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Planners and the Work of Renewal in Addis Ababa:
Developmental State, Urbanizing Society

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Abstract

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This dissertation explores the political geographies of urban restructuring through a case study of planners advancing urban renewal programs in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. I build an account of the work lives of these public servants on the basis of data from interviews, participant observation, and unobtrusive study of planning and policy documents. Amid rapid urbanization, I show that Ethiopian legacies of high modern development are gaining new expression in the EPRDF's agenda of infrastructure-led development. Urban renewal was tentatively tried in Addis Ababa in the 1980s. But by the time of the master planning round begun in 2012, renewal had become the signature intervention of massive redevelopment of the city. Slum spaces have become the proving grounds for planners as key agents of urban governance.

By drawing together insights from Marxist urban studies, socio-legal studies, and recent literature on African urbanisms, the dissertation refines scholarly understandings of the dynamic relations between governance and development in (East) African cities. Urban renewal is not reducible to a local variant on the familiar story of capitalist enclosure, and the slum is

not just a space of immiseration beyond the reach of regulation. Instead, the dissertation shows that as planners draw a line against development failures of previous regimes, they furnish the local state with legitimation for its deepening involvement in everyday life. At the nexus of rapid urbanization, new flows of capital, and the bold visions of this resurgent developmental state, planners see themselves engaged in a historic project to realize better urban futures through renewal. Some even see in the current moment a more egalitarian planning praxis to come, including upgrading as an alternative to urban renewal. However, though the specialist knowledge of planners points to the potential for new and more inclusive planning paradigms, such a vision has yet to overcome the hegemony of party politics.

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While I hope many more research projects are ahead of me, this is surely the only dissertation I will write. This is my chance to acknowledge the considerable intellectual and personal debts I have incurred in the course of this project. Scholarship is ultimately a collective endeavor. I finally know why acknowledgement sections can be so long.

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Note on Transliteration and Spelling

When primary or secondary sources use Latin transliterations different from my own, I have left them retained them out of respect for the original. Transliteration of languages like Amharic (in the Ge'ez script) to the Latin script leads to many English spellings for names, place-names and concepts. For example, scholars may render the words as አዲስ አበባ as Addis Ababa, Addis Abeba, or Addis Abäba. Other languages in Ethiopia, like Afaan Oromo, acquired a first written form in Latin script, leading to a bit less variation in their transliteration, but few of them appear in this text outside of place names. I render Amharic words or concepts in the text in English, by italicizing a transliteration in Latin characters with simple English translations immediately following in parentheses – for example, “*ketema* (garrison or city)”.

Note on Names

To protect the anonymity of informants in the dissertation, I refer to them by either a descriptor of their role, by a title that they approved, or by a first name I assigned at random. In both formal and informal occasions, a respectful form of address in Ethiopia usually uses a person's first name. This is because the tradition in both Muslim and Christian families is that a father's first name is inherited, not a surname. That distinguishing first name is sometimes used in academic cultures in Ethiopia, and so in the text, I have generally chosen to use this form of address for Ethiopian authors and other Ethiopians. For example, the author Dandena Tufa is cited as "(Dandena 2008)" and is listed in the bibliography within the D section for Dandena, not the T section for Tufa.

In a few cases, as noted in the dissertation, I have assigned names to certain places or projects, so as to protect the confidentiality of informants. But I have typically kept place names and names of local institutions as they are.

Common Acronyms

AAU	Addis Ababa University
ANDM	Amhara National Democratic Movement <i>Part of the EPRDF Coalition</i>
AU	African Union <i>Formerly the Organization of African Unity</i>
EAC	East African Community
EBC	Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation
EiABC	Ethiopian Institute of Architecture, Building Construction, and City Development
EPRDF	Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front. <i>Present-day ruling party</i>
FUPI	Federal Urban Planning Institute <i>Formerly the NUPI</i>
GERD	Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam <i>Formerly the Millennium Dam</i>
GTP I, II	Growth and Transformation Plans 1 and 2
NUPI	National Urban Planning Institute <i>Succeeded by FUPI</i>
OAU	Organization of African Unity. <i>Succeeded by the African Union</i>
OPDO	Oromo Peoples' Democratic Organization <i>Part of the EPRDF coalition</i>
ORAAMP	Office for the Revision of the Addis Ababa Master Plan
PASDEP	Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty
SEPDEM	Southern Ethiopian Peoples Democratic Movement <i>Part of the EPRDF Coalition</i>
TPLF	Tigray Peoples' Liberation Front. <i>The party at the center of the EPRDF coalition</i>
UN-HABITAT	United Nations Housing Agency
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa

Introduction

Spaces of lack and possibility in an urban age

Urban life today is hardly suffering from an excess of centralized planning and big, public, citywide projects. Few cities (outside of China, perhaps) are currently carrying out large-scale reforms that affect all of their urban space ... Some aspects of the postwar grandiose approach to urban design were certainly problematic. However, [my] main conclusion ... is that the pendulum has swung too far the other way.

(Valverde 2012: 216-217)

Africa has often been portrayed as not being in sync with the pace and direction of planetary history, and its localities presented as remote spaces frozen in time, precariously governed by custom and calamity ... [Yet] an untimely sensibility is indispensable to the task of thinking and writing about Africa otherwise, to apprehending it in such a way that the questions we have grown accustomed to asking of the sub-continent might be subjected to the shock of other responses posited by different voices.

(Goldstone and Obarrio 2016: 17)

An “untimely sensibility” can be indispensable to understanding rapid and historical change. When seemingly familiar processes appear out of synch, out of place, or out of proportion, we question our new knowledge, as well as our categories. I followed an untimely sensibility in the course of this dissertation, and I have collected, fashioned, compared, and discarded a few analytical tools along the way. I suspect this is both because I am an emerging scholar and thus new to the toolkit, and perhaps also because my object of study—a program of urban development—is itself still emerging. When so many different sorts of things happen

together, as they do today in a city like Addis Ababa, the possibilities and names for urban living are in flux.

An untimely sensibility was also at the heart of a recent short promotional film, *Creativity in Motion* (EIC 2015), which sought to market Ethiopia to global investors. Instead of a space of lack that potential investors might have assumed about Ethiopia, *Creativity in Motion* presents Ethiopian spaces of possibility. The film opens onto a wide, windswept vista of light-green grass in the Ethiopian highlands. Across the horizon, clouds cast blue shadows onto the ground and across the mountains. The camera pans right and comes to rest on a trim, tall man standing alone and gazing out at the landscape. This is Sileshi Demissie, the Amharinya language musician and folklorist, dressed in a neat blue suit and fedora hat. **See Figure 1.**

Sileshi establishes himself as the film's narrator when he turns to the camera, and begins speaking in English. "The cradle of mankind: Ethiopia. It's the land where mankind first started creating. Home to an ancient woman who holds the secret of the evolution of humankind." He produces a polaroid photo of the skeleton of the early hominid, Lucy. "Hi, Lucy," he says. The camera reveals another figure just out of focus: a young woman sitting on a light blue bench at a weaving loom. Unaware of the camera, she works intently while dressed in a traditional white cotton *adjettabab*. She pushes her bare feet against the wooden pedals of the loom. A few plaintive notes from the *krar* (lyre) in the film's soundtrack emphasize the rhythmic movements of the woman's hands, as much as Sileshi's own status as a cultural icon. Sileshi continues, "The land has always created something new, delivering happiness to people around the world." The camera cuts to a barefoot girl dressed in white cotton running through

the grass while carrying a long, sky-blue banner. Together, these opening images suggest a dreamlike, pastoral landscape almost outside of time.

Figure 1: The narrator and the weaver in *Creativity in Motion*



Source: EIC, 2015.

The film then delivers a rapid pastiche of various urban and industrial scenes, as the music swells and takes on a more pronounced pulse. Smiling men and women emerge from work sites surrounded by coffee, honey, gemstones, flowers, fashion, and art. Children are skateboarding, a DJ plays in a night club, flight attendants stand in the aisle of an Ethiopian Airways plane. A jogger in an Olympic jumpsuit in Addis Ababa proclaims, “The land is full of bread and passion ...” Highland tourist sites flash by quickly until the film’s focus settles on

hands feeding leather through sewing machines. The music subsides and the film cuts back to the narrator, Sileshi, who is again standing alone in the majestic highlands. He is trying on a pair of new, factory-made black leather gloves. Sileshi completes the jogger's pronouncement, " ... to deliver a new happiness to the world." The film title emerges, and the blues and greens of the rugged landscape are covered by the national flag rippling in the wind.

Through its rich production values and forceful style, *Creativity in Motion* weaves together several developmentalist tropes about rural and urban places in Ethiopia. Craft traditions morph seamlessly into industrial scales of production. A few landscapes and customs drawn from the Ethiopian highlands stand in for the whole of Ethiopia's 100 million people, 80 ethno-linguistic groups, and 11 territories. By suspending the viewer in this dreamscape, *Creativity in Motion* suggests that longstanding representations of Ethiopia's lack are being outmoded by new expectations of dynamism and riches. In apparent contrast to assumptions of the superiority of Western knowledge over the darkness of African experience (Jarosz 1992, Keim 2014), and Western associations of Ethiopia with a failure to feed itself, the film inaugurates the possibility of an abundant future. This is an attempt to claim what Obarrio and Goldstone might call an "Africa otherwise," a fusion of Ethiopian capacities and foreign capital in the alchemy of globalization.

If developmentalist imaginaries of an African Century are to be believed, a renaissance is sweeping the continent and leaving wholly new possibilities for living in its wake. The *Economist* (2011) predicted "Africa Rising" through economic growth, an urbanizing middle class, and good governance. Such optimism would be a common referent of scholarly critiques

in the years to come (*c.f.* Brooks 2017, Taylor 2016, Manji 2015), but it reflected an emerging common sense of policy-makers while speaking to the desires of many investors, both on and off the continent. A similar narrative was rehearsed at the World Economic Forum on Africa in Addis Ababa in 2012, when a speaker from the China Investment Forum spoke on Ethiopia's prospects for industrialized development. By reference to the supposedly fully realized Chinese experiences of industrialized capitalist development, he advised Ethiopians in the audience to take heed: "You have a clean sheet of paper here. Try to write something beautiful" (Gao Xiqing in Looney 2015). Such a framing is peculiar for dismissing the long, complex legacies of modernization in Ethiopia, to say nothing of the beauty of many modernist Ethiopian styles. For over a century, various programs of high modern development have been the mainstay of imperialist, colonialist/fascist, socialist, and federalist politics in Ethiopia. Some interventions led to modest successes, while many were abject and deadly failures. Against these historical currents, however, the image of a "clean sheet" anticipates more high modern development. What means of erasure are necessary to secure these spaces of possibility?

This dissertation joins with other accounts of urban governance by examining the development program of urban renewal that is basic to the massive redevelopment of Addis Ababa. I do so by adopting the perspective of planners in Addis Ababa. As they make space for new infrastructures and new possibilities for city living, their technical expertise helps to perform a vital function of governance. In an era of rapid urbanization transforming both rural and urban spaces, high modern development is not what it used to be in Ethiopia. The massive redevelopment of this city has become a crucial priority in national development ambitions and adds to the legitimation of Ethiopia's developmental state by distinguishing it from earlier

regimes. Slums across Addis Ababa have become the primary proving ground for a new means of urban governance through planning. Planners recognize that the historic moment of Ethiopia's urbanization presents crucial opportunities for a better and more egalitarian planning praxis. However, I argue that such a progressive vision ultimately cannot overcome the hegemony of party politics, even as planners give form to that hegemony in many ways.

Examining the viewpoints of planners

The profound impacts of urban renewal in Addis Ababa were made evident to me constantly during my time in the field. Over the course of five stays in the city between 2007 and 2015, crossing through the city meant negotiating with the dead-ends, ruptures and holes left by massive redevelopment. Whether surrounding one building, or encompassing acreages of a demolished neighborhood, ubiquitous yellow and green "development fencing" mapped out new landscapes of demolition and construction. New shopping malls and hotels sprouted like mushrooms in Bole. Neighborhoods like Hiya Hulet and Lideta became dusty, open-air construction sites for years at a time. A new light rail system was rammed through the city, as the country's first fly-over bridges and first stoplights were added to widened roads. In almost every neighborhood, piles of rubble were ubiquitous: strewn along sidewalks, dropped between buildings, or clogging the street. A "ring road" encircled part of the city but could not constrain ring after ring of new peripheral growth. Conversations with informants, scholars, friends and neighbors, as well as local news reports all emphasized the extraordinary nature of these transformations. City life was marked by blockages and disruptions of official design.

Constant intervention, or at least the mess born of it, supplanted longstanding legacies of official neglect of the city.

Making space for all this transformation in a rapid, synchronized manner requires urban renewal. Ultimately, in Addis Ababa, this means the destruction of so-called slums, and thus the dispersal of residents, and the arrival of newcomers. The complexity of all this change at once was made clear to me during a visit to Addis Ababa in August of 2012. Zeki, a planner in his late 20s, gave me a tour of the grounds of Ethiopia's leading urban institute, the Ethiopian Institute for Architecture, Building Construction, and City Development (EiABC). His tour included a huge, high-ceilinged warehouse in which dozens of tables sat, each of them covered by blue vinyl tarpaulins. He drew them back to reveal a die-cut wooden model of Addis Ababa's core areas in intimate detail. On the basis of the municipal government's remote-sensing data from 2009, his team had worked for a year to glue together layer upon layer of plywood to render topographical and architectural features down to the scale of a garden shed. When I asked how the model itself was used, Zeki told me the municipality hoped it would be sent to them for display and study. But by the time the model was complete, the interest of municipal officials seemed to have flagged and it had never been claimed by them. I could tell as we walked from table to table that many parts of this model city had already been demolished in two or three years, rendering parts of the huge and finely detailed model out of date. Zeki's pride in his team's work was nevertheless evident. For him, this was a successful educational exercise and a good application of their state of the art laser die technology.

As we resumed our walk, our conversation turned to the city visioning processes of planners. I brought up the issue of urban renewal. The United Nations estimated that urban Ethiopia in the 1990s that 95.5% of Ethiopia's urban residents lived in slums (see UN-HABITAT 2014: 165). So I asked Zeki what he thought of the connotations of the word "slum" and whether it named something meaningful in Ethiopia. He acknowledged why some might use the word for descriptive purposes, even to the point of accepting the relevance of slum classifications in many other cities in the world. But he said, "the difference here is that they're working." Zeki spoke about how slums are functional spaces that were integral to urban livelihoods. Such talk explodes moral assumptions in much of the urban governance policy literature. Rather than spaces of disorder, on this view, slums were ordinary spaces built from necessity, places in which certain possibilities for urban living had been secured in a provisional form. I came to understand that many Ethiopian planners shared this view, even as they eagerly accepted the task of erasing and replacing slums through urban renewal. While my earliest interests in this project had to do with eviction, the thrust of the project shifted toward the way in which planners attempt to balance competing visions of a progressive and pro-poor order and the high modern dicta of the local developmental state.

The dissertation makes two theoretical contributions to studies of urban governance and urban restructuring. The first is to refine scholarly conceptualizations of the planner, a key practitioner of development in many cities. The urban planners who I have come to know in Addis Ababa are experts who understand their roles in the city in primarily technical or functional terms. Few would accept the notion that they are doing the work of a new urban politics in Ethiopia, and claim instead to be pragmatists motivated by the logic of expertise. At

the same time, I show that planners in Ethiopia are not quite the report writers in James Ferguson's (1994) account of depoliticizing development in Lesotho, or capitalists familiar from Jane Jacobs' (1961) critique of mid-century New York modernization. Instead, I follow Gordon Wilson's (2006) concern that the impulse to consider such actors as mere "technocrats" forecloses a more nuanced and accurate view of their work lives. Planners mediate between progressive aspirations for betterment of everyday life and the unique powers of the local state.

