like what the Greeks called an 'ethos' (p39). Therefore, rather than …seeking to distinguish premodernity, modernity, and postmodernity, he argues, 'it is more useful to chart the struggle of the attitude of modernity with that of countermodernity.' And arguing against the view of modernity 'in terms of consciousness of the discontinuity of time: a break with tradition, a feeling of novelty, of vertigo in the face of the passing moment' Foucault contends that 'modernity is distinct from fashion, which does no more than call into question the course of time; modernity is the attitude that makes it possible to grasp the 'heroic' aspect of the present moment. Modernity is not a phenomenon of sensitivity to the fleeting present; it is the will to 'heroize' the present.'

Cultural Embeddedness of Modernity

More often than not, 'modern' and 'traditional' are treated as binary oppositions both in scholarly and popular discourses. In architectural discourses, the relationship between the 'modern' and the 'traditional' is seen as incompatible, as could be seen in the widely discussed subject of architectural modernism, which is largely criminalized for its radical approaches to replacing existing forms. 'Modernism' in the arts and literature is highly regarded as an approach that radically breaks with traditional forms and styles. Architecture shares this view in the arts rather than understanding of modernism in sociology. Whereas in sociology, the word 'modernity' is used more often than 'modernism' to refer to an intellectual/cultural influence in Western thought since the eighteenth century, in architecture 'modernism' is recognized as a movement that was inspired by architects of particularly the mid-20th century, the most notable being Le Corbusier, who, driven by a utopian vision for a 'modern city' committed to transforming

the way of life by means of radically new urban and building forms. In reference to the style – a purely functional building, well designed and true to its materials, would be beautiful and would not need ornamentation – the word 'functionalism' is interchangeably used with architectural modernism. Louise Sullivan's "form ever follows function" and Mies van der Rohe's "Less is More" were the underlying principles of much of modern architecture. In his latest book *From a Cause to a Style: Modernist Architecture's Encounter with the American City*, urban sociologist and architecture critic Nathan Glazar (2007) shows that, in fact, modernism started as a social cause and ended up being a style in form.

However, the narrow emphasis on the physical expressions of much wider societal experiences adds little to our understandings of 'modern' and 'traditional'. Instead, much could be learnt from sociological perspectives that discuss modernity as a culturally embedded phenomenon. Among others, for example, Gustfield (1967) has intelligently challenged binary oppositions between modernity and tradition. Describing it as 'misplaced polarities' and 'fallacies', he attacks views that see traditional societies as static, normatively consistent, or structurally homogeneous. The relations between the traditional and the modern do not necessarily involve displacement, conflict, or exclusiveness. This understanding is fundamental in the later theoretical developments that helped detach the notion of modernity from its geographic centeredness (in Europe) and from narrow expressions in built form.

Multiple Modernities

While modernism in the "Western states" is said to be the result of industrialization and social and cultural transformations, in the low-income countries it is generally considered to have been imposed by colonial powers or imported by post-colonial governments, or prescribed by NGOs and funding agents. Social theorists have also long presented modernity as a distinctively Western project. Thus theories on the subject suffer from a normative bias towards 'eurocentrism'. As a counter theory to 'Eurocentric conception of modernity', a 'multiple modernities' paradigm has been proposed since the late 1990s (e.g. Eisenstadt, 1998, 2000; Spohn, 2003; Robinson, 2006; Fourie, 2012). This recognition of the universal and the subjective local is what Roudometof (2003) attempts to conceptualize as 'global modernities'. In the formulation, 'global modernities' thematises modernity in terms of 'form' and 'content'. In terms of 'form', argues Roudometof, 'modernity is globalized' as is 'evident in the construction of a world culture consisting of formal rules and regulations'. In terms of 'content', modernity is localized, thereby producing global modernities, each of which is shaped by the particular historical specificity of a cultural context and the ways in which particular regions and civilizations have interacted with each other over the course of the last several centuries. This view gives a possibility of acknowledging the global forces of cultural homogenization while at the same time appreciating local contexts that continue to counter act, modify and localize global forms.

Taking ideas of multiple modernities further, Jennifer Robinson (2006), in her pioneering work *Ordinary Cities: Between Modernity and Development*, challenges the

bias in urban theory that ascribes the concept of 'modernity' to Western societies and cities while assuming the "non-Western" as 'closed', 'traditional', or unchanging. Against this idea of "otherness" in discussions of 'modernity' she proposes what she calls a 'cosmopolitan approach to urban modernity' that sees all cities as 'ordinary cities' – in this case, cities, 'both assembling and inventing diverse ways of being modern'. She argues, 'forms of urban modernity everywhere are as likely to be borrowed as created anew; as likely to absorb or to adapt durable cultural forms as to abandon them for new ones' (p 90). Drawing on concepts of 'multiple modernities,' Roy (2005) calls for 'new geographies' of imagination and epistemology in the production of urban and regional theory in the global South. Particularly in the context of Africa, works by group of scholars, such as Malik (2001), Nuttall (2004), Mbembe and Nuttall (2004), Robinson (2002, 2004, 2006), Roy (2009), Pieterse (2010, 2011), and Myers (2011) could be cited as exemplary for their attempts to conceptualize and enhance new ways of studying African cities as ordinary cities in their own rights.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

The primary aim of this chapter is to present the methodological framework used in the overall investigation on place becoming – or more specifically the development of the condominium estates of Addis Ababa as places or home-places.

3.1 Ontological Orientation

The significance of interpretation both on the part of the subjects and on the part of the researcher is undoubtedly immense in this study. The tradition in social science is to find self in either of these categories. If there is no explicit mention of such a position, the methods used in the study (i.e. whether qualitative or quantitative) are used to label one's frame of inquiry as 'positivist' or 'constructivist.' I find such labelling problematical because the epistemologies are not necessarily opposed to each other; nor are the methods unsupportive of one another which, I believe, is why finding the complementarities between them is a productive way of understanding complex problems. Such sharp categorization and the tendency to make direct association of particular methods and techniques of inquiry with the positions have been debated by many (e.g. Cupchik, 2001; Barkin 2003). An intermediate position, which is referred as 'constructivist realism' (Cupchik, 2001) or 'realist constructivism' (Barkin 2003), has been forwarded in recent years.

In his most influential book *The Postmodern Condition*: *A Report on Knowledge* (1984), Lyotard describes the epistemology of postmodern culture as the end of 'grand narratives', which he considers to be the essential feature of 'modernity'. Despite his preference for this plurality of small narratives that compete with each other, replacing the totalitarianism of grand narratives, Lyotard acknowledges that there is an *objective truth*, but because of the limited amount of knowledge that humans can understand, we will never know this objective truth. In other words, Lyotard advocates that there is no certainty of ideas, but rather there are better or worse ways to interpret things. Latour (2005), in his clarifying text on Actors Network Theory (ANT), also asserts a similar position of 'objective reality'. From a similar worldview, Bourdiue attempts to overcome the opposition between subjectivism and objectivism. Particularly in relation to the complex issue of 'modernity' which the study directly and indirectly deals with, I find Lyotard's and Latour's position to be more *useful*. To this end, I argue, assuming a sharp divide between the epistemologies would be problematical as much as searching for a 'socially constructed reality' in a predominantly physical world is or as searching for an 'objective reality' in a predominantly social world would be. In that sense the difference between objective realism and constructed realism should be seen as a continuum rather than as fixed and opposing views (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1 Subjective-Objective Continuum of research paradigms. The two boxes in the table show the two world-views within which the inquiry in this thesis is carried out.
Source: Gareth Morgan and Linda Smircich (1980)

	Subjectivist Approaches to Social Science					Objectivist Approaches to Social Science
Core Ontological Assumptions	reality as a projection of human imagination	reality as a social construction	reality as a realm of symbolic discourse	reality as a contextual field of information	reality as a concrete process	reality as a concrete structure
Assumptions About Human Nature	man as pure spirit, consciousness, being	man as a social constructor, the symbol creator	man as an actor, the symbol user	man as an information processor	man as an adaptor	man as a responder
Basic Epistemological Stance	to obtain phenomenological insight, revelation	to understand how social reality is created	to understand patterns of symbolic discourse	to map contexts	to study systems, process, change	to construct a positivist science
Some Favored Metaphors	transcendental	language game, accomplishment, text	theater, culture	cybernetic	organism	machine
Research Methods	exploration of pure subjectivity	hermeneutics	symbolic analysis	contextual analysis of Gestalten	historical analysis	lab experiments, surveys

I argue that what matters most is the *usefulness* of the form of inquiry to drawing an applicable knowledge frame rather than the ontology. Based on a theoretically informed view that place is both *spatial* and *social*, I *oriented* myself and my inquiry towards 'objective reality' when dealing with the *spatial* aspect of place and towards the 'social construction' when particularly exploring its *social* aspects. However, that place is spatial and social at the same time, and the fact that its *materiality* cannot be understood independently of its *sociality* or vice versa meant that I had to continuously switch between positions or accommodate multiple orientations in the process of the inquiry.

And yet, by arguing for a 'strategic orientation' I do not claim that a position is something one can generally chose with full awareness. One's background knowledge and subsequent belief makes up the bases for such an orientation in scientific inquiry. In that sense, the usefulness of such positioning in an academic research such as this one would be a matter of transparency and self-reflection so as to facilitate fair judgment of methodological approaches and theoretic arguments. With this in mind, I admit my overall inclination towards post-positivist ontology and the logics of my assumptions to be in line with an 'objective reality' position. My training as an architect in a positivist school of thought may have influenced my thinking to believe in the predominance of an objective truth. But my interaction, particularly with sociological and human geography texts, during the course of this study has brought me to appreciate the compelling arguments of 'social constructivism'. However, especially in my attempt to assess social worlds of users, my inquiry and interpretations assume a 'socially constructed' reality. Yet, with my emphasis on 'context' (such as cultural, historical, political and economic

contexts) within which the social actions should be understood, I favour "emancipatory" system of inquiry (Groat & Wang 2002:30).

3.2 Research strategy and design

In a scientific investigation, the understanding that reality is complex and unlimited forms the basis for the use of research strategies that, by way of reducing data, make the empirical world amenable to investigation (Johansson, 2005). 'Reductionist', 'Experimental' and 'Explicative' are the terms that Yin (2003) uses to represent the categorization of different research strategies. Based on such framing, I find the terms "explicative" research strategy more descriptive of the way this research is carried out, as the study attempts to deal with a complex phenomenon which holds many variables but can be addressed with purposefully selected cases in their naturalistic setting. For example, the people's culture, their perception, their interaction, what they say, what they do, the quality of the physical environment, are all important variables in the investigation.