My informants are relatively self-reflexive, and at times, deeply conflicted agents. They resemble the "street-level bureaucrats" making policy through practice (Lipsky 1980), the "double agents" of development searching for heretical possibilities (Roy 2010), and the "colonized middle" class of state agents at the core of colonial-era bureaucracy (Myers 2003). While they have deep fidelities to the city's past and are committed to what they see as a better urban future, they are never outside the tensions of Ethiopian society's transformation. They are caught up in diverging expressions of social class in the city and their work is grounded in the ethno-federalist territoriality extending far beyond the city. With the exception of a few planners at senior management level, few have a personal investment in the ruling EPRDF party's national priorities, yet they are nonetheless public servants of that same autocratic political structure. While planners see in urban restructuring a significant moment for lasting interventions, they are uncertain as to just how that future urban society will cohere, who will benefit, and for how long. Such uncertainty is understandable, given the prolonged nature of urban crisis that the current regime inherited.

A second theoretical contribution of the dissertation is to provide a nuanced account of urban governance in light of the emergence of Ethiopia's developmental state. Scholars of urban development in the global south have often argued that classic, state-led paradigms of development have long advanced capitalist agendas for urban restructuring. New evidence for such claims can be found in private-sector "warfare" against the poor in Manila's periphery (Ortega 2016), or the NGO investments alongside Indian slum-dwellers that opened up new accumulation strategies for private investors (Desai and Loftus 2012), or private control of South Africa's new master-planned, gated cities (Herbert and Murray 2015). There is much within these accounts that informs us of the financial logics driving urban restructuring in southern cities, even including novel "situated" versions of neoliberal urbanisms. I acknowledge the deep significance of urban development to Ethiopian livelihoods and the inequitable distributions of the burdens and benefits of development that such changes produce.

However, this dissertation takes up a different task just adjacent to these accounts. While urban restructuring in Ethiopia mirrors some of the speculative logics of global political economy and the growing influence of investments from Ethiopians in diaspora, I attend to the logic of the local developmental state's quest for legitimation. By intervening in the worst aspects of prolonged urban crisis, the party seeks to distinguish itself in the very sites where past regimes had failed in their development ambitions. Investment capital may be a necessary condition for some of these processes, but it is not sufficient on its own to explain the workings of urban governance today. Instead of yet another case of neoliberal global urbanism touching down in a novel formation in yet another part of the global south, I take up urban renewal

programs to show how post-socialist trajectories in Ethiopian society are adopting an urban form.

Research questions, informants, and methods

The dissertation enhances understandings of governance through urban renewals by focusing on the work lives of urban planners. That task rests on two research questions:

1. How are planners in Addis Ababa situated as experts in their professional and institutional contexts?
2. How do their contributions to urban renewal programs alter possibilities of urban governance?

To answer these questions, I employed three qualitative methods of data collection: in-depth interviews, participant observation, and unobtrusive research on texts.

My first method of data collection came from interviews. I conducted semi-structured interviews with 37 individual planners working in a variety of planning institutions in Addis Ababa. My informants were male and female, ranging in age from their early 20s to their mid 60s, and with various levels of experience, specialties and professional ranks. All but one of my informants were Ethiopian nationals. Many of them had multiple roles and commitments to more than one institution, and some were engaged in independent contracting and consulting work. Most were planning practitioners, while some were both planning practitioners and trainers of planners. I opted for purposive sampling in the study. While I preferred to approach potential participants in the study directly, I also arrived at snowball sampling through a mix of personal introductions, references and tips of informants already interviewed. The interviews

were sometimes supplemented by follow-up conversations, and in a few cases, short discussions at a later time for clarification.

I conducted all the interviews myself, in person, and almost entirely in English. I usually conducted interviews in locations that would maximize privacy, as in an office with closed doors or certain public places we could speak freely. Some individuals were interviewed on more than one occasion. While the length of interviews varied from 35 minutes to more than 3 hours, most interviews took place between 60 and 80 minutes. While interviews were captured in digital audio recordings, I also jotted and recorded aspects of them in hand-written notes. Since these were semi-structured interviews, I arrived at the interview with prompts and probes already written or typed on paper. As interviews unfolded, I typically would steer the informants to clarify points of fact, as well as the relationship between their words and other issues and impressions. In many cases, I made additional notes after the interview both as to what seemed significant or surprising in the personal encounter or key points. When listening back to recordings and transcribing onto computer, I consulted these written notes and jottings for emphases, key points and observations that would guide my consideration of the interview. I conducted all transcriptions myself. Etic codes steered my initial process of repeated readings of transcripts, and cross-referencing with data collected in other ways. Gradually, emic codes also emerged, either at the time of transcription or later on.

My second mode of data collection was participant observation. The circumstances of my observation of informants varied widely, from casual conversations, consultations, private meetings, and both in-house and public presentations, to everyday workplace

encounters. Often, but not always, I made field notes based on these observations and typically did so by hand as quickly as convenient and appropriate, as I typically did not have a computer with me. Sometimes field notes spurred additional jottings that would contribute to observations later. My direct observations of landscapes, neighborhoods, and sites of demolition and construction were important to my background knowledge, and such observations occasionally resulted in photographs and field notes. But often it was through interviews and conversations that these observations could assume a more meaningful role in analysis.

My third mode of data collection was unobtrusive research on texts. I collected a broad array of popular and media texts on paper and in online form, as well as legal documents such as federal gazettes and legislation, or other administrative documents. I acquired these texts from personal contacts, internet searches, the government printer, copies from the National Archives in Addis Ababa, and other places. Most were recent, while others were decades old. Much of this material has not made it into the dissertation, but still provided background context in conjunction with secondary accounts.

Data analysis of written transcripts, notes and written texts were initially conducted in Atlas.TI 1.03X for Mac. After significant computer problems, however, I ultimately resorted to more conventional labeling and coding, whether of transcripts or other documents. In separate computer documents, I clustered together certain themes which culminated in concept maps. In turn, these concept maps helped me to select from among data sources, and often to discard or de-emphasize certain interviews as sources. As I drew these various data sources together, I

was better able to compare and contrast them, to shake out commonalities, and of course to interpret them.

The dissertation project originated in my M.A. thesis (McClelland 2008), which was a critical appraisal of the UN housing rights regime in relation to the government-built condominiums in Addis Ababa. That program would later be called the Integrated Housing Development Program, or IHDP. So I certainly benefitted from short visits to the field in 2007 and 2008. This earlier study helped me to gain a sense of the longer arc of urban development, as well as a deeper appreciation of the local logistics of conducting fieldwork. Fieldwork for the dissertation project was conducted in three stints. After intensive Amharic study in the Summer of 2011 at the University of Florida, I conducted a pilot study in Addis Ababa from July to August of 2011, which led to my particular interest in planners. I returned to the field in July to September of 2012 for Amharic language study at the Addis Ababa University, and was able to continue building some contacts, gaining some permissions, and making notes. Most of the substantive fieldwork happened during a longer trip, from February of 2014 to February of 2015.

Structure of the argument

The dissertation unfolds in six chapters. Chapter One offers a desk review of current understandings of urban restructuring. I focus on three broad literatures: (1) neo-Marxist urban studies of neoliberal governance and the global cities framework, (2) urban boosterism policy prescriptions that pre inter-urban competition, and (3) new African urbanisms. While these

literatures share some common empirical objects, the significance of African localities and African expertise sits quite unevenly across them. I show that even the new African urbanisms literature would be improved by closer examination of the work lives of agents of urban governance.

Chapter Two gives a historical account of the position of cities in relation to territory in the history of Ethiopia. I trace the broad outlines of such change up to the early years of the EPRDF ruling party as it emerged in the late 20th Century. The chapter explains how state action and neglect both played important roles in the production of so-called slum areas in Addis Ababa. Urban development in Addis Ababa allowed important degrees of social mixity in what has broadly been termed “organic” growth. Though high modern development often was focused on rural restructuring, such efforts had a limited reach in Addis Ababa. Planners have only gained the capacity to carry out urban renewal at scale in recent years.

Chapter Three moves from this historical context on urbanization and governance to the contemporary picture of development interventions under EPRDF’s developmental state. As Ethiopia grapples with the three meta-processes of globalization, urbanization, and industrialization, national development priorities have assumed a dynamic new geography of development. Rather than a turn purely toward urban development, I argue that the developmental state is producing an infrastructural turn which alters the relations of urban and rural places. On this view, renewal programs in urban space are the local manifestation of broader national transformations.

Chapter Four attends to the knowledge and practice of planners engaged in various ways with urban renewal. I probe their reflections on this program. For the improvement of huge parts of one city through massive redevelopment, urban renewal has proven indispensable. As compared to upgrading, renewal is preferred by the municipality because it enrolls socialist-era land policies to generate revenue and to accelerate the pace of urban change. Moreover, in targeting slum areas and the social mixity that has long characterized the city, renewal advances a new spatiality of urban zones distinguished by new infrastructures. As technical specialists, planners govern the city through urbanism but struggle with their political positioning. While they advocate for different modes of planning, their practices nevertheless advance ruling party efforts at political legitimation.

Chapter Five explores these aspects further by situating planners in the city in their workplaces. I show how a new, increasingly capable professional cadre of planners has been produced, and why their emergence matters. In place of socialist-era educational and professional networks, a new pipeline of professionalization now links Ethiopia's emerging planning talent with a new range of partners abroad and a flood of models on offer. At the same time, I show that reliance on foreign experts has been stemmed so that planners see themselves as self-sufficient "indigenous professionals" well suited to their work in an apparently exceptional country. Working as a planner in Addis Ababa means negotiating the bureaucracies that advance ruling party politics and the blockages they impose. Rather than Weberian notions of bureaucratization of depoliticized reason, what matters here are the dicta of party politics in the developmental state.

The dissertation concludes in Chapter Six. Here I present a capsule review of the argument, the main limitations of the study, and the main contributions of the study to scholarly literature.

Chapter 1. Situating an African city in the urban age

Introduction

Studies of urban restructuring are hardly new, and this Chapter presents a desk review of a few approaches to that object of study. I compare three broad and admittedly heterogeneous groupings of literature that approach restructuring in various geographical contexts and according to different political positions. First, I describe neo-Marxist accounts of urban restructuring, where the most relevant contributions to the dissertation have been studies of neoliberal governance and the emergence of the global cities framework. Second, I outline “urban boosterism” literature. While the economism of that work does not advance critical accounts of restructuring, the literature is beginning to imagine African cities along new frontiers of investment. Third, I outline the new African urbanisms literature, which attends to urban landscapes and livelihoods across much of the continent. As this work emphasizes the everyday socio-spatial practices of urban inhabitants, it rarely focuses on practices of high modern development or official systems of governance. In response to these literatures, the chapter ends by arguing that inductive accounts of the work lives of development practitioners would help to produce critical accounts of urban restructuring in African contexts. This dissertation draws on aspects of Marxist urban studies and new African urbanisms to further such an agenda.

Cities at the center and periphery of neo-Marxist urban studies

The early Marxist approaches to human geography began as a challenge to functionalist urban geographies of spatial form, planning, and morphology that were

commonplace in the 1960s. Marxists introduced a special interest in urban inequalities, such as the means by which racial segregation and poverty have been reproduced (Bunge 1971, Morrill and Wohlenberg 1971, Harvey 1973, Blaut 1974, Ley 1974). Their radicalism politicized socio-spatial practices in the city and the project of urban scholarship itself. But with only a few exceptions, such as David Smith's (1974) study of apartheid-era governance of South African cities, early Marxist urban geographers were almost exclusively concerned with North American cities. Later, as late industrial cities became bound up in processes of globalization and neoliberalization, two major strands of Marxist work on urban restructuring would emerge, in relation to (1) neoliberal governance, and (2) the global cities framework.

(1) Urban restructuring amid neoliberal governance

The first of these strands was a broad, politically engaged research agenda that related the changing modes of urban governance to the production of space. Early on, Harvey (1989) identified the move of urban governance arrangements from "managerialism" to "entrepreneurialism." Harvey's (2003) later interest in "accumulation by dispossession" was taken up to understand the changing drivers of investment and material impacts in the built environment. Likewise, many explored restructuring in relation to demolition, displacement, reconstruction and gentrification and thus also the deepening of race and class disparities in the city (Fainstein 1994, Smith 1996, MacLeod 2002, Harvey 2006, Hackworth 2007, Lees et al. 2008, Lai 2012). Such processes proved so extensive that they welcomed transnational investors as new urban arrivals (Mitchell 2004) and even displaced many out of the city altogether into suburban enclaves. The path-breaking work of Jane Jacobs (1961) on

exclusionary politics of urban planning was also a key point of departure for understanding new municipal engagements with massive redevelopment (Merrifield 2014, Smith 2002). Scholars also noted gradations of abandonment of some urban quarters altogether (Safransky 2014). By these lights, neoliberalization has not just protected elite economic interests in the city through reclaiming urban space from poor, marginalized and minoritized people.

These neoliberal programs are of course situated in broader institutional contexts, and related processes unfolding in the city. Perhaps the major focus in this regard has been on practices of zoning, policing, and adjudication that open the city to regulation, and allow for the criminalization of class and racial difference in the process (Herbert 1997, Smith 1999, D. Mitchell, 2005; 2009, K. Mitchell, 2009, Beckett and Herbert 2010, Brown 2010, Blomley 2011, Valverde 2012, Sylvestre et al. 2015). Anti-poor urban geographies were reflected in an “advanced marginality” (Wacquant 2008) taking aim at specific kinds of individuals, families and communities. Welfare provisions were weakened across cities (Burnett 2013), as finance for public housing fell (Crump 2002), and racist exclusions were a hallmark of the drug war and the penal system to disbarment from electoral participation (Alexander 2013, Gilmore 2007). Ecological disasters and wartime emergency also were shown to enable new regulatory environments of privatization and securitization (Derickson 2014, Mitchell 2011, Schwartz 2007, Gregory 2004). The “actually existing geographies” (Brenner and Theodore 2002) of urban spaces in neoliberal governance were multiple, in flux, and bound up in institutional transformations at a variety of scales.

Neo-Marxists and other radical scholars also showed how cities were nevertheless places for the discovery of political alternatives to neoliberalism. Empirical studies aimed at demonstrations of how “mobilization at the local scale has impeded the roll-out of neoliberal projects” (Leitner, Peck and Sheppard 2007: 325). Social movements sought municipal reform through anti-homelessness and anti-eviction campaigns (Blomley 2004, Mitchell 2003) and took direct action to feed the hungry (Spataro 2014, Heynen 2009). Public spaces for direct democracy were carved out by grassroots movements by claiming, barricading, and occupying urban spaces (Farias 2016, Springer 2010, Herbert 2007). Akin to notions of “insurgent citizenship” or “un-civil society” in which cumulative political gains were made through gradual appropriation of spaces and resources (Holston 2009, Bayat 1997), this radical politics of the commons did not aim at achieving recognition from the state. Instead, following Lefebvre’s (1968) notion of a right to the city, scholars examined democratic practices in the grass roots of European and North American cities (Vasudevan 2011, Marcuse 2009, Purcell 2003, Mitchell 2003), and the urban politics of Kenya, China and the global south generally (Manji 2015, Samara, He and Chen 2013).

As critical interest in the means of urban restructuring traveled across the globe, there was also a questioning of some of the central terms and conceptions of a neo-Marxist account. Amid globalization, place was thought to be a “glocal” arrangement of policy-making between and within cities (Swyngedouw and Kaïka 2003). The particular fears and desires of elite actors in particular cities were shown to be significant in producing consent of the middle class for anti-poor urban policies in China (Pow 2009) and Latin America (Lees 2012, Caldeira 2001). Some substantial engagements with urban spaces in Africa also emerged in research on

the retrenchment of older spatial logics of apartheid in new South African cities and gated suburbs (Lemanski 2006, Ballard and Jones 2010, Herbert and Murray 2015). Against classic Marxist critiques of capitalism, this research attended to the specificity of historical and cultural contexts of city-making. That turn, as Peake and Shepard (2014) noted, welcomed the bridging of Marxist perspectives to feminist, anti-racist, and postcolonial studies paradigms.

(2) Urban restructuring and the global cities framework

A second strand of neo-Marxist work on urban restructuring emerged as a thesis on global cities. Inspired by a growing interest in global complexity (*c.f.* Harvey 1982), this framework has followed networks of service-sector firms through cities to understand drivers of global economic change, like financial decision-making (Friedmann 1986, Sassen 1991). Firms produce economic territories that span multiple, seemingly distinct places, and adopt certain cities as “command centers” for global integration (*c.f.* Wallerstein 2011, Amin 1997). The flowering of cultural economies has been an important theme here, as in the increasingly significant roles of spectacular consumption and of mega-events in the construction of urban and national identities (Massey 2007, Elsheshtawy 2010). The global city has also been explored in relation to networked flows of migrant laborers and their logic, rather than the logic of capitalists exploiting them (Kathiravelu 2016).

A hallmark of the global cities thesis has been placing these multifaceted urban linkages within global hierarchies. Roughly a decade into the development of this research agenda, Friedmann wrote that “regional cities—the commanding nodes of the global system—

can be arranged into a *hierarchy of spatial articulations*, roughly in accord with the economic power they command” [ital. original] (Friedmann 1995: 23). Taylor (1997: 328) soon claimed that “the hierarchy should not be measured as a static structure but as a dynamic ordering of cities,” and thus merely a tendency towards hierarchy. Many scholars examined shifts in this interurban hierarchy, according to the changing role of territoriality for the nation-state (Brenner 1998, Keil 1998), or new technological inputs for financial services (Derudder et al. 2010), or according to regulatory regimes coping with the global financial crisis (Bassens and van Meeteren 2015). Global cities have generally been understood as sitting along an East-West axis from Japan to China, Europe, North America, and occasionally in the Middle East. In general, then, “African, Latin American and Asian cities are relatively more likely to act as isolates and relatively less likely to play a primary role in the world city system” (Alderson, Beeckfield and Sprague-Jones 2010: 1917).

However, these visions of urban hierarchy and interurban competition arguably mark a return to theories of modernization and dependency that were ascendant in much of the 20th Century development theory. First, global cities accounts reproduced some aspects of modernization theory. Urban hierarchy, after all, was fundamental to national-level development administration and to new measures of modernization theory (*c.f.* Zipf 1941). Population distributions across a hierarchy of cities has often been used to suggest that over-urbanization in primate cities correlated with countries lacking a large industrial base (Rostow 1960, Berry 1961). Theories of *regional* development presumed that superior models of resource allocation in the already-industrialized global north compared favorably to “backward regions” elsewhere (Alonso 1968), such as Africa.

There are two kinds of empirical evidence that hold up these hierarchies for scrutiny. For example, France and Ethiopia both fall into a broad class of countries with primate cities as capitals. But this fact of population geography cannot explain the *roles* of urban primacy in either country's development: the countries have very distinct development histories, and each primate city functions very differently according to global financial networks. More significantly, the emergence of new megacities, conurbations, and urban corridors across the globe in the last three decades have rewritten narratives of modernization. City populations, rates of growth, size and location are found distributed in countries with both small and large industrial bases. Of course there are considerable ecological, political and logistical challenges that contemporary urban situations of rapid urbanization present. But these cities have undeniably altered the face of urbanization and globalization today. For more and more reasons, these urban conditions make urban trajectories matter at a global scale.

Second, the global cities thesis derives from dependency theory, which in turn reflect the imprint of integration from an imperial age of African and European contact. Entrepôts, port cities, and other hubs of colonial mercantilism have long held sway in the imagination of economic geographers because of their steering functions in the largest flows of goods, people and money. These places were undoubtedly very significant in the production and enrichment of European metropolises, but many of the large African cities today were either started as new master planned projections of European colonial bureaucracy, or were profoundly transformed by them (Freund 2007). The subjugation and exploitation of the black, working class urban majorities was (re)designed to assist white colonial regimes of extraction. In Africa's anticolonial movements in the mid-20th Century, cities became the grounds of a new,

agonistic postcolonial politics; high modern planning by newly independent African countries meant both a search for development through new and self-sufficient modes of industrialization on the one hand, and a turn toward rescaled rural production and land redistribution. This latter task was often expressed through villagization programs, the nationalization of natural resources, or the breaking up of white-owned commercial farms into new cooperatives. Attempts at ruralization did not always produce material gains for everyday people and sometimes lead to new and devastating outcomes, but were sustained through ideological appeals to the village as an authentically African cultural unit. Such regional dynamics of the decolonization process mark a departure from the logics of territorial integration in the imperial era.

Taking note of the limits of the explanatory power of the global cities framework are not meant to suggest that such scholarship is locked in an ahistorical approach. Marxists have sought to map the variegated nature of global capitalism in its urban linkages, not to deliberately omit African places. However, it is curious that the distribution, territorial integration, and the means of planning that would withstand interurban competition—such as the massive flows of resources through diasporic remittances, aid in trade, or even transboundary criminal networks—do not draw much interest for the global cities framework. African cities are indeed dynamic nodes in a variety of networks and they are deeply consequential for the production of territories, but they are not seen as following the pathways of decision-making favored by firms as in New York or London. Whatever the limitations of the critical purchase of this Marxist approach in hailing urban change across Africa, the recourse to hierarchy has been adopted by the normative policy prescriptions of urban boosterism.

Urban boosterism: Restructuring for inter-urban competition

Urban boosterism literature adheres to a pragmatist orientation assuming interurban competition as a ground truth. This work is defined by two aspects. First, the work is almost entirely concerned with the territorial logics of comparative advantage; a city is advised to develop economic powers over others, even as their interactions and interdependencies thicken. So in contrast to the critical approaches of Marxist frameworks that seek to explain global processes through cities, this literature prescribes means of inter-urban competition, including urban restructuring.

Second, instead of a purely academic literature, urban boosterism is characterized in part by its medium, which enables a breezier voice of business reports, executive summaries, and promotional materials. In image, though not substance, urban boosterism hails a version of the city-as-growth-engine. Molotch (1976) established that notion in moving urban theory away from an “ecology” of resources embedded and distributed in community (c.f. Park, Burgess and McKenzie 1925), to a new conception in which municipalities strategically build their own populations until they become opened up to the class and political interests of migrants. As a departure from Molotch’s vision, when Friedmann and Wolff (1982) inaugurated the talk of global cities, they claimed that cities would have to harness the apparently exogenous “forces” of globalization.

Urban boosterism departs further from this scholarship by preferring a variety of urban strategies for engaging such forces. The metaphor of certain cities as “command centers”

of globalization is attractive because it offers a simpler account of the complex ties between urbanization, and globalization. Buzzword-laden aspirations—global cities, world-class cities, green cities, smart cities, sustainable cities, plug-and-play cities, or even cities without slums—all help make urban policy amenable to inter-urban competition, and imagine the transferability and mutability of policy-making. The embrace of this perspective by investors, urban managers and policy-makers as a normative blueprint rather than the explanatory framework of the neo-Marxists who advanced the global cities thesis, is not particularly surprising (McCann and Ward 2012). Emptied of its critical content, the global city aspirations have had wide-ranging impacts, including the rationale for adopting anti-poor urban policies.

Public lecture circuits and consultancies, and not academic journals, would hail the specialist talents of the “creative class” (Florida 2002). On this view, local service economies flourish by attracting and retaining “creatives” and firms through local amenities and incentives. Warm receptions of Florida’s work by policy-makers and media channels remind us that critical urbanists are merely a small part of a broader epistemic community setting the terms of urbanity. Indeed, much of this knowledge production is now codified and determined by players even beyond Florida’s influence, in a growing institutional complex that spans media, philanthropy, city governments and some aspects of I/NGO institutions. As “pop-policy,” urban boosterism reaches its most popularly accessible form in an online culture of data visualizations, TED Talks, videos, animations, and other digital ephemera. Crossovers between institutional and popular domains are found from the opinion pieces at The Atlantic’s *City Lab* to the speculations of the Rockefeller Foundation’s *100 Resilient Cities* program, the Cities

Prosperity Initiative, and the tech-sector boosters working at the New Cities Foundation. Such outlets shuttle the notion of global cities across an extensive itinerary.

Perhaps the most telling expression of urban boosterism is the rise of city rankings. Far from laying the contradictions of financial capitalism bare, these rankings promote new anti-poor pathways for urban investment. A descendent of rankings of the supposed best places to live (McCann 2004), these lists are scripts for urban investment. Investment managers at A.T. Kearney (2016) celebrate a list of 15 “global elite” cities. The brokers at KnightFrank (2016) celebrate global cities with the most profitable real estate prospects. Scholars at the Institute for Urban Strategies (2016) offer a *Global Power City Index* for urban policymakers. Some version of the global cities ethos finally comes full circle, since IUS has the credibility of a research team of renowned scholars, including Saskia Sassen herself. Since its founding in 2008 to the present, the *Index* has put New York, London, Tokyo and Paris as “comprehensive leaders” at the top of the list each year—the four cities that were already the central focus of Sassen’s foundational work some 25 years ago. Of course, there is no African city on any of these rankings; such places figure in only as the peripheral, constitutive outsides of capitalist processes of urban restructuring. Yet, if detached from its original moorings in the West, “urban boosterism is increasingly being used in countries that are neither democratic nor firmly committed to the free market ideals of neoliberalism” (Koch and Valiyev 2015).

As Africa is the last of the continents being remade by urban revolution, there is more and more potential for the logics of inter-urban competition to be taken up. Africa is projected to have 50% of its residents living in urban areas in 2030 (UNDESA in Pieterse and

Parnell 2014). Since the global financial crisis and instability in food and oil markets, investors and policymakers have begun to explore what they have long understood to be beyond conventional frontiers of investment. The celebration of “world-class” cities has become more common in local discourses in Africa and foreign discourses about Africa (Sihlongonyane 2016), and such discourses are starting to do significant symbolic and material work as they circulate. Explicit consideration of African cities was the goal of Mastercard’s *African Cities Growth Index*, which placed Addis Ababa among 37 cities having “medium-low growth potential” among some 79 African cities on a “consolidated cities” ranking (Mastercard 2015: 23). A report from KPMG, the auditing and financial services firm, suggests that urban boosterism may be making an African turn:

On the cusp of an economic boom, there are two key features altering the course of economic development for Africa’s future: a rich demographic dividend and urbanization, which together will drive modernisation [*sic*] and increase connectivity across the continent. These are essential prerequisites for sustained economic progress on the continent. Cities are at the centre [*sic*] of these new determinants of economic prosperity (KPMG 2015).

Mainstream media have also cottoned on to this shift in investment incentives. CNN popularized this new consensus view in its own list of top-ten African “Cities of Opportunity” (Page 2015). The Economist (2011) also has shared this spectacular view of investment-led growth in Africa in its “Africa Rising” narrative. These are good signs for global investors, as well as many African investors and policy-makers, even as local contexts remain hard for outsiders to negotiate and the gains of these investments can be illusory.

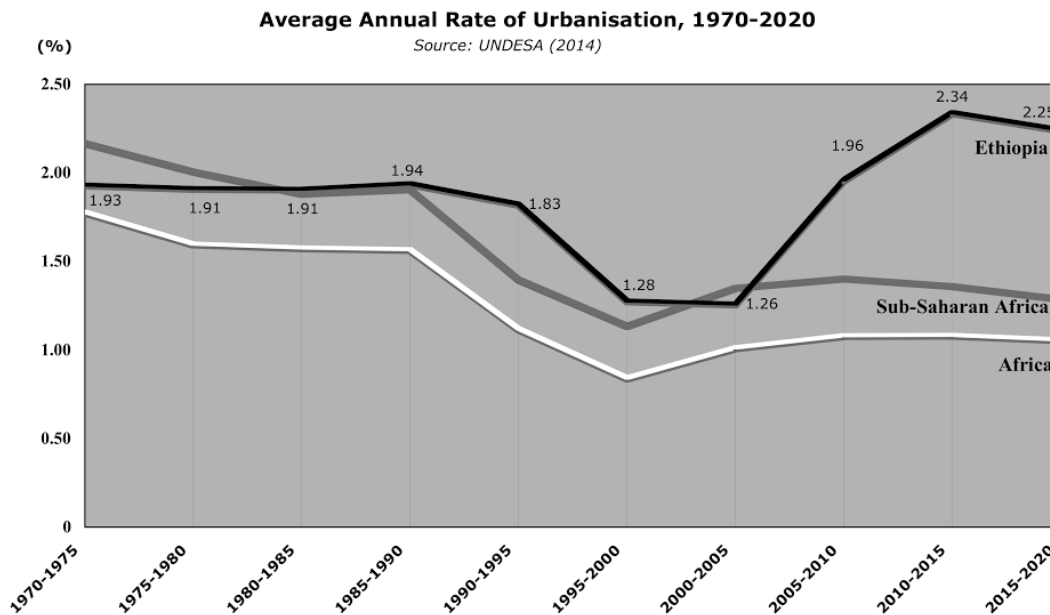
Ethiopia presents an intensified version of the broader picture of Africa’s urban transformation. As such, the country has been a focus of much of the new speculation about

future economic growth. Ethiopia has the second largest population in Africa and an urbanization rate surging at twice the continental average. **See Figure 2.** According to UNDESA (2014), Ethiopia's annual average rates of urbanization today stand at 2.34% in 2010-2015, whereas 2.25% is the annual average rate projected for 2015-2020. Addis Ababa may double in population between now and 2040, when the metropolitan area currently being planned may be home to 8.1 Million residents (United Nations in Einashe 2015). Ethiopia's urbanization is associated with outlooks for its ongoing economic growth, as in the unbridled optimism of the promotional film, *Creativity in Motion*. The World Bank (2016a) noted that Ethiopia has been "averaging 10.8% growth per year in 2003/04 – 2014/15 compared to the regional average of 5.4%," associating much of that growth in service and agriculture sectors. McKinsey Global Institute (2016) concurred that Ethiopia had the highest and most stable economic growth profile in Africa in 2015, but traced this growth to gains in manufacturing. The African Development Bank Group (2016) claims that Ethiopia's successful structural transformation owes much to foreign direct investment at \$2.1 Billion, making it the ninth-largest African recipient of FDI. Special export zones, improved highways, a rebuilt national train system and other new infrastructure point to the intensified relevance of logistics while Ethiopia focuses on building a diversifying, globally integrated national economy.

The possibilities of capitalist transformation of Ethiopia seem anachronistic, given long-standing developmentalist narratives. Just a decade ago, Davis (2006) grounded his account of a planet of burgeoning slums on many of the statistics and conceptualizations of UN-Habitat, which in turn has quoted his work extensively. While Davis noted the exclusionary politics and ecological crises implicit in neoliberal urbanism and would doubtlessly take issue with simplistic booster

visions of a flattened global order (*c.f.* Friedman 2005), his insistence on slums as merely places of overcrowding, disease and immiseration is reductive. Merely acknowledging the unevenness of capitalist development across the globe does little to explain the inner workings of particular places. At its most insidious, “dystopic narratives” of the city (Robinson 2010) prevent slum dwellers from being understood as historical agents, leaving them adrift in exotic and tragic spectacles (Roy 2011). As Richa Nagar et al. (2002: 262) caution, even when posed as a critical rejoinder to global capitalism, certain “discourses of global capitalism continue to position women, minorities, the poor, and southern places in ways that constitute globalization as dominant” among other processes. If urban boosterism has begun to champion African urban transformations at the frontier of global investment, it obfuscates from the nature of urban crises in Africa or the multiple trajectories forward.

Figure 2. Average Annual Rate of Urbanization, 1970-2020



Graph by Author.

New African urbanisms: epistemologies of marginality

The third cluster of literature under consideration here is the work on new African urbanisms. While sharing a critical interest in urban inequality and marginality with Marxist urban studies, this work draws more on post-structural and post-colonial conceptions and features a wider variety of aims, methods and empirical objects. In advancing a close study of the practices and logics of everyday life in African cities, the scholarship is perhaps more accurately summed up as a collection of shared epistemologies of place than a defined paradigm. Three significant contributions to the study of urban restructuring follow from this emphasis on the social geographies of African cities: (1) provincializing existing practices in urban research; (2) new conceptualizations of urban infrastructure; and (3) the recognition of uncertainty as a pervasive aspect of urban life. With regard to this dissertation, part of African urbanisms generally consideration of the city through slum spaces.