A research design is the 'logical plan' that gets the researcher from the initial research question/s to the 'logical sequence' and to the final conclusion there by connecting the empirical data to a study's initial research questions and, ultimately, to its conclusions (Yin, 2003:20-21). The aim is to maximize construct validity, internal validity, external validity, and reliability. In a case study design, the study's questions, its propositions, its unit/s of analysis, the logic linking the data to the propositions, and the criteria for interpreting the findings are all important components of the research design (*ibid*). In further describing the components, Yin points out that the form of the study questions – in terms of "who," "what," "where," "how," and "why," – provides an important clue about the research strategy to be used. Case study strategy for example is more appropriate for "how" and "why" questions. Study propositions could play a complementary role to research questions by reflecting an important theoretical issue and telling where to look for evidence (Yin, 2003:20–23). The case should also be a complex functioning unit, investigated in its natural context with a multitude of methods, and be contemporary. This study primarily employs a case study methodology. It attempts primarily to be exploratory and descriptive research strategies.

Considering the particularity of the selected study case, one may suggest an evaluative study as an appropriate method. The general tradition in evaluative studies in built-environment researches (for example, in Post-Occupancy Evaluations – POEs) involves 'systemic data collection, analysis, and a comparison with explicitly stated performance criteria' or indicator (Preiser, 2002:42). In such researches, the "how" and "why" questions are not as important as the "what" question. Despite their high capacity as pragmatic research strategies to deal with real life issues that require immediate, practical response to improve or modify an existing condition, their contribution in terms of giving an explanation, thus adding to scientific knowledge, is limited.

Instead of looking for presumably independent, linear causal relationships as is often done to find connections between, for example, location and residential preferences,

physical distance and social relations, or density and crime, I have attempted to explore networks of mutually conversing co-relations that, broadly speaking, constitute the built-form, the individual, and the community all at the same time. Caution should be taken not to assume strict divisions between content and context, between the local and the global, between the agency and the structure and between the neighbourhood and the city. Instead, in discussing what may be regarded as the content, there ought to be an attempt to reflect back on the context and vice versa. In relation to this, the conceptualization of space both as *text* and *context* (Knox, 2010) at the same time suggests the systemic nature of space that is not bound or fixed but is constantly inscribed in and circumscribed by other systemic relations.

As an investigation interested in exploring multiple ways of place becoming, an interdisciplinary (or more precisely a transdisciplinary mode of inquiry) was sought. Place and home are concepts that cut across cultural geographical and disciplinary boundaries and, therefore, enable the establishment and synthesis of a comprehensive understanding generated through different disciplines (Dovey 1985b). Place and home are common concepts which enable the elimination of the gaps in the conceptions between professionals and ordinary people (*ibid*). The quality of the built environment is inherently related to the opportunities available for the appropriation of space, thereby building identity with place and making home (Dayaratne & Kellett, 2008). The use of place and home as key theoretic concepts in this study was inherent, as could be seen in the research questions, but was also methodological to allow flexible study of connections, relationships, and networks or more broadly speaking text and context.

The research design may thus be regarded as "open-ended" in the sense that Hammersley & Atkinson (2007:3) use it to describe the kind of study ethnography typically employs.

> They (ethnographers) begin with an interest in some particular area of social life. While they will usually have in mind what the anthropologist Malinowski – often regarded as the inventor of modern anthropological fieldwork – called 'foreshadowed problems', their orientation is an exploratory one. The task is to investigate some aspect of the lives of the people who are being studied, and this includes finding out how these people view the situations they face, how they regard one another, and also how they see themselves. It is expected that the initial interests and questions that motivated the research will be refined, and perhaps even transformed, over the course of the research (ibid, pp. 3–4).

3.3 Research Methodology

The primary methodological focus of the study is to develop an in-depth analysis of the main study case – i.e. the condominium housing of Addis Ababa. Much of the investigation focuses on the contemporary observable facts, thus showing that the study primarily needs to employ a qualitative research strategy (Groat & Wang 2002). Thus, in the tradition of qualitative studies, in-depth observation of interactions of the study objects in their "natural settings" was carried out with the aim of presenting a holistic portrayal of the setting as the respondents themselves see it (Groat & Wang, 2002: 182-4).

The study employs what may best be described as an 'ethnographic case study'. The choice to use ethnography as the main method of data collection was decided following a preliminary field work that lasted two months, and during which time different methods were tested (See note under 3.4.1). While a full-fledged ethnography typically demands long-term engagement in the field, an ethnographic case study can be conducted over a shorter span of time to explore narrower fields of interest (Global Impact Study, 2008; cf. Hobbs & Klare, 2010).

Since the main subjects of the study are people (or residents) – i.e. their perceptions and spatial practices – ethnography is used as the primary method of data collection. The ethnographic data is then triangulated with data collected from multiple sources that include interviews, study of official documents, archival records, and direct observations. The ethnography of a selected housing development from the main case study closely examines inherent conditions that associate/dissociate residents with their physical and social environment. For many years, anthropologists and ethnographers have devoted themselves to studying traditional communities in remote places. The last few decades however, have witnessed a growing interest in using ethnography to study 'modern' ways of life in cities. Yet literature on the use of the method in housing research remains scarce. A methodological novelty of this thesis lies in its use of an anthropological tool in studying a modern housing estate.

Nevertheless, the scope of the study requires more than an ethnographic account alone, as it also considers variables that cannot be fully understood without questioning, document analysis, or through other investigation means. No single method is sufficient enough to understand a complex issue such as a socio-spatial or socio-cultural phenomenon. Multiple-methods of primarily qualitative but also quantitative nature are proposed to help address a broader range of historical, attitudinal, and behavioural issues. And in the analysis the plan is to validate findings is through triangulation of methods, data sources, theories and investigators when necessary (Yin 2003; Johansson 2005) (See 3.6, for validity and reliability).

Condominium neighbourhoods or more specifically the clusters of condominium buildings are studied as places.[5] In the field studies and overall investigation, more weight is given to studying the use of shared spaces such as the common yards and corridor spaces and the nature of neighbourly relations. The assumption is that much of the observable socio-spatial interaction takes place at this scale, and the dynamics is most intensely felt in this interaction. This scale however changes (widens or narrows down) in the different articles written.

[5] The challenge defining the limits of neighbourhood primarily comes from the fact that a neighbourhood is an organ of self-governance as in *Kebele* (the smallest political administrative units in Addis Ababa), while on the other hand it is not self-contained. In recognition to this challenge, Jacobs (1961) explores a city neighbourhood, in three levels: city, districts, and streets.

3.4 Methods for data collection

As a case study a range of data collection methods, mirroring their multi-faceted character are applied in the investigation. Different methods dominate in different aspects of the study, presented in the four papers. See table 3.2 for an overview.

3.4.1 Field studies

To develop a sensible combination of methods and strategies and to develop relevant lines of questions for the study, a pilot field study was carried out, as suggested in Bryman (2008) and Yin (2003). An additional purpose of this field study was to identify key issues of relevance for the research question and so that the scope and limits of study will be decided. To meet this objective, a background study of the case is carried out through official documents, maps and drawings and interviews with government representatives and experts involved in the housing development in the city.

The field data was gathered in three field studies. The first one was carried out for two months from April–May 2009 during which time I conducted a background survey of the city's courses of transformation through interviews, photographs, archival records. The second field study was carried out for four months between December 2009 and April 2010 during which time I lived in one of the new government-built condominiums in Addis Ababa as I studied it ethnographically. The third field study was carried out for three months between December 2011 and March 2012. This last field study was aimed to supplement the first two field studies. For example, since there were no official statistical data about condominium residents that I could refer to in order to relate with or evaluate the accuracy of my observations and help in my interpretation, I felt the need for a supplementary quantitative survey. During in the last field study, addition interviews with people were also done. In total, during the three field studies, I interviewed 72 people, most of whom were residents, but including well-informed architects/planners, and housing agency and municipal officials.

During the first field study, I examined eight condominium housing sites in Addis Ababa, which I selected based on their differences in size, location, and duration of inhabitation. The study involved the application of multiple methods, including direct observation, document analyses of the housing complexes, and in-depth interviews with 35 selected residents and with well-informed planners and housing agency officials. The selection method combined acquaintance 'snow-balling' and random selection. Acquaintance is supposed to allow for a less structured but more prolonged relationship between the informants and the researcher (Yin 2003:79), whereas snow-balling is aimed to access a richer information source. Of the interviewees, 17 were residents, 13 were architects/planners or construction engineers and five were official in the housing agency and other involved government offices. The group of interviewed residents comprises nine female respondents and three board members of owners' association. The group also contained house owners, tenants, female-headed households and families with and without children. With the exception of three, all the architects/ planners and the construction engineers have been involved or are still involved in the condominium

housing development program. One architect and one engineer still live in a condominium house.

The interview questions to residents were targeted at exploring spatial experiences of the people and the use of different spaces at different levels for socializing, common traditional activities and for income-generating activities. It also raised questions about self-initiated transformation of the houses, interaction of residents with each other, future intentions, and questions aiming to explore what people consider "modern." The questions to key-informants were devoted to ascertaining the perceptions, views and plans about condominium housing. How the success of the projects are (have been) measured with respect to the functional and physical performance of the buildings was also of interest in the interviews.

Besides serving its purpose as a background study of the case, the field study revealed that behavioural and attitudinal issues were difficult to study or comprehend without a much closer involvement with the people and access to the more intimate spaces of their dwellings. Participant observation was then, chosen as the primary mode of data collection for the main field study. The usefulness of participant observation for studying interpersonal behaviours and people's established customs and rules, their hidden desires and ambitions, and their conflicts and harmonies is discussed by various authors (e.g. Davies, 1999; Yin, 2003). Its relevance in housing research is highlighted by others (e.g. Kellet and Tipple, 2005; Vestbro, 2005). To diversify the data source and intensify the field study, however, I went on to engage in an ethnographic study, in which participant observation remained the primary mode of data collection (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994). While interchangeable use of participant observation and ethnography is considered acceptable for academics (see, for example, Delamont, 2004), others, acknowledging the disagreements in how each should be understood and carried out, suggest that definitions or schemata of work may be put forward individually for common understanding (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994).

3.4.2 The Ethnographic Field Study

Ethnography typically refers to the field study in which investigators immerse themselves in the life of people they study as a means to identify and document people's points of view and experiences about the investigated phenomenon (for detailed definitions, see Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). The ethnographer's core method, participant observation, requires that researchers simultaneously observe and participate in the context they are attempting to document. The rationale for this approach is that, by being there and actively taking part in the interactions at hand, the researcher can come closer to experiencing and understanding the insider's point of view (Have, 2004). My understanding and definition of ethnography mainly comes from Hammersley & Atkinson's (2007) description of features of an ethnographic work (p 3):

1 People's actions and accounts are studied in everyday contexts, rather than under conditions created by the researcher – such as in experimental setups or in highly structured interview situations. In other words, research takes place 'in the field'.