(1) Provincializing practices of urban research

The first contribution of this body of work has been the theoretical move, as Chakrabarty (2007) put it, to “provincialize” foundational claims of urban studies. Urban studies long focused on Western peoples and places and could not help but render their circumstances in Western lexicons, while reserving a small space for considerations of urban conditions elsewhere, usually through lenses of development studies or of modernization theory. The preponderance of such work suggests that experiences of urban modernity in general are derivative of European experiences of modernity in particular (Robinson 2006, Mbembe and

Nutall 2004, Comaroff and Comaroff 2012, Lawhon, Ernstson and Silver 2014). In provincializing urban studies, then, Africa might no longer be held up as “an object apart from the world, or as a failed and incomplete example of something else ... [so as to ignore] ... the embeddedness in multiple elsewheres of which the continent actually speaks” (Mbembe and Nutall 2004: 348). Some attempts at comparative accounts of coloniality and post-coloniality in cities were underway while anti-colonial movements were still coming to fruition (*c.f.* Abu-Lughod 1965), so the desire to provincialize is not entirely new. Still, the analytical purchase here is to stake out fresh grounds in urban studies that would open the field to a variety of new engagements through new terms on those places with which scholars have been less familiar. There are two main strategies to effect this turn in urban studies.

One provincializing strategy lies in questioning the landscapes, case selections and points of departure presented by academics (as well as urban boosters) for the stealthy, but significant work they do in our collective imaginations. Merely mentioning cities like London, Dubai, Detroit, or Beijing relies on master narratives of waxing or waning urban fortunes, on stories already thought consequential and generalizable. Case studies from such places are thought to provide ample empirical evidence to enhance conceptions of themes like gentrification, securitization, neoliberalization, enclosure, or resilience. While certain cities appear to offer significant global stories in microcosm (McCann, Roy and Ward 2010), the reliance on urban master narratives about these cities comes as a detriment to the rich, multifaceted possibilities of research in them that might fall outside these thinking units. Moreover, a recourse to these master narratives complicates attempts to contrast, compare, and wonder about the full breadth of urban situations in other cities around the world. When

scholars and laypeople off the African continent might hear of Dar Es Salaam or Doula or even Addis Ababa, there may be no narratives to draw on at all, succumbing to the age-old imaginary of “a continent having little to teach” (Mlambo 2006). New accounts from such places thus carry a burden of context: a search for those characteristics that might tell new versions of familiar stories. The situation is perhaps particularly vexing for geographers, as scholars who pride themselves on commitment to place and to examining situated knowledge.

Africa’s rapid urbanization suggests that African cities are significant for collective understandings of the future of urban life across the globe, as well as many millions of African city residents themselves. Scholars can refuse the worn categories and binaries of modernization theory to recognize what African cities can teach about “divergent paths of urbanization” (Myers and Murray 2006). This means striking a balance between considering African cities as an emerging locus of urban theory in their own right, and an attempt to essentialize their processes and relations as merely African (Ernstson et al. 2014). They need not be isolated in a special taxonomy, but put into circulation on new terms. Though Soja once claimed that Los Angeles fragmented spatialities and disorienting architecture made it the quintessential “postmetropolis” (Soja 2000), Garth Myers (2011) later countered, “What if the postmetropolis is Lusaka?” Such a rapidly growing and globalizing city challenges claims to a postmodern geography inscribed in certain sorts of places.¹

¹ This inversion is a bit ironic. Soja’s (1967) dissertation explored Kenya’s development in relation to imperialism and modernization, but the more renowned work of his career looked at urbanism and urban regions of North America. How different would Soja’s conception of “postmodern geographies” be had he pursued a long-term commitment to the study of East African urban situations?

A second provincializing move is to do work on the global north through a southern theory lens. Following Ferguson (2006), Comaroff and Comaroff (2012) note that global investment strategies are attracted to weak and porous regulatory regimes often found in Africa. In this sense, as the old core of capitalist development is hollowed out, “[t]he Global South is running ahead of the Global North, a hyperbolic prefiguration of its future-in-the-making” (Comaroff and Comaroff 2012: 126). Hentschel performs something of this move when she describes how the Neukölln area of Berlin already reflects socio-spatial practices commonly associated with African places.

Neukölln long bore a stigma similar to that of many places in the global South: poor, dysfunctional and failing on all fronts... In Neukölln, like in other poor districts of Berlin, informal ways of getting by were flourishing: pensioners collected bottles, young men bargained with used but still valid metro tickets, families planted vegetables in any vacant spot they could find, and indebted yet hopeful inhabitants frequented some of the thousand-and-one gambling parlours [*sic*] (Hentschel 2015: 83).

In Neukölln, poor Germans and immigrants from Eastern Europe and the Middle East fabricate the illicit casinos they can afford, and police fabricate regulatory practices in response. Other Western cities are also grounds for these changes, too. For example, a Parisian rail station has become a “node of accumulation” for petty trading by West African migrants, much to the chagrin of their white French neighbors who found that work disorderly (Kleinman 2014). Others have argued that municipal abandonment of crucial public infrastructures, as in Detroit or Hartford, is perhaps more akin to the characteristics of South African models of neoliberal governance, rather than American models (Silver 2014; Myers 2012).

Of course, there are skeptics of just how urban studies can be provincialized. Against new possibilities for urban comparison or even a reenergized regional studies (McFarlane and Robinson 2012, Roy 2009), some warn against what they see as a latent Africanist essentialism in the work (Peck 2015, Brenner and Schmid 2015). Peck allows that it is time for “universalizing tendencies” in urban theory to be challenged by new engagements with a broadening array of cities and urban theories, but is wary of the “disarticulation, dissipation and fragmentation” that may follow (Peck 2015: 162). Brenner and Schmid support “all those committed to developing more adequate ways of interpreting—and, ultimately, of influencing—the patterns and pathways of contemporary urbanization” (2015: 159). Yet while Brenner and Schmid tentatively support Robinson’s (2006) provocation that all cities are in the end “ordinary cities,” they await “theoretically reflexive interventions and theory driven research forays” that they believe “postcolonial urbanists” have yet to deliver (Brenner and Schmid 2015: 160).

(2) New conceptualizations of infrastructure

A second impact of African urbanisms scholarship is through new conceptualizations of urban infrastructure. Rather than presuming order in urban forms and materials, such work often emphasizes the enabling capacities of assembled forms, if not necessarily post-structural notions of *assemblage*. For Larkin, the “peculiar ontology” of infrastructures “lies in the facts that they are things and also the relation between things. As things they are present to the senses, yet they are also displaced in the focus on the matter they move around” (Larkin 2013: 329). Infrastructure is fully constituted in this sense as people work through the relations between things.

Everyday communication across African cities shows the multifaceted nature of infrastructure. For young men in Inhambane, Mozambique, mobile phone networks heighten personal ambitions for their own social mobility and opportunity (Archambault 2012). Weak financial infrastructure across Kenya's cities opens up mobile phone technologies as platforms that move credit and allow for bill payment (Guma 2016). While their husbands struggle in the cash economy, poor women in Cairo expend "phatic labor" at one another's houses, maintaining a communicative infrastructure that conveys favors, tips, and influence that enable opportunity (Elyachar 2011). In Kinshasa, an "infrastructure of paucity" works against the conventional terms of infrastructure; the absence of materials shifts the ways in which bodies, ideas, and activities cluster together in significant places (De Boeck and Plissart 2014: 235).

What one needs in order to operate a garage is not a building named "garage," but rather the idea of a garage. The only material element needed to turn an open space into a garage is a used automobile tire on which the garage owner has written the word *quado* (supposedly after the name of a well-known Belgian garage owner in the colonial period).

Verrips and Meyer (2001) offer a case in point in their study a taxi named "God Never Fails" on and its owner, Kwaku. As a taxi-driver, Kwaku maintains a place in Accra's economy by satisfying his customers, countering risks on the road, paying mechanics to replace failing auto parts with parts from other machines, and engaging faith healers who bless the car to prevent accidents and breakdowns. By drawing together material and social infrastructures into surprising ensembles, the narrow and often precarious possibilities of life in the city are transformed and enhanced. Acts that may seem to outsiders to be incongruous or superfluous may be the very socio-spatial practices that can make the city coherent and livable.

Such practices give credence to Simone's notion of "people as infrastructure"² and the diverse means by which human action is situated.

If production possibilities are limited in African cities, then existent materials of all kinds are to be appropriated ... The key is to *multiply the uses that can be made of* documents, technologies, houses, infrastructure, whatever, and this means the ability to put together different kinds of combinations of people with different skills, perspectives, linkages, identities and aspirations [italics added] (Simone 2006: 358).

As governance in African cities is porous and material possibilities are scarce, the capacity of city residents is essential to their survival. Infrastructure often lies open to predation or new uses. Degani (2015) describes how *vishoka* ("hatchets," or "hatchet men") are new players in electrical power provisions in Dar Es Salaam following neoliberal restructuring. Using their tools as well as their knowledge as former employees of the local electricity bureau, *vishoka* navigate local bureaucracy to provide illegal power from the grid to their customers, presenting a kind of provisional toll on electricity access. While the interplay of social and material infrastructures is significant for urban residents, it also reveals limits to the sovereign capacities of municipalities.

² Simone's conception of people as infrastructure relates to the concept of *bricolage* in the writing of Lévi-Strauss (1962). The *bricoleur* is a kind of handy-man driven by necessity to rearrange and fit together odds and ends to support their own subsistence:

The 'bricoleur' is adept at performing a large number of diverse tasks; but, unlike the engineer, he does not subordinate each of them to the availability of raw materials and tools conceived and procured for the purpose of the project. His universe of instruments is closed and the rules of his game are always to make do with 'whatever is at hand', that is to say with a set of tools and materials which is always finite and is also heterogeneous because what it contains bears no relation to the current project, or indeed to any particular project, but is the contingent result of all the occasions as there have been to renew or enrich the stock or to maintain it with the remains of previous constructions or destructions (Lévi-Strauss 1966: 17).

(3) Recognizing uncertainty as a pervasive aspect of city life

A third contribution of African urbanisms has been the recognition of uncertainty as a pervasive aspect of city life. Various sorts of risk and distributions of it are basic to life in any human settlement. In Addis Ababa, uncertainty about the future of city living abound, often in relation to the possibility of pending demolitions. But more often, in those cities typified by disengaged officials disinterested in or incapable of such interventions, the uncertainty described here is basic to cities in which residents contend with prolonged, everyday crisis; their uncertainties are rooted in the durability of social relations both as they are in the present and about the pursuit of urban futures (Pieterse 2008). Where social mobility has little to do with paid labor, and where public and private development ventures have been abandoned, people must discover autonomous means for securing their needs and creating livelihoods. In many African cities, even African elites may enjoy little return on their risks and commitments. So another logic of urban sociality is basic to economic life in the city. Obstacles are overcome by an openness to multiple pathways, and residences, opportunities, and networks all provide buffers to everyday challenges amid crisis.

Pervasive uncertainty accords with a sociality of provisional, occasional rewards for risks. Uncertainty in the city may strain the bonds of friendship (Mains 2012b) or alter the family planning decisions basic to motherhood (Johnson-Hanks 2005), but nonetheless it can be instrumentalized. Without income, and without banks that would secure assets, financial skills focus instead on “hunting and capturing” resources (De Boeck and Plissart 2014: 242). Hustling

within systems of illicit exchange can work if kept invisible from regulatory agencies (Simone 2014, 2007). Surprising deals may take place in locations such as “the use of underground parking garages as sites for new mega-churches; the use of hotel kitchens as daycare centres [sic]; and even indoor swimming pools as butcheries” (Simone 2006: 362), or in sites far outside the city altogether. De Boeck and Plissart’s (2014) classic study of Kinshasa shows that occasional work in illicit mines is funneled into informal urban economies of accumulation and distribution. Returning to the city after dangerous, short-term work in the mines, young men immediately distribute cash and buy goods for their loved ones and dependents. By meeting the expectations of social networks, they expect rewards to return to them in future such exchanges. One becomes more secure the more that they can demonstrate their own accountability to the social.

Pervasive uncertainty also requires a search for material assets that are in some sense future-proof, a socio-spatial practice of becoming. Jonathan Silver writes that since a slum is built through “material improvisation and emergent forms of social collaboration,” that it is a site of “incremental infrastructure” (Silver 2014: 801). Assembling materials in the city helps to coordinate and channel possibilities over time. Cement is only sporadically available in Maputo, but gathering it may signal ambitions for joining the middle class, or even romantic attachment (Archambault 2016). In Ethiopia’s small towns and cities, I have observed that *koro koro* (corrugated roofing sheets) are relatively cheap and fungible assets. Once piled in layers on a roof during good times, one can keep them until bad times necessitate their reselling. I have also observed that skylines in Cairo’s *ashewayyat* (popular neighborhoods) often feature brick buildings topped with bare rebar and construction debris, instead of finished roofs.

Keeping one's home in a permanently unfinished state of construction is thus a strategy to evade required taxes on finished homes; one indefinitely puts off a financial risk to safeguard the present. At the neighborhood scale, such practices accrete as signature urban design features.

In sum, new African urbanisms recognize urban marginality as integral to the production of space in many cities. The slum is not the constitutive outside of urban settlement, but appears to be a permanent condition of urban modernity that attends uneven development. After all, many slums arose by design. In this sense, urban quarters of the colonial era—as in downtown districts of colonial bureaus, parks or plazas, with “high density” urban peripheries—were spatial strategies that kept black labor accessible while holding black people in easily policed margins of the city (Freund 2007). After decolonization, the persistence, densification, and expansion of many such settlements comes to define the limits of the local state to know, govern, and transform the city. On the other hand, some slums emerged without a planning bureaucracy, while others were gradual accretions off grids, plans, or maps. Those settlements may gradually attain legitimacy over time in the regularization of tenure and service delivery, but if they are met with slum clearances and evictions, the incremental gains of urban residents take on particular consequences. Thinking urban restructuring through the contingencies of these experiences opens up new theorizations of governance. A publicly engaged research agenda on African cities calls attention to these dynamics and logics without assuming that the ingenuity of poor residents alone is enough to overcome the serious, even deadly, risks of the city. Instead, good scholarship can reveal the coexistence of multiple urban trajectories and the means by which they are contested and articulated.

Bringing expertise back in

This desk review has laid out three currents in urban studies that foreground the dissertation. I have grouped them as Marxist accounts of urban restructuring, urban boosterism, and new African urbanisms. Like many cities in the global south, Addis Ababa is possibly one of thousands of localities in Africa that present important opportunities for studies of urban restructuring under relatively unique political conditions. While the literature on African urbanisms has made many incisive observations of marginality, it is only in the last few years that it has begun to exert influence on the mainstream debates in urban studies. As the urban political ecologist Mary Lawhon (2013) asked of her Africanist colleagues, “Now that they’re listening, what will we tell them?” What I want to tell my colleagues in urban geography and urban studies is a story of planners working through the new possibilities of urbanization, but under political conditions shaped by party rule as much as capitalist modes of accumulation. State visions of order are made legible by reclaiming urban territory from slum spaces. The central dilemma of planners, then, is their ambivalence in the rough fit between their expertise and the politics of urban governance.

The entanglements of my informants with the promise of urban renewal require a hybrid theoretical orientation drawing on insights from multiple frameworks. Critiques of state power in the execution of anti-poor policy are vital for uncovering aims and drivers of urban restructuring, including the Marxist schools mentioned above. But while urban renewal is undoubtedly a class project, it says more about the socio-spatial practices of destroying and

rebuilding infrastructure through urban governance. With a few notable and major exceptions (Silva 2015, Myers 2011, Pieterse 2010; 2008), new African urbanisms often have a different constraint: while advancing finely-grained accounts of socio-spatial practices in the urban margins, much of this work offers little in the way of a useful framework for understanding logics of governance. Planners in the municipal government of Addis Ababa know very well that their city is embedded in “multiple elsewheres” (Mbembe and Nutall 2004) and that it is undergoing historic transformation. While massive redevelopment of Addis Ababa may be a very rough analog to those “world-class” visioning strategies of intra-urban competition, it is not reducible to them. As I argue, this process speaks more to a national project made legible through new infrastructures, a process that finds slums an irresistible target for intervention.

In the last decade, as massive redevelopment has emerged, a rich body of work on urban displacement and broader transformations in Ethiopia has emerged. Scholars have done well to explore urban marginality and poor peoples’ experiences of urban displacement, from Addis Ababa (Pedrazzini, Vincent-Geslin and Thorer 2014, Assefa and Tegene 2012, Elias 2008, Gebre 2008) to Jimma (Mains 2012, 2007), to Bahir Dar (Haimanot 2010), to Jijiga (Emmenegger 2016) and even a few comparative views across Ethiopia’s cities, also (Pankhurst and Tiemelissan 2014). Only a few studies have looked at changing modes of Ethiopian planning in reordering Addis Ababa (Ezana 2011, Yirgalem 2007, Minwuyelet 2005), however, and while these works examined planning texts and sites of planning, they have not incorporated analysis of first-hand qualitative data from Ethiopia’s planners.