2 Data are gathered from a range of sources, including documentary evidence of various kinds, but participant observation and/or relatively informal conversations are usually the main ones.

3 Data collection is, for the most part, relatively 'unstructured', in two senses. First, it does not involve following through a fixed and detailed research design specified at the start. Second, the categories that are used for interpreting what people say or do are not built into the data collection process through the use of observation schedules or questionnaires. Instead, they are generated out of the process of data analysis.

4 The focus is usually on a few cases, generally fairly small-scale, perhaps a single setting or group of people. This is to facilitate in-depth study.

5 The analysis of data involves interpretation of the meanings, functions, and consequences of human actions and institutional practices, and how these are implicated in local, and perhaps also wider, contexts. What are produced, for the most part, are verbal descriptions, explanations, and theories; quantification and statistical analysis play a subordinate role at most.

How and for how long?

Living for an extended period in the community could inextricably mix the personal life of the researcher with the research being undertaken (Vestbro, 2005). Such mixing involves, for example, the feeling of betrayal the researcher may experience when revealing information about the people in his writing. Cases of anthropologists who ended-up abandoning their research to overcome such internal conflicts are among the common challenges in this kind of research. If proper recording and documentation of field notes and transcriptions of interviews is done from the beginning "very long periods of observation will become quite unmanageable" (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007:37).

Thus, how long an ethnographic study of a housing area should take, among other things, largely depend on how intensively (in time) and widely (over space in time) the observation and documentation is done from the beginning. The time span should include observation at different hours, on different days, in different weather conditions and different seasons. Frequencies of occurrence of events and activities may be used to draw patterns. Exceptional and incongruent occurrences can also reveal certain information that cannot easily be revealed with other conventional methods. In that sense, provoking certain situations could be useful to comprehend certain hidden desires, motives, and views.

Based on Vestbro's (2005) recommendation of study duration for a similar study, and with pre-planned ideas for intensive study, I set out to do four months of ethnographic field study. In early December 2009, I moved with my wife and my one year-old daughter into one of the earliest built condominium housing areas in order to carry out my ethnographic study. I selected the study site mainly for its expected information richness as one of the earliest built and inhabited condominium estates, but partly also because it was representative of most condominium clusters in terms of its size, character and location (an intermediate part of the city). The estate, identified by the name of a nearby hotel called Tsion, is located in a well serviced, older part of the city and consists of 250 housing units divided in six separate buildings (Fig. 3.1). The construction of the

estates was carried out between 2005 and 2006, and most of the residents moved in between 2006 and 2007. At the time of field study, the place had been inhabited for between two to three years.

Figure 3.1 **Images from Tsion Condominiums**

Primary sources of data

The primary sources of my data are (1) a personal diary in which I mainly recorded my observations during the ethnographic field study, (2) chains of conversations with selected key informants, (3) audio recordings of unstructured and semi-structured interviews with condominium residents, architects and planners and officials, and (4) hundreds of photographs of the studied housing areas.

Field Note: A Diary

I did my observation each day at different hours of the day trying to cover the hours between (06:00 and 22:00) on different days, often planned but at times spontaneously doing an observation. I relied on my extensive interviews with the night guards to complement what I may have missed on the hours and days of my absence. I would often go out empty handed (to avoid disturbance) or with only my mobile phone, which I used to take photos of important events and sometimes to record interesting conversations. I would return home several times a day and make summarised notes which I used later to help me recall things that I had observed during the day and/or the evening. Later, during the night, I would sit for two to three hours to meditate and write in detail my observations and experiences throughout the day – all in the form of a detailed diary. As time went by, what appeared to be fragmented information in the beginning gradually began naturally to build itself on what I had written the days before.

Key informants

Ato[6] Mohammad[7], a father in his late thirties, perhaps one of the most important social figures in the housing area because of his membership of the board of the housing

[6] "Ato" is equivalent to Mr. used for an adult man who may or may not be married

association and the small kiosk he owns and runs just outside the gate of the condominium compound. He lives, with his wife, two young children and a maid, in his own two bedroom condominium unit. His family was among the first to move into the housing area. Almost every condominium dweller buys daily household items from his kiosk. He was my first and perhaps most important contact in the housing area. And in just couple of days, his kiosk window became the most important place for me to easily meet residents, as he would introduce me to them as a resident and researcher. Because of his position in society and in the housing association, being introduced by him was an inconceivable opportunity that made it quite a lot easier for me to freely talk to people. Each day or every other day, I would spend an hour or two leaning in his kiosk window talking to him and meeting people while also taking notes. The condition facilitated my task of collecting hidden information such as people's desires, what they value, their hates and likes, and some of their hidden agendas.

Ato Endale is a young man in his early thirties, who works as a technician for the national telecommunication company. He owns a one bedroom condominium unit in which he lived with his wife, Wr/o[8] Ruth for a little over two years. That makes them some of the earliest residents. They have a daughter who is only eighteen months old. Their 'yuppie' status makes them quite representative of the major group of condominium residents. Mr Endale was the right person to talk to so as to learn about typical and intimate issues of condominium life. We remained close friends for the last three months of my field study. I could freely go to his place and have coffee with him and his wife, while discussing with them things of relevance to my work.

Guards at this condominium site have multiple duties which give them a role like immediate assistants of the committee of the housing association. They have a key role, for example, in overseeing rules and regulations set by the housing project office and those adapted by the housing association are respected. Besides their routine as security guards, they are on the lookout to make sure that general tenancy rules and specific rules about the use of common spaces and facilities are respected. They act as immediate judges in times of dispute. They are the supreme brokers in condominium rental deals in which their role extends from their informal blockage service of connecting tenants and owners to their formal responsibility of supervising the paperwork in the rental contract. Their extensive presence in the housing area and their multiple roles, which includes watching literally everything, makes them the best sources of information about life in condominium housing.

One of the most important associations I had during my field study was with security guards. I was introduced to the chief security guard by the chairman of the board of the housing association early in my study. This gave me favour in his and his fellow guards' sight. I could at any time, approach them and ask them about things I wondered about. I also made it a habit to spend time with the chief guard on a regular basis; I would meet

[7] All indicated names of informants in the article are self-invented to maintain a level of anonymity

[8] "W/ro", short for Woizero, is equivalent to Mrs.

him one or two evenings a week and spend hours with him while he is still on duty. His presence allowed me to make unnoticed observations of night activities in the area.

Next to guards, children know the most about people in the housing area. Their easy access to people could be accounted for by their extended knowledge about residents. As a matter of norm in Ethiopian culture, children are approachable and friendly to every distant neighbour. This makes them accessible channels of information both for newcomers and for existing residents. This norm in the culture gave me the condition to approach them without difficulty. They are also considered a great source of honest and direct information. Nevertheless, what kind of questions to ask them to obtain the exact information requires a level of understanding of their psychology. My two most important key informants among the children were Beti, a young girl of 9s and Aman, a young boy of 5.

Besides these informants from the area I lived in, I have had a few other informants who live in other condominium sites.

Figure 3.2 Images from Tsion Condominiums

Methodological challenges and exit strategies in ethnography

Literature on the subject of ethnography highlights the conflicting task of the researcher as the detached, objective observer and the more subjective, participating observer (e.g., Hume and Mulcock, 2005; Have, 2004; Davies, 1999; Vestbro, 2005). The challenges often arise from (1) the deliberate attempt, by the researcher, to simultaneously position him or herself as both 'insider' and 'outsider,' (2) the difficulty of avoiding subjectivity in the role of 'objective' researcher, and (3) the diverse ethical issues that arise when having to make choices at various points in the study process. It is also possible that the complex nature of the objects of this study – the scarcely understood concept of 'space' and its reciprocal relationship with humans – complex as they are – further complicates the challenge of applying a method. Further challenges that avail in ethnographic methods in the study of housing environments have been documented by other authors (e.g., Holston, 1989; Vestbro, 2005).

During my field study as an ethnographer, I was confronted with a number of methodological challenges that I had to find ways to deal with. Some of these challenges are inherent in roughly all ethnographic studies, but some were typical of the specific approach I used. Here are some of the most important ones:

Minimizing disturbance and gaining trust

During my field study, I discovered that by letting loose my daughter in the area and running around with her as an act of "supervision" I could eventually lessen the disturbance my constant presence in the area may cause on the environment. The act also gave me a sound reason to access some spaces which would not have been easy to access otherwise – or enter without too much disturbance.

The field study also demonstrated how a considerable level of trust can be achieved by starting out the investigation as a participant within the community and then gradually

transitioning to taking on the role of researcher. For the first month and a half, I made it a habit to take my daughter and sit for hours in the common yard 'watching my daughter' and not interfering in any way, all the while, of course, engaged in passive observation. People from all floors and nearly all blocks could see us. Within a few weeks, many people began to recognize me and my daughter.

Formalizing a gender role

The significant role of gender in the success of the chosen research method for field investigation is indeed beyond doubt. For example, in many cultures women are not supposed to speak much in public, or even when they are free to speak they are inclined to limit their speaking or be selective in what they talk about with men outside their familial circles. Beside cultural and psychosocial[9] contexts that put limitations on access across different genders, the same contexts can put a lot of limitation on the quality of information that is obtained even when the cross-gender access is overcome. The challenge is even more serious when the participatory research method is a significant part of the research strategy. Herod, for example, shows that 'gender relations are an important dynamic shaping the interview process which can significantly influence the sorts of data obtained using this particular research methodology.' This very much explains one of the challenges I myself faced during my field study. Although women, because of their frequent presence in the housing area seemed to have much more information than men, in general, I could not speak "freely" with them all the time. It took some time until I figured out that I could, in fact, use my wife as my research assistant to help with this. It was clear that most of the women found it easier to communicate their concerns, fears, and ambitions to my wife than to me, whether I approached them informally as a neighbour or formally as a researcher with formal enquiries.

An alternative to co-habiting in ethnography

The traditional approach in most ethnographic studies involves cohabiting with a family in the community being studied. One key methodological finding in my field survey regards the strategic choice I made in moving into the condominium housing with my family as opposed to living in the same dwelling with another family. As it turned out, I became better known to people, accompanied as I was by my wife and young daughter, than had I come alone. Apart from making people less suspicious about me and my research, my daughter often served as a means to get me in touch with people, and my wife literally became my research assistant by bringing me useful information through her informal channels.

Ethnography by a native researcher

Since participant observation is much used by anthropologists studying "foreign" cultures, it is often assumed that this method is less useful when studying phenomena in one's own country. Vestbro (2005) argues that such assumptions 'overlook the fact that most

[9] Psychosocial contexts could be interpreted as those involving aspects of social and psychological behaviour.

countries are strongly stratified societies, and that researchers often have limited experience from other living conditions than their own.' Some advantage of familiarity to the study environment and culture could be seen from the point of view of language and cultural understanding. That nothing is lost in translation provides a better condition for more accurate interpretation of observed activity.

My field work experience in this study evidenced that having a similar cultural background with the people I studied and being a native speaker of their language helped me not only to communicate easily with the people but to understand the cultural and social contexts within which the observed phenomenon and the communicated language could be interpreted.

> Because of their hybrid ability to negotiate a variety of traditions and contexts, native ethnographers are uniquely positioned to understand and conciliate these different cultural systems (Kraidy, 1999).

Writings by foreign anthropologists, and historians who studied socio-cultural issues of Ethiopia (e.g. Adejumobi, 2007; Howard, 2010) were intensively used in the interpretation and analysis of the data collected. In particular a recently published comprehensive guide to Ethiopian culture, "Culture Smart", written by the Scottish social anthropologist Sarah Howard (2010), was a useful resource that helped me see the socio-cultural context from an outsider perspective.

Ethnography by untrained ethnographer

How did I complement my lack of training as ethnography? I relied on the extensive use of literature on how to do ethnographic study. I was also given advice by an anthropologist, one ethnologist and a few people who had carried out ethnographic study.

3.4.3 Multiple sources of Data

Although the study used ethnography as a primary method of data collection, as a case study the ethnographic data was supplemented with data from multiple sources, each of which are used in different proportions in the four articles (Table 3.2.)

Table 3. 2 Methods of Data Collection

	Article I	Article II	Article III	Article IV
Architectural & Neighbourhood plans		x	x	X
Public docs, archival records	XX	X	x	X
Direct observations	XX	X	x	XX
Participatory observation	X	XX	XX	X
Key person interviews	x	X	XX	x
Interviews	X	X	XX	
Questionnaire survey			X	

Key: The number and size of the X in the table is intended to show the importance of each method. The larger the X, and the more Xs there are, the more the method is used.

During my early visits to the Addis Ababa Housing Development Agency (AAHDPO), I was able to acquire verbal information and a few project reports. My repeated visits finally paid off, and on one of my visits, I was granted access to a wide range of digital records and archives which included architectural drawings, minutes of meetings, study reports, progress reports, and other official documents. I also had access to multiple sources of data at the City Administration (AACA) and the Ministry of Works and Urban Development (MWUD). This helped in dealing with problems of inconsistent information on particular issues. There were, for example, cases where statistical information from the same authority was different. Although the information sought was not critical to the overall investigation, it did influence my reliance on those presumably useful official documents.

Furthermore, mostly during the field studies, but also afterwards through desk review, I was able to collect and review a large volume of secondary sources which included academic studies by masters and doctoral students, news articles and publications by public media agencies and reports by some non-governmental institutions.

3.5 Analysing the data

There are three recognized modes of reasoning in social sciences – deductive, inductive and abductive (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003). In a case study, different modes of reasoning and generalization are often combined (Johansson, 2005). In similar manner, calling it "adaptive theory approach", Derek Layder (as cited in Johansson, 2005:38) argues that theory testing and theory generation are combined in practice.

Although ethnographers often use theories from the social sciences in the interpretation of their data, the use of 'grounded theory' to help analyse ethnographic data has also been suggested by some (e.g. Charmaz, *et.al.* 2001; Pettigrew, 2000; Strauss and Corbin, 1990). In my study, I used theories from social science and urban design to help me frame the subject of my study. And yet, not to be totally bound by the theories, I allowed different explanations that may emerge from the data-set itself, thus leading to theory-generation based on inductive reasoning. The themes and sub-themes of the ethnography were derived inductively through open coding of interview transcriptions and field notes. As the work progressed, the resulting theories were then used for in-depth reading and development of more particular theories that were then used for further documentation and analysis of existing and new data sets. In the concluding discussion, a case was synthesized from facts in the case and theories developed later. This part of the process was thus based on abductive reasoning.

3.6 Validity & Reliability

With all such conflicts within and around the researcher immersed in an ethnographic study (see, section 3.4.2) how can we validate our finding? To what extent should we rely on our senses? Using an example of two perpendicularly bisected lines, where the

bisector visually appears to be longer but when measured with a ruler the two lines prove to be equal, Hansson (2007:32) argues "if we had relied strictly on our senses as infallible, then we would have believed that the two lines are of unequal length…" Clearly, the availability of an objective instrument for measurement – the ruler – is an advantage in this example. In case studies where the use of absolute instruments to measure results is substantially limited and in an ethnographic study where both the instrument and the object measured are subjective, the risk of inaccurate or biased documentation and analysis is undoubtedly immense. The question is then how can we validate our data and analysis?

Yin (2003:112) suggests that case studies could be validated — or aim at trustworthiness — through *triangulation*. Most often data collection methods are triangulated (many methods are combined), but in addition to that, data sources, theory or investigators might also be triangulated. If several sources of evidence point in the same direction, it underpins conclusions that may be hypothesized from observing only one type of data. In this sense, I believe, the diversity of sources and quantity of data has greatly helped to enhance the validation of my work. One example could be where I attempted frequently to combine an observation or interview I carried out with official reports and media reports (See Article I).

As the main source of data in this study was that collected through ethnographic study, an additional set of rules needs to be established to increase the reliability (or as many qualitative researchers would prefer to call it "trustworthiness") of the work. Richardson (2000), an authority in qualitative research methods, in her highly cited article on "Evaluating Ethnography", argues that ethnography needs to be evaluated through two lenses: science and arts, i.e. scientific—in the sense of being true to a world known through the empirical senses—and literary—in the sense of expressing what one has learned through evocative writing techniques and form. The author suggests five "criteria: *substantive contribution, aesthetic merit, reflexivity, impact, and expression of a reality*" (p. 253, emphasis added). Shortened, the five criteria could be read as (p. 254):

1. Substantive Contribution: "Does the piece contribute to our understanding of social-life?"
2. Aesthetic Merit: "Does this piece succeed aesthetically?"
3. Reflexivity: "How did the author come to write this text? Is there adequate self-awareness and self-exposure for the reader to make judgments about the point of view?"
4. Impact: "Does this affect me? Emotionally? Intellectually?" Does it move me?
5. Expresses a Reality: "Does it seem 'true'— a credible account of a cultural, social, individual, or communal sense of the 'real'?"

While the expectation that an ethnographic account can be evaluated as a scientific work may be arguable (cf. Aunger, 1995; Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994), the criteria Richardson (2000) lists provide a useful guide to carry out a systematic field study and present a reliable ethnographic account. This study had thus to deal with the double challenge of proper field work engagement and presenting a truthful and artful account – i.e., firstly because one cannot guarantee full self-awareness and neutrality from the object and subject of study, and secondly because the quality of the work is partly dependent on one's capacity to effectively communicate and artistically present the work.

Accordingly, during the course of my study, I tried to keep a check on the quality of my field data and writing of the thesis based on criteria set and recommendations for ethnographic and case study methods (e.g. Richardson, 2000; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Flyvbjerg, 2006; Delamont, 2004). For example, as a strategy to meet the *reflexivity* requirement for an ethnographic study, I followed Delamont's (2004) advice of exiting from the fieldsite every time the fieldsite feels like home (p. 214). And in the recording, analysis and writing of the thesis, as a caution in accurately *telling the reality* of the situation, but partly also to help make my contribution *substantive*, I tried to do as much *indexing* of the data (be it a text or audio) as possible as is advised in Sanjek (1990) or done by Whyte (1980) and used the indexing to evaluate and select important themes for discussion based on the frequencies, and affluences. But one cannot guarantee that the indexing was bias-free.

CHAPTER 4 SUMMARY OF ARTICLES

This thesis is about how places gain their material and social identity and meaning – or how spaces *become* places. Each article explores this from different angles. In this section, summaries of the articles are presented, which mainly include the aim, key findings, and contribution of each article to the main research question. The purpose is also to show the thread that joins the articles together and to the main thesis (See table 1.1). In the attempt, some words that were not explicitly stated in the articles had to be introduced in relation to the theoretical framework (Chapter 2).

Article I History, Modernity, and the Making of an African Spatiality: Addis Ababa in Perspective

This article explores the historical and social-political bases of the current transformation of Addis Ababa and the production of its new residential environments. The aim was to understand how and to what extent these forces and processes inform the becoming of condominium housing into the kind of place it is. The article has at least two key roles in the overall study. Firstly, it serves as a background study to understand the very context in which the study case is situated. This role makes the article not only useful to properly frame the specific research questions directed to the study case, but also helps the general reader who has little knowledge of the Ethiopian context to have a better grasp of the background situation, hence raise the position to be able to evaluate the study. Secondly and most importantly, by discussing how and in what ways context matters to the making of *places*, it helps answer part of the main research question.

As such, the article relies on the narrative history of Addis Ababa and the ethnography of condominium housing. The findings show how the local experience of modernity, which is primarily situated in the isolated and non-colonial history of the nation, provoked a sense of belatedness (compared to other colonized nations and Western nations) and helped coordinate political intentions with the people's will and everyday practices in the co-making of the Addis Ababa and its emerging housing environments. Thus, unlike how they are often described in academic works, the article shows that modernist spaces are not simple top-down impositions serving only the political ambitions of governments or the utopian dreams of architects and planners; instead they are historically, culturally and socio-politically situated and largely co-inspired by all members of society. The evidence shows the link between history, collective memory, identity, everyday life, and place thus contributing to discussions on placemaking and place becoming. Place in this article could be seen as a construction of social-historical *processes*.