A final concern here in the manner of theorization goes to the likelihood that (local) dynamism in African cities may be misconstrued as a transition to already thoroughly understood (global) processes. For example, the broad contours of urban policy-making in Addis Ababa have been understood as “situated neoliberalism” (Fassil 2008). I believe this conceptualization conceals more than it reveals. By insisting on situating existing concepts, the historical arcs basic to the quest of political legitimacy around development go less considered. While the institution of planning in Ethiopia today has many characteristics that enroll capitalist investment in a tightly controlled market, it is far more than an expression of neoliberal governance. I claim that massive redevelopment in Addis Ababa has more to do with the post-socialist era of a resurgent state in search of legitimacy, not about the production of entrepreneurial subjects that recognize themselves as free subjects. Workers on demolition and construction sites are part of microenterprises that are assembled and disassembled by local government. Long-winded party indoctrinations convene at the neighborhood level before elections. Public universities gather masses of students and faculty together for “political trainings” led by ruling party members. One planner even described to me an occasion in which “technical experts” were called before a small panel of party members and asked which development model they favored: neoliberalism or the EPRDF notion of democratic developmentalism. Participants in these sessions supposed that party officials were not just interested in an intellectual exchange so much as they were searching for critics of party rule. The tacit message in such encounters is that the vanguardist notion of democratic developmentalism was superior to neoliberalism, and thus the progenitor of an exceptional,

defiant Ethiopian state in its own developmental pathway. The expert knowledge and practice of planners is largely fashioned in this context, but is not yet well understood.

As an urban and political geographer attending to the particulars of development under these circumstances, I drew inspiration in this project from the above three literatures while maintaining some skepticism about their limits. The dissertation seeks to advance research on urban restructuring through an inductive case study that “looks up” at urban planners who do the work of urban governance in Addis Ababa. I show that their work lives reveal much about the drive for legitimation in the developmental state. That argument continues in Chapter Two, which gives a historical account of the role cities in the making of territory, and ultimately the rise of centralized planning.

Chapter 2. Histories of urban territoriality with and without the institution of planning

Introduction

In order to understand the making of urban territory in Ethiopia today, some broader historical sense of the governance of both urban and rural places is important. A comparative view over time reveals the newness of urbanization in Ethiopia, the rise of the imperative for governance to respond effectively to urban localities, and how attempts at development unfold in relation to legacies of earlier development programs. Despite the very real differences of political regimes in Ethiopia over the 20th Century and their varied material impacts as I describe them below, important continuities have also run through them. Perhaps the key continuity is that political elites in Ethiopia have often sought to distinguish themselves from others through modernization, even as their targets for intervention have varied across space. Slum spaces in Addis Ababa are but very recent sites of transformation, and here the salience of infrastructure turn in national development, described more fully in Chapter Three, is perhaps most acute.

The first section of this chapter gives a brief discussion of the representation of territory in Ethiopia. Second, the chapter describes a weak relationship between urban settlement and territoriality in medieval and early modern history. However, the third section of the chapter describes how urban settlement became crucial to the formation of political territory with the founding and development of Addis Ababa. Fourth, the chapter shows that planning was an *ad hoc* and incremental means of governance for the early years of the city,

and that its institutionalization came in the mid-20th Century and intensified at the end of the 20th Century. Fifth, the chapter shows that ambitions for urban renewal first emerged among city planners in the 1980s, but were only selectively implemented. Chapters Three and Four will deepen this discussion of urban renewal in the context of national development priorities and describe how it only became a systematic program within the current agenda for massive redevelopment.

Representing territory in Ethiopia

Accounts of the production of territory in Ethiopia, including the task of tracing the role of cities within territorial projects, are provisional and almost necessarily colored by nationalist framings. While Ethiopia's history is often presented as a rejoinder to European imperialism and had by the mid-20th Century come to represent the independent African country *par excellence*, certain colonial representations of place and territoriality in Ethiopia have nevertheless enjoyed outsized influence in telling such stories. As Europeans engraved and painted, photographed, mapped, observed, traded with, and also killed peoples in the Horn of Africa, their assumptions and experiences of place became foundational to Western scholarship on the Horn. Colonial tropes like the Italian scholar of the 1930s who typified Ethiopia as a virtual "*museo di popoli*" (Cerulli in Markakis 2015: 10)³ are bound up in notions of

³ Doreen Massey's (2005) interest in spatiality helps to uncover this proclivity. Following the historian Eric Wolf, she questions the ways in which scholars assume that discrete social groups are the starting point of scholarship, while in actuality, scholarly "ascriptions of remoteness and isolation have been produced, both discursively and materially, through colonialism ... A timeless 'precontact' ethnographic present ... does not depict the situation before European expansion" (Wolf in Massey 2005: 67.)

territory. Indeed, a taxonomic attention to difference can be found in European magazines and newsreels, missionary writings, coffee table books, as well as the expert voices of ethnologists and ethnographers at the dawn of Ethiopian Studies (*c.f.* Hewan 2017). The notion that Ethiopia's peoples have been untouched by modernity would give rise to cultural tourists fascinated by bodily art in the Omo Delta of Ethiopia (Turton 2004).

More interestingly, perhaps, Ethiopian governments have also relied on a kind of ethnographic tableau to fix people in place. There have been many official attempts to modernize and transform the bodies, livelihoods and customs of supposedly "peripheral" indigenous peoples (Girke 2013, Ellison 2012, Donham 1999). There remains a tendency for Ethiopianists to protect symbols of "Amhara pride and domination"⁴ (Getahun 2016: xvii)—stand-ins for the sovereignty of an exceptional Ethiopia—from critics of Ethiopia as an "indigenous empire." Similarly, Toggia (2008: 321) finds in too much of the history writing on Ethiopia a "closed system of state historiography." Similar closures can be found around other expressions of modernization, such as planning. Comparative, historical perspectives on the

⁴ Getahun declares in his recent book on the history of urban growth in Ethiopia that he will not even use the name "Addis Ababa," but only the name "Finfinnee".

Some [scholars] favor the name to stay arguing that "Addis Ababa" is extensively used in the academic literature. Others, especially Ethiopianist scholars, see the name from a historical perspective, as a symbol of Amhara pride and domination and they fiercely resist the change. I was one of the former group and used Addis Ababa in my works to date. Now I am convinced that it is time to use its original name ... [One reason why] is that I am not writing this book for the past generation. Instead, I am writing it for the current and future generations who only know the city by its indigenous name. If I use Addis Ababa, I will put current and future Oromo generations in the same confusion which has haunted past generations, including mine, for years (Getahun 2016: xvii – xviii).

While Getahun may be overstating the uptake of the use of "Finfinnee" among young Oromo people, he offers a compelling argument for his purposes. In this dissertation, however, I use the name "Addis Ababa" for two reasons. First, the city is a very different place and political project than the original Oromo sites it displaced. Second, I honor the understandings of my informants on questions of place, politics and identity, and my informants are civil servants in government agencies who use the name "Addis Ababa."

production of territory help to unearth what is common between planning in Addis Ababa and the culture of planning across Africa, and what is more particular to Ethiopia.

Across colonial knowledges of place and apparently anticolonial programs of state-led modernization, images of properly developed territory have helped to generate a defense of state power. In one of many attacks on the international NGO movement's criticism of the developmental state, the Former Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Meles Zenawi invoked colonial claims to knowledge: "They want us to remain undeveloped and backward to serve their tourists as a museum ... These people talk about the hazard of building dams after they have already completed building dams in their country" (Meles in Moszynski 2011). Ethiopia's developmental state presents itself as singularly able to deliver development, and to secure a federalist system in which "all sovereign power resides in the Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples of Ethiopia" (FDRE Constitution of 1995, Art. 8). In an inversion of the *museo di populi*, then, such a conception of state power seeks to refuse the notion that Ethiopian territories are constitutive outsides of modernity. Rather, as the Ethiopian state seeks to make its own order legible through the production of territory, it draws up new relations of people and place through development.

The relationship of city to territory in Abyssinia and Oromia

From ancient times to the formation of modern Ethiopia in the late-19th Century, cities have had an uneven, and often limited, role in the articulation of territory. The highland region of Ethiopia was one portion of the ancient Axumite empire that spanned present-day

Ethiopia, Eritrea and Yemen. From Axum's ashes, Abyssinia emerged in the 11th Century with a political and administrative structure sustained by three fidelities: adherence to Orthodox Christianity, the court language of Ge'ez, and *mesafint*, a system of political legitimation tethered to claims to the Solomonic ancestral line. Church and state in Abyssinia were enmeshed in important functions, such as taxation and the governance of landed property. However questionable the claims to the Solomonic line were, they made an ethno-nationalist model of success durable, and closed to ethnic and religious minorities.

Assumptions of Abyssinia's splendid isolation have often been inferred from topographical features like deserts and mountains that might have impeded intercultural contact. While these factors were significant at times, on the whole they were not. Abyssinian territory was shaped by numerous trading connections with various peoples along the Red Sea coast. There was both marked periods of diplomacy and violent conflict with Abyssinia's Muslim neighbors to the east, such as Ottoman and Egyptian militaries and the Muslim caliphate in Harar. By the 15th and 16th Centuries, Portuguese and Dutch explorers and proto-imperialists arrived, drawn partly in response to Muslim encroachment on European territories elsewhere and because of Crusade-era legends of Prester John and his "lost" Christian kingdom that had been spread in Europe (Bahru 2002b, Levine 1974). Portuguese Jesuits actually lived in Abyssinia for 100 years and enjoyed great influence in the capital city of Gondar. They even conducted conversions of nobility to Catholicism. But by 1653, they had all been "banished or lynched," in part at the insistence of elite Abyssinian women (Belcher 2013: 125). The Orthodox Church was soon restored to its heavily influential role in state affairs.

Abyssinian elites reproduced their power through the maintenance of a feudal economy. Most Abyssinians lived as serfs who labored in support of local nobles. Land governance was carefully administered so as to support feudal models of rural landholding and thus helped to preserve class positions of the nobility.⁵ As **Figure 3** shows, the capitals of Abyssinia shifted many times, as nobles sought to bring advantage their home territories, or decamped to head off political challenges. Even during the first dynasty in Lalibela, ruling large territories from cities was a challenge for a few reasons, according to Tekeste Negash:

The Ethiopian political machinery of the period lacked the technology as well as the bureaucratic basis. Although the Ethiopians ... had access to horses, the rugged terrain and the well articulated regional sentiments appear to have made imperial rule from a fixed centre [*sic*] very difficult. In addition to this structural dimension arising from the problem of scale, the geography and landscape of the country ... militated against the tradition of fixed capital[s] (Tekeste 2003: 12).

Fasil Giorghis also notes that a provisional reliance on capital cities led to new approaches to place-making and settlement. At times, capital cities were even moved on a seasonal basis.

From the thirteenth to the late sixteenth century, the tradition of rulers permanently residing in capital cities had diminished; the kings and their courts resorted instead to what is commonly known as moving capitals. These constituted nomadic, camp-like settlements in which the royal family, nobility, priests, and the army settled temporarily in an array of tents on a selected site (Fasil 2016: 49).

⁵ For well over 1,000 years, two classic modes of land tenure were maintained across many regimes. *Ryst* land was a nominally private regime legitimated through hereditary rights. Land transferred in *ryst* was subdivided and at times promoted competition within extended noble families. The other classical mode of land tenure was *gult*, a feudal system of land and labor rights that was allocated according to political favor or as payment for good works done for the state. *Gult* was vital to the power of the Orthodox Church, which was the largest single landholder in Abyssinia for centuries. The *gult* regime pressed peasants into cultivation through taxation and tribute, but practically it led to other forms of service labor to land holders (Akalou 1973). While this land was often owned by lords or even by monasteries, it was sometimes the case that rights of access to labor were temporarily accorded to *gult* rights holders who were not land owners (Tekeste 2003). *Gult* land would be reflected in the southern plantation system of modern Ethiopia.

These connections of city to countryside were not as important to political rule as the capacity of nobles who found ways to exact tribute from territories while they were on the move. By the late 19th Century, imperial leadership was briefly split between two families, and two cities, Mekelle and Addis Ababa, vied for status as the national capital. But the Abyssinian national project would transform into the new political formation of modern Ethiopia with the selection of Addis Ababa.

Over the last thousand years, Ethiopia's many lowland societies sought to flourish beyond the reach of Abyssinian control. These societies flourished in Ethiopia's plains, deltas, hills and deserts is extraordinary and their economic practices varied greatly from hunting, fishing, gathering, trading, mining and raiding. Farming was also a critical part of cultural and economic life in the south and west, where river systems and rain were plentiful. But in the east, where much of the land is endemically in drought, relatively few crops were viable. In these areas, trading and pastoralism were instead indispensable models for nomadic groups, such as the Afari, Somali and Oromo. Endemic drought and occasional famine, competition for land, and related violent conflicts posed serious challenges, so that nomadism often proved to be a more durable option than long-term settlement of cities. Nomadism enhanced herding, lessened the possibility of political and military challenge, and mitigated against risks of disease which often stalked permanent settlements.

While Oromo society relied initially on farming, a combination of circumstances compelled them to embrace pastoralism. Oromos seem to have been in present-day Ethiopia at

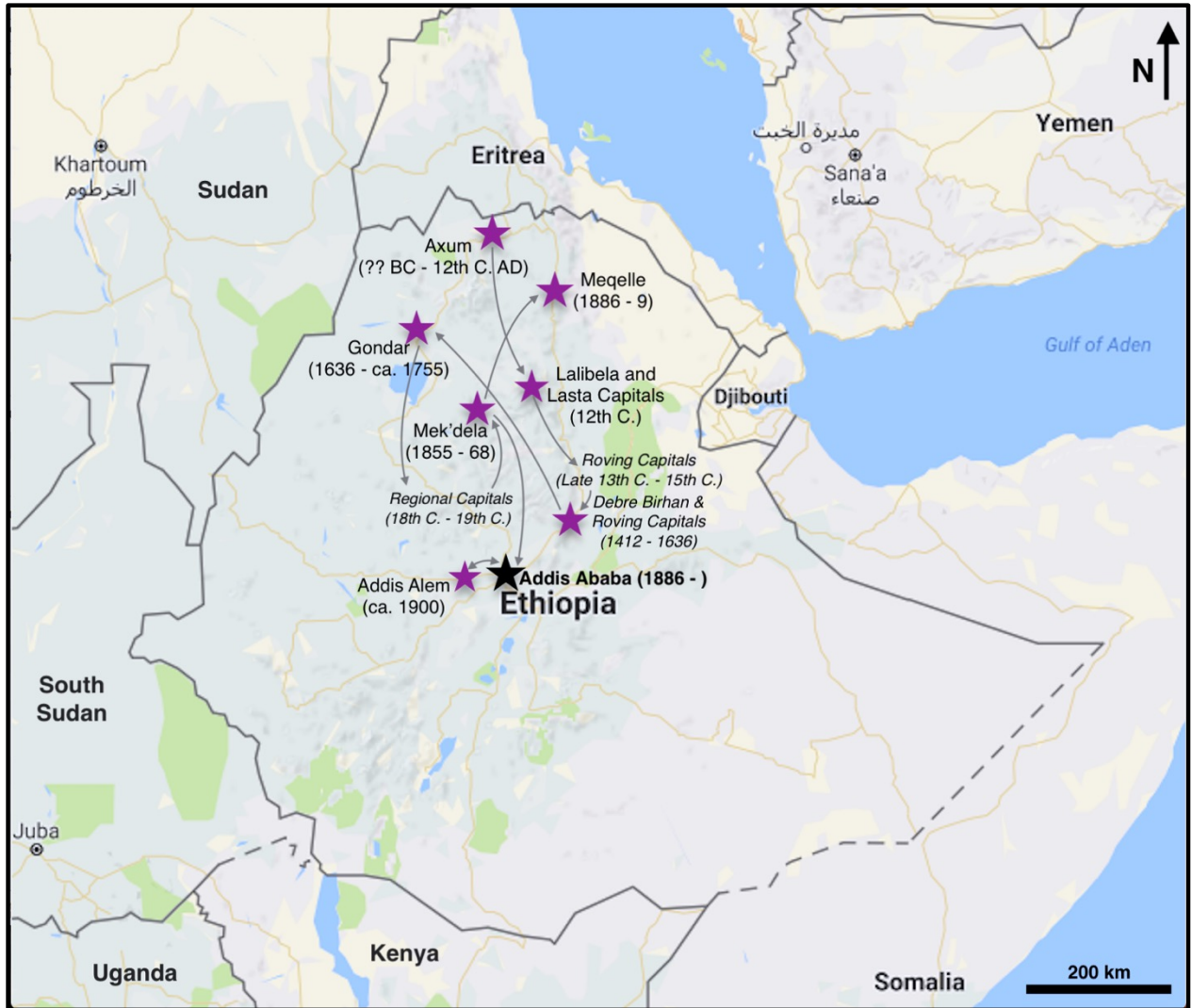
least as early as the 15th Century. While scholars claim they may have migrated from present-day Somalia, Kenya, or Central Africa, many Oromos trace their own origins to present-day Ethiopia itself (Hassen 2015).⁶ They seem to have endured and even thrived during periods of upheaval, as in the Muslim and Christian clashes in the 15th and 16th Centuries in the central and eastern lowlands (Hassen 2015, Hogarth 1969). Oromo land claims by the mid-17th Century probably covered present-day Addis Ababa and an expanse of thousands of square kilometers stretching far to the west and east, and sat between southern edge of the Abyssinian highlands to many smaller nations in the fertile south (Fra. Mauro in Hassen 2015).