Article II Socio-Spatial Tensions and Interactions: An Ethnography of the condominium housing of Addis Ababa

Arising from theoretic underpinnings that assert strong, dialectical relationships between people and their environment, the aim of this article is to analyse the interactive relationship between the residents' way of life and the spatial organization and quality of their living environment. The study primarily relies on data collected with ethnographic surveys and key-person interviews supplemented with a review of official documents. The spatial practices and social relations of residents in the housing environment are studied in the context of contesting/or divergent motivations and expectations held by politicians, planners, and residents and the material context that gives the ground for the contestation. The findings show that different motivations and expectations (than assumed by the planners and politicians), and attempts for respective fulfilment among residents (identified as tenants and owners) influence spatial uses and appropriations and ultimately the functional and social performance of the housing environment. For example, because many condominium owners saw their home as a new means of income generation and let out their condominiums, and because many tenants saw it as a temporary stay, it is shown that there is a reluctance to socialize and to contribute (in money and emotion) to the development of the area. On the other hand, the material context contributes to a different set of appropriation and use of spaces that give rise to relational tensions among neighbours. For example, space limitations and functional problems such as problems with toilet sewerage, leakage of floors and walls, and poor drainage in the condominium construction and design, are frequently seen to be causes of tensions between neighbours and between owners and tenants. The cumulative effect, it was indicated, appeared to be a lower desire to socialize to avoid conflicts and lower motivation to participate in local developments (See Figure 5.2). The article's contribution to the wider investigation on place could be seen from how it shows seemingly micro-scale practices and processes become important in the shaping of the residential place and how motivations and desires, which are often invisible to design and planning experts as well as politicians, are vital aspects in the making/becoming of *familiar* or *unfamiliar* places. Place could thus be seen as an *assemblage* of experiences and micro practices.

Article III Home-looseness in large residential neighbourhoods? An Ethnographic Case Study

The main aim of this article is to trace the sense of home among residents of condominium housing. Place is thus studied as *home*. The primary source of data is the ethnographic material which included field notes from my diary, interviews and notes from conversations with key persons. The sense of home is explored in four parallel sets of conditions in the condominium production and inhabitation: (1) the dialectics between hegemonic production of modern housing and life through discourses and forms, and residents' ways of meaning making through everyday life practices; (2) the manner in

which home ownership changed the sense of home and the social life in the home environment; (3) the constant negotiations between privacy and community that residents are apt to make; (4) what residents consider to be their ideal home and the way they appropriate the spaces and uses accordingly. The findings reveal the co-presence of both engaging and disengaging forces in the making of condominium housing as a home place. While the wider recognition and celebration of condominiums as the pride of the city may bring about an increased sense of home in relation to the city, the alienation of existing forms of housing and discontent with condominiums due primarily to their poor physical spatial and social functioning point to a risk of a declining sense of home both in the individual housing unit and at the neighbourhood level. As a result, development of a loose sense of home particularly at neighbourhood level is indicated. The results demonstrate how conceptualizing housing as place or home-place can help understand large housing developments from a broader and more integrated perspective, and can thus be useful to politicize housing in a manner that it benefits disadvantaged people.

Article IV Sustainable Urbanism: Moving past neo-modernist, past neo-traditionalist housing strategies

The main aim of the article is to comparatively study and evaluate the condominiums of Addis Ababa based on criteria set in sustainable urbanism. In relation to the main thesis, the aim is to locate this form of housing development on the global map of large public housing strategies aimed for low-income people. Based on sustainability criteria, which saw a comparative evaluation of the physical, functional, social, management, economic and environmental qualities of the studied cases, strategies for improved design and planning of housing are suggested. The strategies address: self-sufficiency strategies, social mix, social services and support systems and user participation strategies (pp 8-10). The condominium housing of Addis Ababa, as a neo-modernist housing strategy is compared with the HOPE IV housing program of the USA, which in the article is treated as a neo-traditionalist housing strategy. The argument has it that condominium housing of Ethiopia signifies an ironic move from the traditional to the modern in a rather traditional context, whereas the Hope IV programme is a move from the modern to the traditional in a highly modern context. The findings show contrasting results of these different paradigms in housing and their consequences in the making of the places. Place is thus discussed as a *product* of particular urban design/planning paradigm. In the end, the Sustainable Urbanism paradigm is discussed and the possibility that it might offer as an alternative to housing planning and design.

This article is co-authored with a colleague, and my main contribution in the work was the description and discussion of the condominium housing part of the case studies.

The link (as is also called “Common-Thread”) that joins the articles to the main thesis is indicated in Table 1.1.

CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSIONS

In this chapter, I will discuss the key theoretical and methodological findings of the thesis. Since the main findings are already presented in the self-contained articles, I will focus here on elaborating those findings that are more directly related to the main research questions of the thesis. I will start by highlighting the key theoretic underpinnings of the study presented in Chapter 2. and attempt to show their connection with the key findings presented in the Articles. Building on this discussion, I will then put forward ideas for theoretical, methodological and pedagogical developments on the issue of place making/becoming.

5.1 Becoming Place: Ordinary People in Placemaking

Arising from the main research questions – specifically how places become? And how ordinary people contribute to their becoming – I endeavoured to review, in Chapter 2 of this introductory essay, relevant theories of place, placemaking, as well as theories showing the multiple ways that people associate themselves with their social and physical environment. Key theoretical underpinnings presented in the chapter were:

People and the environment are strongly, dialectically related. We have underlined that people and the environment (whether physical or social, man-made or natural) are strongly related to each other (See 2.1). This relationship, as many studies particularly in what is commonly known as "people-environment studies", highlighted (e.g. Altman, 1973; Rapoport, 1977) is not linear but complex, reflexive, and recursive (Knox & Pinch, 2010). While dualism of people versus the environment, structure versus agency, subject–object, sociality versus spatiality and the individual versus the community largely characterize studies on man–environment studies, ideas such as *structuration theory* (Giddens, 1984), *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1977: in Ritzer, 2011:225), *relational perspective* (Blokland, 2008), *assemblage theory* (Dovey, 2010) are some of the theories suggested to overcome the schisms.

Place is not space but cannot be understood apart from space. Place and space, are dialectically related. The relationship is also described as tension (Low & Lawerence-Zúniga, 2003; Byerley, 2005). It is also underlined that the 'spatial triad', which was originally suggested by Lefebvre (1991) and further developed by Soja (1980) and Harvey (1989, as cited in Knox, 2010) gives us a possibility opportunity to study place (or more precisely the social construction of space) within space.

Place is defined by location (fixed geographic co-ordinates), locale (material, physical, visual form), by activities carried out within the space, and by a sense of place or meaning (subjectivity, emotional attachment, and people's relationships), as well as by the characteristics of the people who occupy it and the perceptions with which people regard it (Agnew, 1987; Relph, 1976; Cresswell, 2004; and Gieryn, 2000; Fainstein & Campell, 2011). Thus placemaking is everyone's job (Friedmann, 2010).

Home is a kind of place that is related to one's *ontology of being* (Heidegger, 1971), *ontology of security* (Dovey, 1985; Dupuis & Thorns, 1998; Easthope, 2004). Home is beyond shelter, culture, or tenure (Lawrence, 1987). Home is instead shown to be a multidimensional concept that may imply one's *centre of universe* (Dayaratne & Kellett, 2008) where one's identity is formed (Dovey, 1985; Easthope, 2004). Home is also defined as *connectedness* that is formed and defined by *spatial dialectics, social dialectics, and dialectics of appropriation* (Dovey, 1985). Other descriptions and definitions of home include home as *rootedness* (Easthope, 2004) and home as a *process* and home making as *route to belonging* (Kellett & Moore, 2003).

We also saw that:

Modernity sets a different condition for people–environment relationships (Berman,1982; Giddens, 1990), and modernity should be understood as a plurality of experiences, contrary to Eurocentric conceptions that assume a dominant form of modernity that is solely authored by Western nations (cf. Robinson, 2006; Pieterse, 2010; Gyekye, 2011).

On the basis of these theoretical underpinnings, we then set out to study how the condominium housing of Addis Ababa is becoming place, what kind of place it is becoming, and what the residents' role is in the becoming. Places are 'constructed by their inhabitants from a subjective point of view, while they are simultaneously constructed and seen as an external 'other' by outsiders' (Knox, 2005:1). Particularly the last research question, which endeavoured to explore the different ways people construct places, was aimed at getting an *insider perspective* of places – i.e. to mean the point of view of the ordinary people who inhabit, appropriate and make meanings of their places in ways that are often different from the expectations and imaginations of experts who design and plan the physical setting as outsiders. The usefulness of an insider perspective is justified by the ever-present gap between expert thinking and ordinary people's sense making. The usefulness can also be argued from the diversity and thus quality that it adds to the mode of knowledge production in urban planning and design; thus, its contribution to enhancing theories of place and placemaking, and ultimately benefiting sustainable urban development.

The key findings of the study that are more closely related to the research questions could be summarized under the following headings:

5.1.1 Place as a Contextual Process

Places are constructed by historically embedded socio-political processes and practices

Place is not just an ideological construct, as it is often presented in counter-modernist descriptions that portray, for example, large social housing estates as solely inventions of modernist thinkers and modernism as an artistic/architectural ideology aspiring to social engineering through forms, detached from their social roots. Instead, the study highlighted that place is socially constructed by all members of society. This includes ordinary people who, by identifying themselves with the progressive projects of modernism, co-author the production and construction of modernist space.

The importance of the urban public as the (co)producers of their place through the everyday practices of living and working, the making of place and community (as opposed

to the reordering of space solely by elites) supports Lefebvre's arguments for social construction of space. The evidence also shows the link between history, everyday life, identity, and place, thus contributing to discussions on place-making and place-becoming. The current state-led (but co-inspired) urbanism of Addis Ababa is a demonstration of the common practice of place-making as a city-branding (Article I, p. 290).

Placemaking, as Friedman (2010) argued is thus everyone's job. In the case of Addis Ababa, condominium housing, along with other grand projects becomes a nation building project that facilitates placemaking processes both by elites and by ordinary people. And yet, as Gupta & Ferguson (1992) indicated, through nation building projects, states play a crucial role in the popular politics of placemaking.

Place and Placemaking in the context of modernity

Two key findings/arguments could be discussed here: firstly, that modernity plays a mediating role in the making/becoming of places and secondly, that modernity creates a new condition for a different relationship between people and their environment.

Modernism in architecture and urban planning, often seen as a top-down imposition, has been a subject of study and criticism since the early 1960s. Modernism, by many is considered to be 'a rebellion against historicism, ornament, overblown form, and other things serving the privileged' instead of looking to find ways of attending to the needs of a society's common people (see, Jacobs, 1961; Holston, 1989; Glazer, 2007). It is also seen as inhuman imposition from 'above' or an import from the West.

However, in contrast to the dominant view in which the modernist planning paradigm is seen as anti-tradition and inhuman imposition from above, the study shows that modernist interventions, should most appropriately be understood to be co-authored by all sections of the society in which the roles of the earliest residents who aspire for the new, progressive, modern –often imprecisely equated with a better standard of living – is significant (Article I). Instead, it is shown, that modernity as a socio-cultural force plays a mediating role between structures and human practices, and thus as coordinator/facilitator of co-making of places – both by the producers and constructers of places (Article I). Particularly in Addis Ababa, the study shows how the local experiences of modernity helped coordinate political intentions with people's everyday practices – thus in the co-making of modern city and its residential environments among which condominium housing is the largest and most important.