Across Oromia, the *Gadaa* system of governance created platforms for mediation, political leadership, as well as subtler ways of maintaining social order. *Gadaa* promoted cooperation and nominally democratic representation by assigning male generational cohorts who deferred to older political ranks. By distributing and deferring political representation as inheritance, *Gadaa* may have proved flexible enough to shift and scale across disperse areas and incorporate “Cushitic- and Semitic-speaking groups” into the Oromo social order (Hassen 2015: 137). However, the diversity of Oromo clans and subcultures worked against a conventional sense of national unity, long delaying the onset of a national ethnic identity that emerged for some other groups (Jalata 1995). By the 19th Century, Oromos lived as an influential minority in and around many towns and cities, most notably Harar. They often

⁶ As the Oromo language in various dialects was only committed to written form in the Latin script in the 19th Century, Oromo historical accounts from this period were orally transmitted, leaving little in the way of a textual archive. Many accounts are however written in Amharic (or European languages like Portuguese and English), and retrospective, often uncritical, adoption by scholars in various languages has at times meant a symbolic displacement of Oromo histories. For more on this topic, see Toggia (2008) and Hassen (2015).

adopted Christianity or Islam, or produced a syncretic belief system based partly on their own cosmology.

Figure 3. Capitals on the move, from Axum to Addis Ababa



Map source: Author, based on Google Maps data (2017), with data adapted from Horvath (1969).

The contemporary population structure of Addis Ababa reflects interesting lasting patterns of highland settlement. In the most recent national census with figures from 2007 (CSA

2011)⁷, the Oromo were counted as the largest single group in Ethiopia, with 34.4% of the national population, while only constituting 19.5% of Addis Ababa's residents. By contrast, the presence of certain groups, such as the Amhara (27% / 47.1%), Tigré (6.1% / 6.2%), and Guragé (2.5% / 16.4%) (ibid.) are overrepresented in Addis Ababa compared to figures at the national scale.

This brief sketch of settlement histories shows that while landholding and circulation through it were critical to territorialization, large and permanent settlements had a comparatively slight significance in national projects. Abyssinian cities to the far north such as Axum, Mekelle and Lalibela are of course many centuries old today, but many other smaller elite settlements of the 18th and 19th Centuries were abandoned after just a few years. Oromo settlements were typically shaped by agro-pastoral and pastoral livelihoods. Urbanization and urban livelihoods were not major factors in the political formation of Abyssinia, or in Oromia or other lowland societies of present-day Ethiopia. The only significant and enduring inland city was the multiethnic city-state and Muslim caliphate of Harar. By the 18th and 19th Centuries, Harar was the fulcrum of trading economies at multiple scales, and was home to a large population of local traders as well as foreign traders, merchants, and craftspeople. Ancient port cities like Massawa, Assab, and Mogadishu had long been sutured by Muslims into trade routes along much of the Indian Ocean rim. The rest of this chapter shows how urbanization has become markedly more significant to Ethiopian society and to the governance of space.

⁷ See **Appendix 1** for a more complete account of Ethiopian demography at three scales.

Building Addis Ababa *sefer by sefer*: Settlement at the dawn of modern Ethiopia

Addis Ababa emerged during the founding of modern Ethiopia in the late 19th Century, against the backdrop of imperialist “scrambles” for imperial territory in Africa. This was an extremely dynamic time for governance, as territorial claims and governance arrangements were in flux in the Horn and much of the rest of Africa. Emperor Menilek II and Empress Taitu Beytul⁸ emerged to become transformative, if divisive, figures. Their national project emerged against the screen of two major political challenges. The first was an ‘internal’ challenge of forcibly incorporating lowland African societies into the expanded boundaries of Ethiopia and into a new kind of agricultural economy (Markakis 2015). Ethiopia was in this sense “not a victim but a participant in the ‘scramble’” for African territory in the late 19th Century (Markakis 2015: 3-4). While Menilek certainly believed that the imperial marches across the south were “a holy crusade” for the Orthodox Church (Marcus 2002: 104), he also cultivated many alliances with non-Christians, including powerful international audiences that would strengthen his capabilities (Jonas 2011). Expansion was not formalized in treaties with subjugated lowland peoples but with adjacent colonial administrations, like the British colonial apparatus in Kenya (Marcus 2002). In exchange for their participation in war, soldiers were sometimes given tracts of annexed land, akin to the classical *gult* system of tenure. Conquered survivors of these campaigns were enslaved and conscripted in new labor regimes or even traded for weapons (Hawi 2016). Regional governorates were established, with most leaders

⁸ Menilek came from Ankober, a town in the Shewa region, just north of Oromia. His wife, Taitu, was of Oromo ancestry but was raised in the northern region of Tigray (Jonas 2011).

selected from the highland aristocracy. A form of indirect rule was often imposed, too, pressing kings and chiefs into diminished roles as representatives and intermediaries who could collect taxes from their former subjects (Markakis 2015, Donham 1999).

Settlement and resettlement of highland elites during the Ethiopian expansion followed military and administrative logics of the *kätäma* (garrison). There was little in common at the time with economic or technologic drivers of urbanization at this time in the West, or even the founding of new cities under European colonization elsewhere in Africa. Instead, like the roving capitals of the earlier highland courts, Menilek and Taitu moved their court across many locations in the southern highlands of Shewa. From 1868 to 1884, they alternated mainly between Ankober, Ličé and Debre Berhan (Akalou 1973) in the search for advantageous locations from which to mount attacks on the Oromo. Menilek and Taitu moved camp further south to the Entoto Mountains, as they were known by Oromo pastoralists. In 1886, downhill less than 5 kilometers further south, Addis Ababa (New Flower) was founded on top of the site of an Oromo village named Finfinnee (Hot Springs). Oromo communities of Finfinnee, Gulallee, and Boolee had been destroyed in the area in earlier raids by highlanders, with Oromo residents killed or forcibly displaced (Garretson 2000, Getahun 2002; 2001).

Those who survived eviction were permanently pushed away to the periphery of the city and remained victims of its perennial physical expansion. They were systematically marginalized and some were turned into laborers and providers of firewood, while those who settled in the vicinities provided agricultural products and other vital necessities to the city (Getahun 2001: 157).

The area had already largely been deforested prior to the arrival of highland elites (Horvath

1968). A lack of fuel wood may even have caused Menilek to be reticent about a permanent encampment in the area, as he considered moving the capital again 50 kilometers further west to Addis Alem (Akalou 1973). But quick-growing eucalyptus trees were adapted to aid settlement in Addis Ababa (ibid.). According to Bahru (2002), while Menilek was away on his campaign against Harar, Empress Taitu re-established their court closer to the hot springs to eliminate long walks to Entoto. By 1892, expansion was a political imperative, and Addis Ababa had officially become Ethiopia's capital.

The second major political challenge faced by Menilek and Taitu in founding modern Ethiopia was to turn back the 'external' challenges of colonial imposition (Markakis 2015). British and Egyptian forces jointly subjugated Sudan and fought anti-colonial Islamist resistance there. However, Egypt's influence along the Red Sea coast and in Harar was loosening by the 1870s and 1880s (Jonas 2011). By the time of the infamous Berlin Conference of 1884, Italians occupied much of present-day Somalia, while the French held French Somaliland (now Djibouti) and the British held British Somaliland (now Somaliland). Italy controlled the port cities of Assab and Massawa (Pankhurst 1967), and advanced many colonial plans for Asmara. Egypt, Britain and Italy all looked to Abyssinia to enhance their control in the Horn. Menilek and Taitu led troops from many regions of Ethiopia into battle in 1896, when they took the Italians by surprise near the northern town of Adwa. Ethiopian victory forced the Italians to acknowledge their sovereignty and to withdraw to the present-day border between Eritrea and Ethiopia. They Italians would claim Eritrea as a colony for decades. Though Adwa foreshadowed the many successes of 20th Century anticolonial struggles across Africa (Jonas 2011), its immediate

impact was to forge a powerful new national identity. Other European colonial powers did not follow in Italy's wake.

Menilek gathered regional rulers and fighters and their families to be with him in Addis Ababa. To accommodate what he thought would be their occasional stay in Addis Ababa, he granted access of each noble to their own *sefer* (encampment) (Dandena 2008). As a small settlement, the early spatial structure was diffuse, and shared out across the rough and hilly terrain according to ad-hoc decisions made in Menilek's court. Large white tents that were the signature of military camps were gradually replaced by permanent structures of mud walls, thatch, eucalyptus, and stone. Dirt roads were formed by pack animals and foot traffic and traced hills and riversides. Nobles now in Addis Ababa continued to enjoy control of feudal production systems in the northern highlands. Gradually, the feudal economy was complimented by a small inter-urban trade economy that shifted some political and economic power towards Addis Ababa and other trading towns and cities.

By the turn of the century, traditional feudal and regional social distinctions had begun to assume an urban spatial form. Prominent outlooks in the hilly landscape were markers of social distinction. As in Orthodox custom, churches were erected on hilltops, and inspired reverence and to suggest the notion of pilgrimage. The Gebhi Palace of Menilek and Taitu was built on a prominent hilltop not far from the Filwoha springs, near the former site of the Oromo village of Finfinnee. This was part of a broader socio-spatial practice shared with other elites.

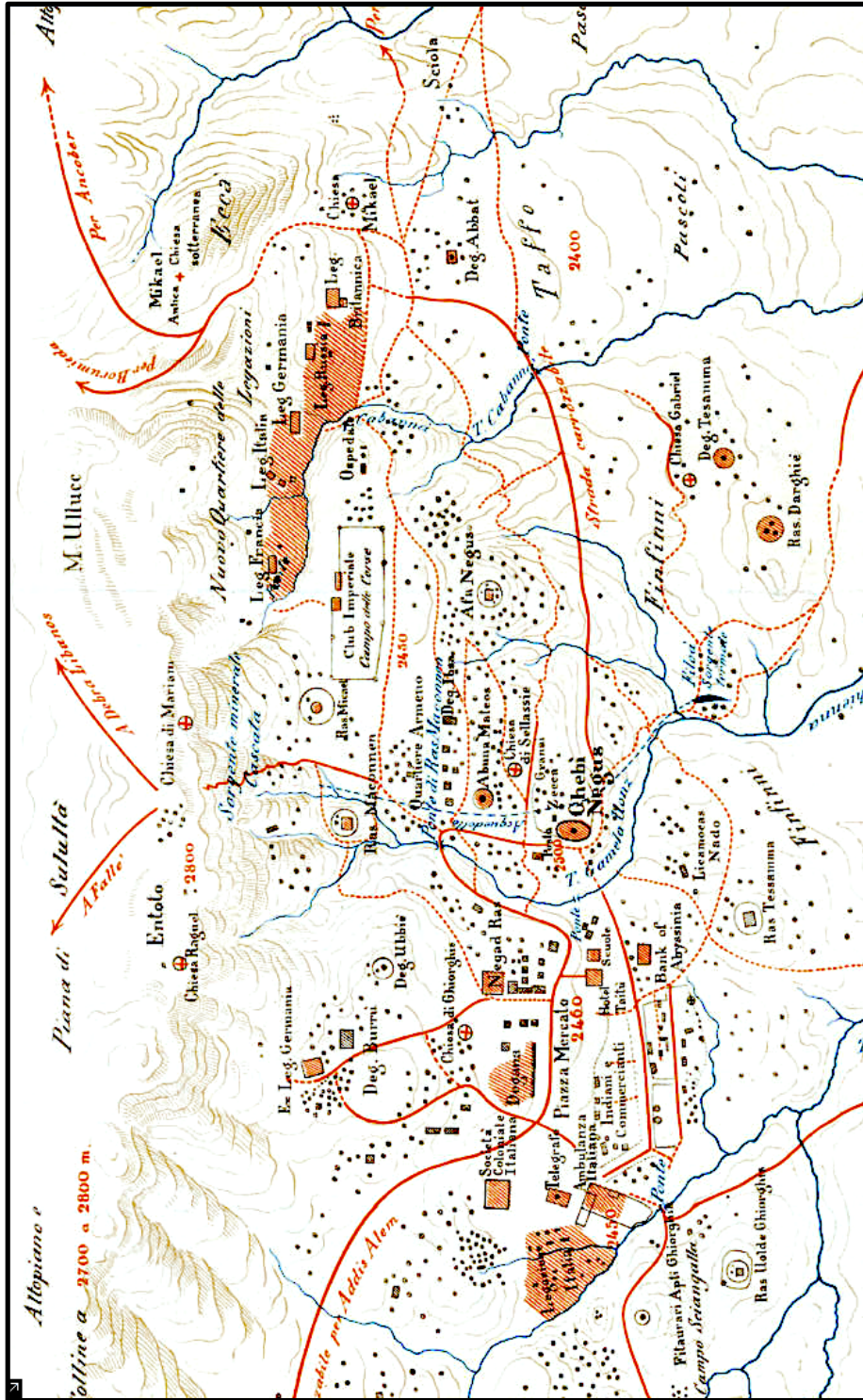
The nobility came to settle on the other hilltops of the emerging town, on land granted

to them by the emperor as a reward for services. Round the gebbi of each member of the nobility clustered his dependents and followers, giving rise to the typical settlement pattern of the town ... Thus were born quarters like *Ras Berru Safar*, *Ras Tasamma Safar* and *Fitawrari Habta-Giyorgis Safar* (Bahru 2002: 69).

As **Figure 4** shows, the loose edges of these several rings and clusters intermingled and could also be spaced far apart.

The *sefer* was the main organizing principle for early construction in Addis Ababa. Rings around a *sefer* insulated the nobility and wove strong cross-class interdependencies into the urban fabric. When attendants and distant relatives of nobles settled in Addis Ababa, they latched onto those emerging nodes of power and opportunity that were open to them. As a result, Addis Ababa emerged outside the zoned and quartered plans that typified racist/colonialist city building under European rule. The adjacency and interdependency of social classes was pronounced and “the townspeople crossed religious, caste, and ethnic lines in their quests of career and fortune” (Marcus 2002: 110). This did not signify an egalitarian order in the city. Most newcomers to the city were poor, and arrived in the city out of desperation. Survival required one to find ways to perform dependence, piety and patriotic allegiance. Such values were perhaps most evident in the institutionalization of public feedings at the Gebhi Palace, which were large enough that they “required the almost total mobilization of the palace’s staff and resources” (ibid.). In these events, and on annual jubilee days in which the urban poor in were required to participate, Menilek and Taitu performed their benevolence.