This situation is further elaborated in Article II. Understanding the long history of ambition for modernization in Ethiopia (Article I) and looking at how, when the moment finally came, the condominium project and parallel programs were carried in a rather quick, radical and non-reflective fashion, the current modernization project seem to have declined from its stake of improving the living conditions of people to that of "an ideology premise on the need to wear the badge of modernity as proof of not having missed the global economic game" (Angelil & Hebel, 2009). Interestingly enough though, despite the challenges residents face in trying to adapt to the new ways of life inscribed in the architecture, the condominium project of Addis has earned high regard among the general public and the majority of its inhabitants (Article II). This meant that residents in the beginning showed more interest, cooperativeness

and tolerance to undergoing challenges they are exposed to and to adapting to the new way of life they subscribe to when moving into the new housing environment (Article II). The desire for adaptation is witnessed by the residents' creative appropriation of spaces, uses, locations and resources (Article II and III). But when expectations are not met as residents continue to be limited by the rigidity of the built form and the legitimacy to exercise power over their housing environment (i.e. 'structure', in Gidden's terms) becomes more apparent, the inventiveness essentially becomes a survival mechanism. One result could be a growing sense of competition and desire for control which is manifested by "unqualified" spatial expansions (or "territorial invasions") accompanied by social withdrawal to avoid confrontations. The gradual erosion of a sense of belonging and sense of community and thus the risk of a decline of the physical and social environment as living environment due to neglect (as seen in poor care of common facilities, and poor maintenance) are attributed to this condition (i.e. the 'agency').

In the theoretical discussion, modernity was argued as a plurality of experiences, as opposed to Eurocentric conceptions that assume a dominant form of modernity solely authored by Western nations. In line with this the findings, Article I showed that the experience of modernity is embedded in local social, cultural and historical conditions. Asserting Nasr's and Volait's (2003) arguments on urbanism by locals, and arguing "against an image of locals that, at its extreme, regards them as impotent, passive and guileless recipients of concepts foreign to their cultures and as spectators observing physical and spatial changes that they neither control nor understand" (p. xii), I tried to show how the locals often played active roles in helping shape the choice, adaptation and realization of the planning and architectural ideas.

In the process, however, due to inherent, but contradictory experiences and emotions of modernity, place becomes a significant terrain representing contradictions (Article I). In other words, modernity can, on the one hand, facilitate the engagement of individuals and the community for larger societal goals such as nation building, but on the other hand, being a fluid experience, it risks the creation of environments that would develop as unfamiliar places and thus could not be fully experienced, managed, maintained, or sustained. As such, the finding supports theoretical underpinning that emphasizes that modernity sets a different condition for people–environment relationships. It is this loose connection between people and place that Heynen (1999) describes as the loss of home under conditions of modernity:

> Dwelling fades into the distance... The metaphors used to describe the experience of modernity very often refer to dwelling as the "other face" of modernity, as that which under modern conditions is made impossible. Different approaches — the existential with Heidegger, the ethical with Adorno, and the sociological with Berger, Berger, and Kellner — all conclude that modernity and dwelling are diametrically opposed to each other. Under modern conditions the world has become impossible to live in; modern consciousness is that of "the homeless mind" (Heynen, 1999:17)

Heyanen's account is identical with the finding that condominium housing, particularly on the neighbourhood scale, is signified by a loose sense of home (Article III). Although little could be done from a professional point of view to alter the consequences of modernity, I have suggested that politicians as well as urban planners and designers can make the choice to

re-orient the intentions and methods of urban transformation towards making the local, the familiar, its inspiration, source of production and target of consumption (Article I). And instead of radical, uprooting practices which often lead to placelessness and/or homelessness (or home-lossness), the ideal home can be sought as a source of inspiration for urban design and planning practices (Article III).

Thus, the relationship between modern architecture and modern life is not reciprocal as it may look and easy to grasp and explain as it may seem (as I myself used to think when I started the study.)

Place as a product of a particular ideological paradigm

The above findings and theoretical underpinnings give strong evidence that all members of society and a whole set of factors are involved in the making/becoming of places. Ideas of place as *co-authored* and as *process* have emerged from this evidence. And yet, the study has also indicated that the built form and the ideological paradigm behind it, besides their perceptual and symbolic significance, give the setting for social interactions, spatial appropriations, and hence have a considerable impact on the making/becoming of places (Articles II, III & IV). In the condominiums of Addis Ababa, for example, material aspects of the housing associated with a modernist style of building, such as standardization, uniformity (in terms of height, colouring, design typology), and construction as isolated/gated communities, all contribute to the placemaking. Associated meanings of the structures as icons of a modern/izing city, symbols of modernity, and/or lack of civility are other aspects of the construction of the residential place. Place as a product of particular ideology is thus highly implied in the results.

What this means is that good or bad places can be the consequences of dominant architectural and political ideologies that manifest themselves in concrete walls and slabs. Thus a paradigmatic shift as is suggested in Article IV would be just a first step towards good places.

5.1.2 Ordinary people in placemaking

The idea that ordinary people are placemakers (as are elites) is already indicated and implicated in the findings discussed above. In these discussions, ordinary people are presented as co-authors of places along with other actors in larger societal processes. So the focus here will be on more direct and intimate ways that ordinary people associate themselves with their places and contribute to placemaking as the main actors. This discussion systematically responds to the empirical questions about ordinary people in the thesis (Chapter 1, section 1.1):

- How do people associate themselves with their residential environment?
- What are their perceptions and meanings of ‘modern’? …of ‘home’?
- How do they appropriate shared spaces and uses in it?
- What are peoples’ ways of fulfilling their needs and desires in the built environment?

As our aim here is to generate theory/theories from the findings, instead of going through each question, I address the questions in one thematic question, namely: How do people make sense of their environment? Among others, the findings of the study reveal that the resident’s

way of life is dynamically related to the spatial order and quality of the built environment (Article II). People make sense of their environment based on primarily material/spatial experiences (Article II), but also perceptually (Article I, III) and according to memories of the past (Article I). These experiences, perceptions and memories are inter-subjective (i.e. shared with others) and are embedded in historical, socio-cultural, economic, political contexts (Article I; Figure 5.1). Likewise, residents' desires, motivations and expectations are related to their subjective spatial experiences, perceptions and memories (Article III) and are key (inter-) personal aspects that influence the making of their residential environments. In the condominium housing, for example, it is shown (in Article II) that less explicit desires, aspirations and expectations largely shape both the production and the construction (i.e. through use and appropriation and meaning making) of the condominiums.

People are not, therefore, simple recipients of materials created for them. They are intelligent, skilful makers and re-makers, as could be seen in the diverse ways in which they appropriate spaces, uses, location, and settings to tailor their environment to their needs. And yet, whilst their personal desires and needs can be suffocated by rigid forms and abstract spaces, people can also identify themselves with an environment even when they are faced with limitations (Article I & II). Spatial appropriation reveals people's way of home making, as it simultaneously allows them to find themselves in this world (Article III; Figure 5.1; Dovey, 1985).

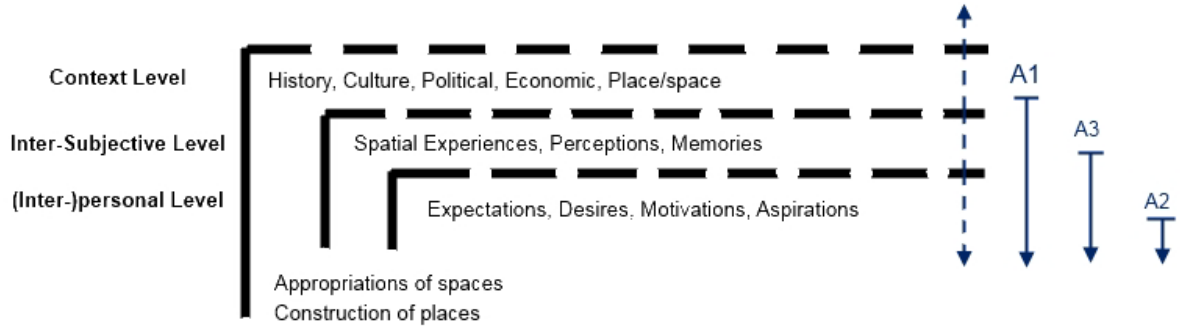

Figure 5.1 Hierarchies of being/self and ways of association with environment.

The (inter-) personal is the most, subjective, fluid and more difficult to assess and address whereas the context (or societal) level which is the historical, cultural, political, economic and spatial may be easier to trace but difficult to influence. The inter-subjective, however, is the best target for influence. The diagrammatic analysis in the figure helps summarize the focus of the three Articles presented (I, II and III) shown as A1, A2, A3 respectively. Accordingly A1 is about the making of place/home-place as part of nation building in relation to historical, cultural, and political conditions. A2 is more about placemaking in relation to subjective experiences, and A3 is about placemaking in relation to intersubjective or community experiences.

The inter-connection between the different levels of being is indicated in different texts. For example, individual subjectivity and urban spatial experience are indicated in Jacobs (2002):

> Individual subjectivity can have an important role in transforming urban spatial experience. There is a strand of literature, across a range of academic disciplines, that advances the view that an ability to live successfully in large conurbations is partly contingent on the utilisation of our own imaginative capacity as a means of transcending what are usually seen as oppressive and hostile environments (Jacobs, 2002:102).

5.1.3 Large residential environments as Places: Challenges and opportunities

This study (particularly Article III) has showed how the scale and the manner by which large housing estates are produced and consumed almost automatically puts them at the intersection of larger political, economic, social and cultural processes. This comes with many challenges for good placemaking, but also with a few opportunities. Large-scale production of housing, for example, often tends to encourage other unintended processes and practices that undermine people's capacities, experiences, expressions and possibilities for intersubjective meaning making. The effect, as indicated in the condominiums of Addis Ababa, is the eventual development of a loose connection between people and their home environment or a loose sense of home (Article III). A much wider, deeper and more complex critique of large housing developments could be given, addressing their spatial, political, and social problems (see, for example, Rowe, 1993; Augoyard, 2007). On the other hand, however, the practices of large housing, as also indicated in this study, is associated with larger economic and social returns to cities and well-being to individuals (cf. Urban, 2012). For example, that people initially associate themselves with large urban transformations (Article I & II; Mar, 2003) is an opportunity that may be exploited for sustainable goals.

But we still need to respond to the empirical research question of how residential environments become places, or more specifically to the study case of how and what kind of place is the condominium housing becoming place. Some aspects are already discussed in 5.1.1 and 5.1.2, but I will add here two aspects of the making/becoming: one concerns the vicious (or possibly spiral) nature of the development as a place, and the other has to do with how the sense of home in particular develops.

Vicious cycle / Spiral of place becoming

It is argued, that the problem of the declining conditions of large residential environments in Europe and worldwide can never be seen only as a problem of architecture or planning, but of a larger nature that involves institutional and structural, as well as human components (Section 1.1; Bristol, 1991; Urban, 2012). Based on his comparative study of apparently similar modernist housing projects in seven cities, Urban (2011) concludes that the design is not to blame for the housing's mixed achievement. "The buildings did not produce the social situations they came to stand for, but acted as vessels, conditioning rather than creating social relations and channelling rather than generating existing polarities (p 2)." He asserts "…triumph or fiasco did not depend on a single variable but rather on a complex formula that included not only form and programming, but also social composition, location within the city, effective maintenance, and a variety of cultural, social and political indicators (p 2)." What kind of formula could be sought then?

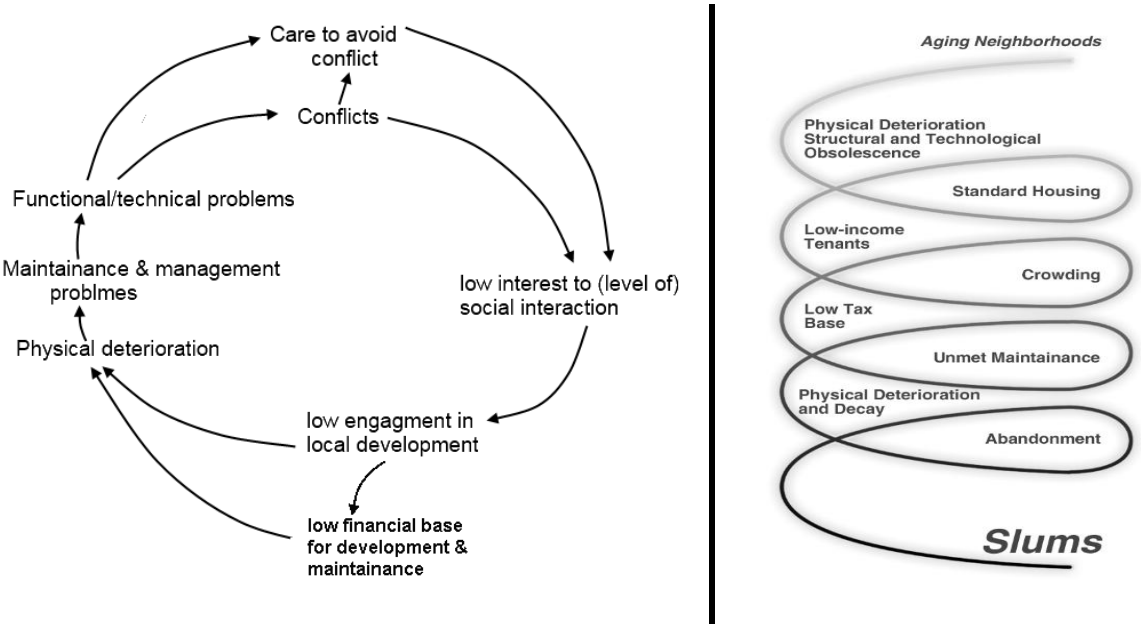

Figure 5.2 Vicious cycle / Spiral of place becoming
Sources**:** Left: own, based on Article II & III; Right: Knox and McCarthy, 2005

Knox and McCarthy (2005) have attempted to sketch what they call "spiral of neighbourhood decay" to show how decent housing environment can gradually decline into a slum due to interrelated factors that build on one another (Figure 5.2, right). The findings of this study (particularly in Section 4.2 or Article II) suggest a development of place in the manner of a vicious cycle, that if let loose or uncoiled, can becoming the kind of spiral that the authors sketched (Figure 5.2, left).

> For example, space limitations and functional problems such as problems with toilet sewerage, leakage of floors and walls, and poor drainage in the condominium construction and design, are frequently seen to be causes of tensions between neighbours and between owners and tenants. The cumulative effect, it was indicated, to be lower desire to socialize to avoid conflicts and lower motivation to participate in local developments (See Figure 5.2). The article's contribution to the wider investigation on place could be seen from how it shows seemingly micro-scale practices and processes become important in the shaping of the residential place and how motivations and desires, which often are invisible to design and planning experts as well as politicians, are vital aspects in the making/becoming of *familiar* or *unfamiliar* places (Section 4.2).

The same principle for 'spiral down' could be projected for 'spiral up' provided the conditions change. Emery & Flora (2006), in their article "Spiralling-Up: Mapping Community Transformation with Community Capitals Framework" discuss how they found that 'social capital—both bonding and bridging—is the critical resource that reversed the downward spiral of loss to an upward spiral of hope—a process we call "spiralling-up"' (p, abstract).

Becoming home-place

The findings in the study (particularly in Article III) also show that a sense of home may develop/decline in relation to four sets of negotiations/ contestations in space such as those between hegemonic spatial production & everyday life (Article I, II, and III), privacy &

communality (Article II and III), ownership & tenancy (Articles II & III), vision of ideal home & possibilities for appropriation (Article III).

Showing contestations between hegemonic spatial production and everyday life, for example, it is indicated that residents found a sense of inclusion in the nation-building programme of creating a modernizing city. Simultaneously, however, they strive to have their expectations met, needs fulfilled, individual wishes and hopes recognized in the built environment by appropriating location, spaces and uses according to their desires and visions of home. While the wider recognition and celebration of condominiums as pride of the city may bring about an increased sense of home in relation to the city, the alienation of existing forms of housing and discontents with condominiums due primarily to its poor physical spatial and social functioning point to a risk of a declining sense of home both at the individual housing unit and at the neighbourhood level.

On the other hand, the positive effect of home ownership is seen to be overshadowed by the side-effects of privatization – which in Addis Ababa were shown to be marginalization of the poor, commodification of housing and a large tenant population who are passive in the local social and physical development.

These sets of conditions could very well be related to theoretical underpinnings of home (in Section 2.3). For example, Dovey (1985) in what he describes as *spatial dialectics, social dialectics and dialectics of appropriation* has argued that home is a dialectics of inside and outside, private and public, and an aspect of being-in-the-world. Each of these elements relates to the sets of conditions discussed in Article III.

5.2 From Place Becoming to Placemaking

Much of what could be said here is already said in the articles about what may be thought and done in relation to the findings. The earlier section has further highlighted the key finding related to the main research questions and made connection with theoretic underpinnings. In light of these findings and the discussions so far, I will attempt to pin down some gaps or challenges in placemaking theories and practices in urban design that deserve attention.

It could be identified based on the results of this study that at least three kinds of limitations/areas of improvement in placemaking thinking and practice exist. The first one is what may be described as a partial conception of human experience or what Westin (2007:267) describes as ‘absence of the human body in architectural conceptual schemata’. Quoting from Pallasmaa (2005:19), Westin argues:

> “Modernist design at large has housed the intellect and the eye, but it has left the body and the other senses, as well as our memories, imagination and dreams, homeless.” It would however be incorrect to claim that architects entirely and deliberately disregard other aspects than the visual (Westin, 2007: 267).

Due to the creative, artistic nature of their work, architects’ pre-occupation with aesthetics and visual qualities is not unprecedented. We may recall Lynches’ theories (1967), which make up the central architectural/urban design conception of urban experiences, are limited to visual qualities of space and ignore other aspects of the urban experience (Stevens, 2006). Peoples’

spatial experiences cannot be reduced to visual experiences or to observable actions or behaviours, although these aspects reveal and make up part of human experience. Lefebvre (1991) points out that the form of the city is not just observed, it is felt with the body and through other senses, and it is made use of in action. Lefebvre (1996:147, as cited in Stevens 2006:804) also emphasizes that urban dwellers do not use only vision; they need 'to hear, to touch, to taste and ... to gather these perceptions in a world'. As is shown in Figure 5.1 multiple/multilevel experiences of people should thus be the bases for architectural, urban design/planning conception of human experience of space and place.

The second area that deserves attention is how places are conceived in urban design practice. Although in theory place is conceptualized as more than a product, and more than visual and sensual experiences (see for example, Arefi's & Triantafillou's, 2005 descriptions of place, Section 2.2), the normative thinking in urban design, and more specifically in placemaking practices treats place as a deliverable product that creative design/planning can offer. Place becoming, as is theoretically and empirically argued in the thesis, implies that places are predominantly processes and are results of interactions and larger processes. Place as *open-ended* hence comes to the fore in the attempt to find theoretical and practical relevance to placemaking in urban design and planning. The notion of place as a process, as shown in the study (Section 5.1.2), implicitly acknowledges the important of context – the 'place as a contextual process".

As a third limitation, we may identify a set of methodological challenges in urban design – firstly, a scarcity of tools to know and understand our subjects, people, and be understood by them, and secondly, difficulties to handle as complex and fluid a subject as place, which it would become when understood as an open-ended process.

Below, I will go further and put forward some ideas that may help fill the stated gaps. However, instead of providing self-contained solutions, I will use observations made by other researchers. Unlike the conventional way where recommendations are used to close an ongoing discussion, the purpose here is to open up new set of discussions on the matter in relation to existing theories.

People-centeredness

If we aspire to see more liveable and likable places, the need to integrate multiple experiences of people with physical planning/design cannot be overemphasised. A people-centered planning/design is what this calls for.

A people-centered approach acknowledges that true placemaking does not completely rest in the brightness of the visions of the designers/planners or in the good intensions of city governments. We may recall Friedmann's (2010:149, emphasis added) assertion that 'placemaking is everyone's job, local residents as well as official planners, and that old places can be "taken back" neighbourhood by neighbourhood, through collaborative *people-centred planning*'.

People-centered approach would require a closer observation into ordinary people's everyday life. Habraken's (2000) call for a return to the ordinary in architectural approaches is a useful reminder in this regard.

> Historically, "ordinary" environment was the background against which architects built the "extraordinary." …architects must now undertake a study of the ordinary as the fertile common ground in which form- and place-making are rooted (Habraken, 2000:cover page).

However, in the effort to revise placemaking approaches, caution needs to be taken to avoid misplaced faith in planning/design as the challenge goes beyond what physical planning/design can provide. Watson (2009) reminds us:

> On the one hand, the renewed attention to urban planning could give impetus to a necessary review and reform of these systems and to a search for new planning ideas; on the other hand, there could be a misplaced faith in planning to address issues the root causes of which lie in broader institutional, political, socio-economic and environmental forces (Watson, 2009:189).