Figure 4: Addis Ababa (detail of city map), 1909



The organizing principle of the *sefer* is clear from the many ringed encampments named after mobility. The central location of the “Ghebi Negus” being the most prominent among them. Toward the west, the road to Addis Alem is complete. Foreign delegations skirt the perimeter of the city. Arada market already represented here as “Piazza Mercato.” Source: Societa Geografica Italiana (1909).

New spaces of trade and consumption also emerged in the large, open-air market of Arada. While Amhara, Oromo and other African merchants and petty traders flourished at Arada and often catered to low-income buyers, there were now also newcomers from trading networks based in Harar, Aden and elsewhere. Distinctions of ethnicity and nationality would become significant aspects of these burgeoning trade networks, with different groups brokering access to certain goods. French, Greek, Armenian, Jewish, and Indian families were able to enroll certain far-flung trading networks that were new to most Ethiopians. In particular, access to European munitions were open to light-skinned people, but closed to Africans, making court emissaries crucial. Menilek grew to rely on foreign advisers⁹ and partners to help modernize engineering, logistics, and administration.

Menilek's court continued to build Addis Ababa as labor, materials, knowledge and practical experience could be mobilized. The city was initially powered by manual power from humans and animals, so that cheap labor was plentiful. Menilek moved in a decisive direction to industrialization, though, beginning with an agreement with the French to produce the Ethio-Djibouti national rail line in 1897 (Pankhurst 1967). The railway would soon establish a new town, Dire Dawa, which sat roughly between Addis Ababa and the port in Djibouti.

Gradually, more and more signs of a modernizing state emerged. Parts, materials and ideas flowed from varied and remote places beyond national borders. A postal system, a

⁹ Menilek particularly embraced Armenians and to an extent, Greeks, partly because of their familiarity with Orthodox traditions. He gave many Armenians citizenship and offered them parcels of land in Addis Ababa for churches and other projects (Nalbandian 2015, Pankhurst 1967). Menilek's favor was not evenly distributed across all foreign groups, but Arab, Indian and French people had administrative posts, and he took on an Austrian political advisor.

hospital, a bank, a mint, a press, a survey, and systems of telephony and telegraphy were founded. As Western acknowledgement of Ethiopian sovereignty spread, Britain, France, Russia, Belgium and Italy all sent permanent diplomatic missions to Addis Ababa (Msmaku 1993). As **Figure 4** shows, Menilek offered these delegations land beyond the city's edge, and especially to the city's north-east. This effectively required some of them to add road infrastructure and to build some of the city's first bridges (Msmaku 1993, Pankhurst 1967). Ethiopia's first paved interurban road was undertaken to connect Addis Ababa to Addis Alem (Bahru 2002, Pankhurst 1967) and its first cars were introduced in 1907 (Pankhurst 1967).

In the first decade of the 20th Century, the city had grown to 35,000 people (Freund 2007: 66), and was a hub of federal and local administration. Government ministries, a judiciary system and a high school were all founded (Toggia 2008). Urban development still was done through small-scale, ad-hoc arrangements that privileged the socio-spatial logic of the *sefer*. Without a clearly defined rule set, local administration was slow to conceive of a whole urban system beyond many diffuse nodes and parts. Though interests of the nobility were still wrapped up in maintaining linkages to rural land, some uncertainties of urbanization also led to state mechanisms that might better coordinate new urban activities and purposes (Getahun 2002). Emperor Menilek introduced a new system of nominally private property which curtailed government power to seize land and effectively turned all citizens into either landlords or tenants (Wubshet 2016). Then, after a long decline in health, Menilek died in 1913. Taitu's tried to assume rule, but she could not. She died of ill health in 1918.

Addis Ababa's founding and early years are inseparable from the national project that it furthered. A city that began as an accretion of military tents amid Abyssinian expansion was the proving ground for new state systems of administration and governance. Apart from European political ambitions in the Horn of Africa, Addis Ababa inculcated a socio-spatial order that venerated highland elites. However modest its opportunities, the city held out some slim alternatives to difficult rural livelihoods for the poor. A permanent capital city had finally become truly consequential to political rule.

Faced with this historical legacy of early urban development, both planners and scholars have sought to distinguish the city from other African cities in two ways. First, many have scholars typified Addis Ababa as an "indigenous city" (see Garretson 2000, Getahun 2007, O'Connor 2007), as well as my informants. Binyam, a senior planner and trainer of planners, emphasized the significance of "how an indigenous city has transformed itself from an original – that kind of settlement, well, I am discussing the historical part – to a modern metropolis today." Compared to those cities of the colonial era in many parts of Africa, this notion of Ethiopia's indigenous city is understandable as concerns the geopolitics of Menilek's rule and the powerful federation of highland nobles he brought together in Addis Ababa.

At the same time, a kind of exceptionalism in such accounts overrides the complexity of the historical record. The city was founded as a highland imperial erasure of Oromo villages and pastoral land. Understanding highland and feudal origins is key to the recognition of Addis Ababa, in the words of (Getahun 2007) as the particular sort of "multi-ethnic metropolis" that it became. More subtly, the indigenous city framing downplays the

cosmopolitan and hybrid nature of many aspects of the city's development, design and construction. Such processes were rooted in relatively unique political grounds in the history of African cities; local and international people provided expertise, labor and knowledge that were coordinated by sovereign black authorities.

The situation is reminiscent in some ways of Garth Myers' (2003) account of social difference in British colonial-era planning of racially segregated Southern and Eastern African cities. In that study, Myers theorizes the crucial contributions of the "colonized middle." By tracing the personal and professional relationship of a skilled Indian planner with his British boss, Myers shows how an Indian expert was uniquely suited to work in the interstices closed under white rule both to African colonial subjects and to British colonists. In some ways, the positionality of prominent, skilled migrants who contributed to modernization efforts in Addis Ababa challenges conventional understandings of colonial power. Prominent migrant families did profit in land, capital and even gained influence in administration and were driven by a mix of political allegiance and a desire for personal enrichment. Even foreigners racialized as white enrolled some of their unique privileges to gain market access to enhance Menilek's modernization efforts. However, they were insulated from the inner-workings of the aristocracy, and would lose favor as the 20th Century unfolded. Turning this hybrid innovation of a city into an imperial capital was a novel strategy of Ethiopia's neo-feudal elites.

A second feature that is commonly used to distinguish Addis Ababa from other African cities is the notion of its "organic" urbanism. Here, "organic" reflects the incremental, ad-hoc nature of planning before it was administrated; this is an urban trajectory resisting easy

interventions and interpretations, again departs from the aspirations of growth and improvement in colonial planning. Organic images and metaphors echoed throughout my fieldwork and registered in public presentations, written work, and casual conversations. Again, Binyam, imagines how he and his colleagues might promote the “organic” heritage of the city in new city-sponsored tourism programs.

We want to take one of these hills where the original settlement took place and regenerate its morphology so that if a tourist comes, you say, “let’s go to this part of the city and show you how the City of Addis has evolved.” You know, with the landlord sitting in the center of – especially – hills surrounded by servants and an organic street pattern developing et cetera and then coming down to the plain. You know, this we believe is very interesting from academics as well as touristic perspective. And we’re just presenting a proposal on that.

Binyam understands the organic past of the city as both an economic asset and as a point of cultural distinction between Addis Ababa and other cities. For him, everyday urban conditions are what elevate the city to the level of academic and touristic interest. In other instances, talk of the organic city points to the dream of the environmentally sustainable city of the future. Finally, at other times, “the organic” came up in the talk of slums, perhaps because of the organic nature of their material construction, or even because of a kind of slum ecology of necessity, reuse, and limited waste. The pull to represent the city as either organic or indigenous is perhaps understandable, however, as a check on the impulse to render the city in relation to colonial territoriality.

The institutionalization of planning in Addis Ababa: late imperialism and Italian occupation

Following Menilek's death, factions within the aristocracy emerged. Some elites favored a unitary state of strong central powers as in Menilek's vision, while others hoped for stronger regional systems of power. Rail access to Djibouti port supported a powerful constituency of elite landowners and regional governors in the south who were capitalizing the plantation model in the lowlands (Marcus 2002). Record profits in a growing commodities market encouraged them to continue exploiting plantation labor. Empress Zewditu, the daughter of Menilek and Taitu, was crowned in 1916, but a complicated power-sharing arrangement between her and *Ras* Tafari Makonnen, the son of a regional governor in Harar, allowed him to be a special regent in Addis Ababa. In 1928, Tafari was crowned *negus* (king) and then in 1930, *negusa nagast* (king of kings), as Emperor Haile Selassie I. Turbulence came to an end with the new monarchic "absolutism" of Haile Selassie (Bahru 2001: 137).

Haile Selassie reigned from 1928 to 1974, notwithstanding the significant interruption of the Italian occupation of 1936 to 1941. These decades marked the rise of high modern planning in both rural and areas of Ethiopia. Government understood agrarian reforms and commodity production to be the major currency earner and continued to make rural land a central target of development policy. This was a period of increasing institutionalization of planning activities resulting in urban space being channeled, rationalized, measured and produced as never before. Haile Selassie's absolutism managed tensions in the composition of the Ethiopian state, such as the balance between his opulence and the crushing poverty that so many of his subjects experienced. While Haile Selassie presented himself as an agent of improvement and thus an opponent of exploitation in feudalism, he would "reconstruct feudalism on a new and advanced

basis, enhancing the political power of the monarchy and guaranteeing the economic privilege of the nobility” (Bahru 2002: 140). His deep commitment to monarchist and Orthodox traditions that mitigated against socialism and its Pan-African, revolutionary expressions turned him into an icon of the non-aligned movement. Prostrations by passerby made to glorify him gave proof of the deep disparities in Ethiopian society. Excess was clear even at his lavish coronation in 1928, which was evident across the city:

Gold and velvet were evident everywhere. A vigorous campaign to beautify Addis Ababa was launched. Offensive slums were cleared. The *gebbi* was equipped with electricity, the main city roads were tarmacked and the police donned new uniforms. The capital received a lasting landmark in the equestrian statue erected in memory of Emperor Menilek II. The occasion also embraced international glamour, with the representatives of many states attending... Journalists, who were to become a regular feature of the Ethiopian scene in the 1930s, rushed to report the great event (Bahru 2002: 140).

Public spectacles offered up the Emperor as a kind of compensation for the hardships that Ethiopians lived everyday, but they also made for exotic newsreel footage and reportage in the West. Ethiopian exceptionalism was cultivated at home and abroad in this way and would not be challenged for decades.

A second tension for Haile Selassie’s regime lied in the balance between *mesafint* (hereditary succession) and *makwanent* (appointment) in the distribution of posts in government. High modern planning through technical expertise began to supplant aristocratic favor. There is a colorful legend about property in Addis Ababa that comes to us from this period, suggesting how these competing claims might have played out.

Minas Kerbéguian, an Armenian who was one of the city's early builders and planners, arrived at the compound of a highland aristocrat with a hammer in one hand and a stake in the other. Servants welcomed Kerbéguian in. But before the servants could announce his arrival to the Ras, Kerbéguian walked quickly across the yard, past the threshold of the mansion, and into the kitchen, where he began to pound his stake into the kitchen floor. The Ras emerged, was outraged, and demanded an explanation for the stake. Kerbéguian said that a new road was to be built on the Emperor's orders and that he was simply trying to mark the edge of the new road. The Ras warily acknowledged that the new road might be necessary, but he asked why it had to be built right through the grounds of his mansion. Kerbéguian said the Emperor's orders might allow for some compromise. He exited the house and drove the stake into the yard instead. Both acknowledged that the compound wall would have to be torn down to make way for the road. But with his mansion spared, the Ras counted himself lucky and resolved himself to awaiting the new road. Kerbéguian was satisfied, too. His initial intrusion straight into the Ras' kitchen was the only way he could ever have gotten rid of the wall on the Ras' compound.

While this legend is probably stretching the truth¹⁰, it neatly captures two aspects of a turning point in the governance of urban space in Addis Ababa. First, Ethiopia's highland-born, late feudal elites began to recognize a counterweight to their role in the figure of the planner. Life on hilltops could not keep them above the urban fray indefinitely, and to protect their status, they gradually were required to use the rules and reasoning of civil bureaucracy. The second lesson of this legend is that the planner is a kind of trickster who summons multiple possibilities beyond the grasp of others. By strategically sharing or withholding insider knowledge, the planner's trick can turn even the remote interior spaces of an elite home into the locus of administrative control.

Some highly educated young men, many of whom were descendants of the aristocracy, searched for a counter-power to administrative control. These "reformist

¹⁰ While conveyed to me by the social anthropologist Dr. Alula Pankhurst, I have recounted this legend in my own words.

intellectuals” of the early 20th Century had a cosmopolitan itinerary; after high school in Ethiopia, most went abroad to gain degrees and skills, learn languages, and otherwise enhance their credentials for administrative posts in Ethiopia (Bahru 2002b). When these young men returned to Ethiopia with expert knowledge, many carried with them hopes of reform and modernization of bureaucracy. A few dreamed of revolutionary action against the monarchy and found themselves imprisoned or killed (*ibid.*). Others flourished as writers of history, poetry and essays, producing intellectual debates as to socioeconomic class, social cohesion, gender relations, and other issues flourished, and found an engaged readership (*ibid.*). Though stung by Haile Selassie’s rebukes printed in these same publications, many of these “reformist intellectuals” would suffer much more as the targets of the Italian occupation.

While Addis Ababa was the seat of national power, and by far the largest city in the country, the city was also a frontier of potential political challenge. If rural conditions seemed stable and relatively transparent, the city’s increasingly diverse population of perhaps 100,000 made it a complicated space to govern (Marcus 2002). Many advisors of Haile Selassie’s regime grasped that adaptation and modernization would be some of the few guarantors of sovereignty in a region generally contending with European challenge, and they favored modernization and negotiation with Europeans against the possibility of colonial subjugation (Bahru 2002b). Purported solutions to problems of rural development often led to human displacement and intensified the impoverishment of peasants. Millions of Ethiopians would be forcibly displaced throughout the 20th Century, even if the state programs of resettlement differed (Pankhurst and Piguet 2009).

The Italians sought to expand their influence in the Horn of Africa, partly on ideological grounds to answer their earlier humiliation at Adwa. Mussolini's administration "envisioned settling hundreds of thousands of Italians in the fertile highlands" (Fasil 2016: 49) in order to rescale the plantation system. After many battles with possibly hundreds of thousands of casualties, including devastating bombardments in and around Addis Ababa, Ethiopian resistance was crushed. Haile Selassie went into exile in Britain, where he would work for years to rally support for bilateral and international pressure against the Italians. Fascist rule in Ethiopia was brutally repressive, with collective punishment and summary executions a common occurrence in Addis Ababa. Viceroy Graziani, the so-called Butcher of Ethiopia, also ordered the killing of thousands, even within the Orthodox Church hierarchy, whom he accused of plotting his assassination in 1937. Italians went about destroying several markers of Abyssinian history and achievements, and pillaged many ancient Axumite relics.

The Italian occupation went to work conducting surveys and studies of many Ethiopian cities, including Addis Ababa, as well as the prospects of better linking them. Architects, engineers and designers arrived who were already practiced at such work from earlier experiences in the colonial bureaucracies. In the countryside, the Italians built a handful of new highways that enhanced access to relatively remote areas, particularly in Ethiopia's south (Donham 1999), where they often presented themselves as a bulwark against highland imperialism. In Italy, the *Istituto Nazionale di Urbanistica* convened a major conference in 1937 to promulgate an "active urbanism" for the colonies — that Fascist "works of urbanism and architecture ... as forms of *civiltà*, must come alive in order to penetrate into the natives' intimate world" (Fuller 2007: 141; Galbiati in *ibid.*). Their architectural designs were grounded

in typologies of culture that distinguished a reasoning, technocratic Italy from the unrefined forms and architectures of African peoples. Even Le Corbusier conjured up a model plan for Addis Ababa, emphasizing grid systems, sharply delineated forms, and space for racial segregation while ignoring the crucial topography of the landforms, rivers and valleys of the area (Fuller 2007; Woudstra 2014). His design would never be attempted.