Place-based Thinking and Practice

In practice being place-based could mean the same thing as people-centered since people are at the heart of the process of place making/becoming. However, as a paradigm, place-based would mean more than considering people's multiple experiences. Arising from the understanding that place is an open-ended process, place-based thinking acknowledges the larger forces that may influence the actual making/becoming of places. In relation to this, Cresswell (2004) has indicated how, with ever growing globalization, it is likely that non-place-based practices will increase:

> …strategies of globalization undertaken by the state, capital and technoscience all attempt to negotiate the production of locality in a *non-place-based* way that induces increasingly delocalizing effects. In other words top-down globalization is insensitive to the specificity of place (Cresswell, 2004:84, emphasis added).

Quoting from Escobar (2001, 165-166) Cresswell (2004) recommends that place-based approach should be sought regardless of effects of globalization:

> It is important to learn to see place-based cultural, ecological, and economic practices as important sources of alternative visions and strategies for reconstructing local and regional worlds, no matter how produced by 'the global' they might also be (Cresswell, 2004:85).

Cresswell then forwards some ideas to realize place-based projects:

> Socially, it is necessary to think about the conditions that might make the defence of place – or, more precisely, of particular constructions of place and the reorganization of place this might entail…[…]an important part of the creation of a sense of place is through a focus on particular and selective aspects of history. […] Place and memory are, it seems, inevitably intertwined. …Memory appears to be a personal thing, but it is also social. …The very materiality of a place means that memory is not abandoned to the vagaries of mental processes and is instead inscribed in the landscape – as public memory (Cresswell, 2004:85).

Design Ethnography

Realizing 'people-centered' and 'place-based' practice is nothing more than a wish, if no advance is made in our methodologies. We need new tools in urban transformation processes, by which peoples' experiential knowledge may be collected and synthesized with experts' knowledge on architectural design and planning. As this study also demonstrated, ethnography of space and place allows researchers to present an experience-near account of everyday life (Low, 2003). Social anthropologist, James Holston (1998) emphasizes the need for regular use of ethnography among architects,

> I am not suggesting that planners and architects become anthropologists, for anthropology is not reducible to ethnography. Rather, I suggest that they learn the methods of ethnographic detection and also learn to work with anthropologists (Holston, 1998:9)

Salama (2012) emphasises the need to incorporate ethnography in pedagogy in architectural schools::

> In architectural design education, ethnographic studies can be utilized in various forms, from the macro level (macro-ethnography) to the micro level (micro-ethnography). These address broadly or narrowly defined cultural groupings according to the scale of design or planning projects. …ethnographic studies may involve -emic or –ethical perspectives. The Emic perspective represents the way the member of a given culture perceives the environment around them, while the Ethical perspective represents the way non-members (outsiders) perceive and interpret behaviors and phenomena associated with a given culture. These perspectives are important components that students need to understand, and their resulting knowledge needs to be incorporated in their design assignments (Salama, 2012:21).

The usefulness of ethnography in facilitating participatory processes in planning is highlighted in Sandercock & Attili's, "Digital Ethnography as Planning Praxis", 2010

> Another enduring field of tension exists around the notion of participation; for any practice that calls for more involvement by people in the making of their environment, it is a central concern. Architecture's engagement with participation has a history dominated by questions of power, control and the legitimacy of architecture (Sandercock & Attili, 2010:221).

Re-defining urban designers'/planners' roles

If placemaking is everyone's job (Friedman, 2010),'a different process is necessary where the professional is the facilitator and implementer of a community's vision rather than the one who defines the vision' (Madden, 2011:661). This new role requires that urban designers/planners engaged in placemaking practices become generalists:

> If urban designers were to adapt this more holistic view and learn to become generalists in placemaking, they may be able to create an entire agenda around urban places that is transformative in affecting how people live in cities in the future (Madden, 2011:661).

In light of the observations in this study it is possible to predict that commitment to people-centered, place-based approach can lead to more active engagement among planning/design

practitioners and academics to the extent of *activism* in situations where people's interests are override by dominant practices and processes.

5.3 Placemaking ideas for large housing estates

I will close the discussion by highlighting some of the recommendations put forward in the articles – particularly those aimed to alleviate challenges with large housing developments.

Working with scale: Scale is a vital aspect of 'place becoming' (Article III) and should thus be a key subject of concern in placemaking. This is nothing new though, as New Urbanists also extensively argue for "human scale" developments. But the branding/commercial aspirations in large scale developments could be questioned here from the perspective of sustainability / social equity and long term results. Like experience and perception, materiality (Lefebvre, 1991) of a place has a direct effect on people's association with their environment. Human scale forms and diversity of housing types (for diverse group of people) could be some of the ways to counter the effect of scale (Article II).

Working in fluid contexts (modernity): As a way forward to counter fluid contexts, long-term objectives can be sought (Article II). "Progressive" urban development models need to have a long-term vision of sustainable dwelling (Article IV).

> Both are 'progressive' attempt to deal with the most complex issue of planning, that of providing adequate and good housing, but lack the long-term vision of sustainable dwelling and adaptation to energy crisis, climate change and risk and uncertainty in general, as well as a long term holistic and systemic approach to home building (Article IV, p 3).

Based on sustainability criteria, which saw comparative evaluation of the physical, functional, social, management, economic and environmental qualities of the studied cases, strategies for improved design and planning of housing are suggested. The strategies address: self-sufficiency strategies, social mix, social services and support systems and user participation strategies (Article IV, pp. 8–10).

In Addis Ababa, if the equivalent support that the condominium housing programme received was made available to people – i.e. lease-free land allocation, financial arrangements through long-term, low rent loan – while people at the same time were given the possibility to organize themselves and collaborate with government in order to develop their neighbourhoods, a different result would have been registered – possibly a better one in terms of place.

CHAPTER 6 CONTRIBUTIONS, FURTHER RESEARCH AND CRITICAL ASSESSMENT

6.1 Contribution of the research

From the very outset, this research was exploratory, attempting to approach old questions in new ways. I hope and believe that I have demonstrated that the original starting points of this thesis, the approach it has taken, and the answers and new questions it has arrived at, offer much promise for producing new and more effective understanding of place in urban design and planning fields. To bring this thesis to a close, I will briefly highlight two contributions of the work:

Studying housing as place from inter/transdisciplinary perspective
Since their emergence in the early 20th century, large residential environments have been studied extensively, but often within disciplinary bounds or from narrow constructivist or political economic perspectives. A number of urban sociologists and geographers have studied large housing estates as places, but often take social constructivist approaches and tend to ignore the physicality of the housing. Conversely, when done by architects/planners the physicality becomes the centre and the social becomes peripheral. One key contribution of this thesis is its engagement in studying housing from a middle ground between disciples, and partly also between social constructivist and humanist perspectives.

Ethnography to study modern urban housing in the making
For many years, anthropologists and ethnographers have devoted themselves to studying traditional communities in remote places. The last two decades or more have shown a growing interest in using ethnography to study 'modern' ways of life in cities. Yet the literature on the use of the method in housing research remains scarce. The methodological novelty of this thesis lies in its use of an anthropological method to study a modern, urban housing environment and life.

6.2 Further research

I see the potential for three areas of research in relation to the three pinpointed gaps in current urban design thinking and practice (Section 5.2). I will briefly address each of them here:

The need to understand place as a process is highlighted in the study. As a way forward, it is recommended that incremental development strategies and direct partnership with the community should be sought (Article II). It is also argued that urban design needs to improve its theoretical base about spatial experience of people. *Informal settlements*, as built mainly by the people, and incrementally developed over time, give us the possibility for exploration of alternative forms of placemaking. The kind of study that Kellett & Moore (2003) engaged in

on home-making practices among residents of informal settlements in Colombia can be carried out on a large scale and in several geographies and contexts. Such studies can benefit both our understanding of people and their relationships with and capacity to make places. As the most prevalent but most ignored modes of urban production in cities of the global South, the usefulness of knowledge to be gained from such studies goes well beyond serving design/planning objectives of creating good places; it has the capacity to address larger objectives that encourage political justice in policies and practices.

It is also indicated in the study that large transformational projects may motivate people to identify with and engage in their construction. This could be exploited for set sustainability objectives. In relation to this there is a wealth of knowledge to be gained from people initiated placemaking practices such as commonly known as ‘‘Tactical Urbanism’’, ‘‘DIY Urbanism’’, ‘‘Guerrilla Urbanism’’, and ‘‘Emancipatory Practices’’. On the basis of knowledge to be gained through these studies a collaborative placemaking strategy could be sought.

It is also indicated that new methods and approaches are useful for more fruitful placemaking engagements. Based on my research experience in this doctoral study, I see the possibility to evaluate and operationalize *ethnography* as ways to do urban design research and practice. This could be a useful approach to studying declining residential environments.

6.3 Critical Assessment

Place is a broad theme in its nature, and ethnography is a method requiring detailed recording of visual data and conversations. Bringing them together has a possible challenge in terms of delimiting the research focus and may lead to excessive data which may not be usable mainly because of difficulty to analyse. I was not free from this problem.

I do not claim to be free from my subjective feeling for the people I studied, nor do I claim that my writing was not at all influenced by it. Besides the ethnographic field work, which literally places me at the position of people, there were particular episodes during the course of my other field studies that I witnessed in the housing area that made me feel angry. I attempted to employ different technics to minimize the influence and maintain higher objectivity. For example, I had to completely abandon using some interview recordings of people who were in extreme situations. The cost was, however, high.

Writing of the thesis

During the course of this study, there were several decisions that I had to take on several issues, but none, to my memory, has been as difficult and unsettling as the decision to present my findings in the form of articles. Presenting results of an ethnographic study (the quality of which is measured by the detailed description it gives) in highly condensed journal articles proved to be tremendous challenge. Despite what I learnt after going through this challenge and managing to publish more than one article, I now (again) think I would have been probably able to present my findings better and with much more freedom, if I had written a monograph instead.

Article II was written in the very first year of the study when my understanding of the subject was limited and my data was not completed or fully analysed. Although I tried to

complement the loss particularly in the other two articles (Article I and Article III), it felt as I had cheaply sold some of the findings of my study. And concerning the co-authored Article IV, I feel I should have had more influence on the writing. The language, the use of an unfamiliar method, and the assertive tone all make the article somewhat at odds with the rest of the thesis manuscript. And yet, the experience of working and writing with others was valuable in this academic engagement and thus this article, as my first co-authored article, has an important place in the doctoral thesis and my academic career.

While the above weaknesses are courses that I could have controlled, there were other uncontrollable situations that affected the study and the writing of the thesis.

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APPENDIX

On Ethnographic Data

The main ethnographic data which is a field note written in the form of a diary can be made available upon request at: alazar.ejigu@gmail.com

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