Fascist planners found the city too diffuse in its structure to sustain truly modernist designs, especially if compared to the more “pure” contrasts of Muslim cities they occupied elsewhere (Fuller 2007). Italy’s fascist planners downplayed social difference among occupied Ethiopians and conceived all African residents as “indigenous.” They hoped to build a *quartieri indigeni*, even if separate from Muslims, and Somalis. Certain white national minorities were expected to be kept in an elite area around Piassa (from the Italian, *piazza*), where fascist officers and administrators also worked and relaxed, while natives were displaced to the periphery (Fuller 2007). Quartering the city in this way would have been an enormous task, however; by 1938, the population of Addis Ababa stood at 300,000 people, a seven-fold increase over just thirty years (Freund 2007: 66).

Here it must be noted that much in the fascist ambitions for planning Addis Ababa were not very distinct from European colonial planning across other African cities. Colonists in many African cities understood them to have disciplinary and pedagogical dimensions. Timothy Mitchell noted that in the case of Egyptian towns, the colonial “techniques of enframing, of fixing an interior and exterior, and *of positioning the observing subject*, are what create an appearance of order, an order that works by appearance” [*ital. added*] (Mitchell 1991: 60). For Ethiopia during the Italian occupation, Mia Fuller likewise noted that “the Italian conception of

appropriate surroundings for natives teetered between the idea of *placing them in unfamiliar settings* to maintain control over them, and the impulse *to make their new settings artificially familiar*" [ital. added] (Fuller 2007: 146). As to the former, Italian planners curved the exterior walls of prominent buildings, privileging the flow of traffic and positing the central role of the automobile in urban life. As to the later, the Italians sometimes adopted the simple and efficient design of the *tukul* (rounded, thatched home) (Fuller 2007), and by taking it as the prototypical local structure, they set into master-planned grids of so-called *tukuloch*: mega-villages which existed to enhance disciplinary aims. Italian planners and designers thought of Addis Ababa as *the proof of concept* of colonial rule, much like Asmara. That city is now hailed as Africa's modernist city par excellence, and oddly is sometimes considered more Italian than Italian cities themselves (Denison, Ren and Naigzy 2003).

Italian occupation left an indelible stamp on just a few neighborhoods in the north-central and north-west of Addis Ababa. The most radically changed were Arada and Piassa (from the Italian, *piazza*). Long-standing businesses of foreign traders thrived on a few major streets there. A second place of Italian influence was the newly reshaped trading areas of the whites-only *Mercato* and the *Mercato Indigeno* (Fasil 2016), where purpose-built shops and warehouses filled out the city's first grid structure. Large-scale trading was more easily overseen by Italians there, but Ethiopian and foreign traders continued to work there, too. In following years, *Mercato* would outgrow its form many times over to become widely considered the largest outdoor market in Africa. A third area of clear Italian influence was Kazanchis (from the Italian, *Casa-INCIS*¹¹), downhill from the Gebhi Palace, south of

¹¹ The *Istituto Nazionale per le Case degli Impiegati dello Stato* is the National Institute for State Workers' Housing.

Arada/Piassa. The area was traditionally the preserve of royal servants, but even Ethiopian elites in the area were evicted for officers' quarters, given an acute shortage of housing that the Italians thought suitable to them (Giorghis 2016). Several stands of modernist quarters would be built for officers in Kazanchis (Rifkind 2015). Some new infrastructural projects were dotted throughout the city, including improved roads and the building of several *fabrika* (factories) supplying commercial farms.

Though Italians were implanted in rural areas at a variety of sites and scales, it soon became clear that “the military and administrative costs of maintaining the empire” were too much (Clapham 2015: 192), especially given the ongoing needs of pacifying local people. Sufficient incentives for a British response to the occupation emerged when Mussolini made common cause with Hitler in 1940 and the strategic importance of the Horn in relation to emerging conflict across North Africa (Clapham 2015: 194). British forces fought alongside Ethiopian patriots to force most Italian settlers to retreat to Ethiopian cities. Italians were forced from Gondar, their last stronghold, in 1941. Thousands of Italian civilians would actually stay in Ethiopia, especially in the Eritrean region (Ponsi 1982), though their numbers would diminish over time. Haile Selassie was quickly restored to power in Addis Ababa, and returned accompanied by several Ethiopian exiles.

With the Emperor's return came a time of reclamation of the means of development and an elaboration onto a few Italian interventions in the city. Core streets of Addis Ababa became places of spectacle, of monumental sites that reflected the logic of a royal procession. A few major corridors were dotted with politically and culturally resonant architecture to form a kind of concentrated urban interior, if not exactly a true downtown. While the research,

urban plans of Italian designers may have taken Addis Ababa as a *tabula rasa*, their work was actually a “continuity and amplification, rather than rupture” of earlier modernization efforts (Rifkind 2015: 161). In turn, though the 1938 master plan of Guidi and Valle was only partially carried out, it caused Haile Selassie’s designers to emphasize new developments south of the Gebhi Palace (Rifkind 2015). In recognition of British military support, the broad, straight road stretching from Piassa downhill two kilometers to the Central Business District was no longer called Mussolini, but Churchill. Haile Selassie’s new Jubilee Palace was built just downhill from Gebhi Palace, suggesting his regime’s proximity to the Solomonic line. In the 1950s and 1960s, a city hall, a parliament, the headquarters of the UN Economic Commission for Africa, and the original structures of the Organization of African Unity (now African Union) were all built. Many other signature modernist projects were done at this period as well, such as the Hilton Hotel, and the Ethiopian Commercial Bank. Unencumbered by colonial economic networks, the regime drew upon a range of architects from France, Sweden, Yugoslavia, Italy, Israel, and foreigners of Ethiopian and Eritrean ancestry (Levin 2016). Such gestures underlined the geopolitical significance of a stubbornly independent African nation.

By mid-century, a form of centralization was partly achieved by orienting and coordinating growth around a few corridors, including one which passed through the Central Business District. Though situated close to the airport and national train station of the day, for decades the CBD has been a through point more than a real destination. To this day, planners in Addis Ababa continue to imagine an enlivened CBD, even as many hubs, and intersections – especially at certain points at the edges of the city – are the locus of rapid growth and new constructions. **Figure 5** shows that certain corridors privileged the access of diplomats and

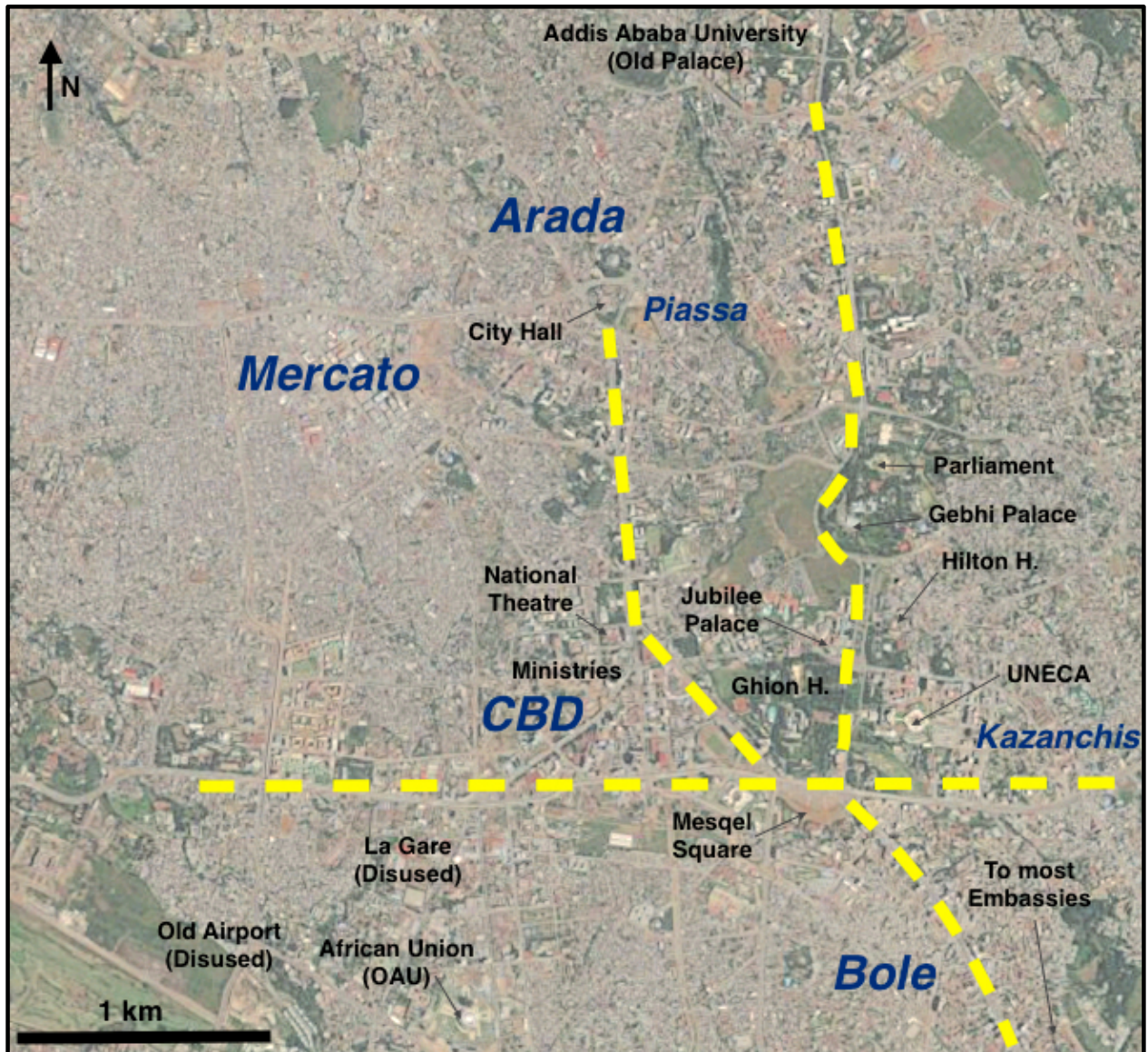
other elites with a central role in both the nation-state and the city. With dignitaries arriving or official African Union business, corridors were closed to regular traffic and securitization, as they still are today. Yet there were both functional and cultural reasons for these forms; budgets would not allow for urban renewal or planning at a large scale. Corridors were an efficient way of drawing up and emphasizing the grandeur and unifying, solidifying presence of political rule in the city. Mesqel Square, named after the flower traditionally associated with the new calendar year, was an urban stage for national holidays and military processions, and one of just a few grand and freely accessible public spaces in the city. Sites of national political affairs and ministries sat to the north of Mesqel, while most embassies, transport linkages, and the grounds of the OAU lay to its south.

Taller constructions with formal title, such as commercial buildings, apartment blocks, imposing villas, or state facilities, have long been positioned in Addis Ababa on wide, paved roads. Working people in the city lived in modest homes on cobblestone roads and alleyways behind the main roads. If the urban poor and working class were now less likely to be clustered around noble families for whom they worked, they were still often in close proximity to elite landholders. However proximate working poor people were to elites, and no matter their growing numbers, they tended to live in small and squalid homes, with limited water, electricity or other services. With 449,000 people in 1961, Addis Ababa was far and away Ethiopia's primate city and even the eighth largest city in all of Africa (Freund 2007: 66). Governing this quickly growing city with poor infrastructure proved challenging.

As anticolonial and socialist movements flourished across Africa, Haile Selassie endeavored to modernize the state on his own terms and timetable. Many nominal political

and administrative reforms came. A new Constitution was done in 1955, which provided for a parliament of appointed personnel. A series of three 5-year national development plans was also done, stretching from 1957 to 1972. The first 5-year plan was little more than a set of lofty

Figure 5: Processional corridors of Addis Ababa, Mid-20th Century



The map shows a selection of sites that were critical to political and diplomatic functions. Most of these were built in the mid-20th Century under Haile Selassie. Dotted lines show corridors for major state processions, which to the present day are still routinely cleared for exclusive, secure access by national and international dignitaries and also some processions. Place names in italics label some of the core neighborhoods of the city where many of the large-scale planning interventions have taken place. *Source: Author, with data from Google Maps (2017).*

aspirations and led to little material effect. Such reforms were scarcely moves toward participatory democracy, since Haile Selassie ruled as a monarch. Haile Selassie's public remarks from this period made clear that modernization projects had to be balanced against certain forms of tradition, for which he was the ultimate arbiter. In a major speech in 1962, Haile Selassie claimed, "We believe in the adaptation of modern economic and social theories to local conditions and customs rather than in the imposition on Ethiopia's social and economic structure of systems which are largely alien to it and which [it] is not equipped to absorb or cope with" (Haile in McVety 2012: 174). The "alien influence" mentioned here was a clear reference to Pan-African socialism.

Unlike the years before Haile Selassie's exile, a politically engaged urban culture of "reformist intellectuals" did not challenge him to broaden the scope of policy alternatives. Intellectuals had been weakened substantially during the fascist years, and many of them were even exiled or killed (Bahru 2002b). However, such reformist agendas were taken in a more radical direction. Several "young educated officials" in government led to a coup attempt in Addis Ababa in 1960, while the Emperor was traveling abroad (Clapham 2015: 199). The palace coup in 1960 and a subsequent revolt in 1963 (Prunier 2015) were early signs of a crisis of legitimacy for imperial rule.

Though Ethiopia's sole university was intended as a dispensation for dutiful subjects and as a training ground for would-be bureaucrats, it also would soon become a political platform. Students from around the country drew together strains of populist, Pan-African and anti-imperialist politics. Students began study groups, debate clubs, and newspapers, they lacked experience of resistance, and tended more to "agitprop" than well-founded theories or

points of unity (Bahru 2014, Balsvik 2007). While associations with “dialectal materialism” became trendy, young activists lacked a deep knowledge of it and “didn’t even read any philosophical book from the other side” (*Interview with Gebriel*). The slogan, “Land to the tiller!,” circulating globally at the time became a touchstone for large demonstrations, which became a regular occurrence in 1965 (Bahru 2014). With varying degrees of legitimacy, student leaders presented themselves as the voice of the poor, and the peasantry. They criticized the inability of high modern planning to solve structural problems in Ethiopia’s food system. They also made common cause with low-ranking military personnel, who were vulnerable to abuse, underpayment and even spoiled rations. Haile Selassie’s recourse to military force in Asmara and elsewhere in Eritrea precisely while budgeting was scarce led to resistance and even some defections within the military.

The political challenges for Haile Selassie intensified with the famine that emerged in 1973. News from outside the bounds of tightly controlled media of starving peasants embarrassed the regime and exposed the flaws of its economic and agricultural planning models (Markakis and Ayele 1986). In February of 1974, as fuel prices surged, a wave of popular and largely spontaneous uprisings in Addis Ababa set the stage for the Emperor’s fall. A truly alternative revolutionary path was not clear, however. “During those crucial months before the military takeover, the popular movement failed to develop any form of political organization, or to produce any type of leadership” (Markakis and Nega 1986, 180). In November 1974, several junior military officers – soon known as the *Derg* (committee) – broke ranks with official military leadership and undertook a coup in Addis Ababa. They spirited the Emperor away.

Members of parliament, advisers, and political leaders linked to the regime tried to evade capture and sought exile.

The Derg next announced a temporary period of custodial rule just long enough to secure national order and a peaceful transfer of power. The identities of the committee composing Ethiopia's new leadership were nebulous, as were their ideological commitments and relations with social movements of the day. Their coup drew Ethiopia's imperial age to an abrupt end, thrusting Addis Ababa into a period of deep and lasting uncertainty. The commitments of Haile Selassie to urban spectacle and age-old court tradition made a perfect foil for a new leadership based on the slogan, "*Ethiopia first!*"

From advanced neglect to the promise of urban renewal: Socialism and since

While the Derg promised liberation from feudalism, they would fashion a punitive social order often more populist or nationalist in its outlook than any properly socialist program. Indeed, as the USSR, GDR and Soviet satellite states scanned the globe for anti-imperialist movements to bolster, they initially saw little in the Derg resembling Marxist-Leninist principles. After some initial hesitation with Haile Selassie behind bars, the Derg made a clear break with the past by killing him and many of his advisers. For two years, national development programs were halted, as "all the attention and efforts of the struggling new government were focused on the urgent tasks of reorganizing and defending the country" (Ponsi 1982: 108). Measures were introduced to restrict rights of speech and assembly. The Eritrean People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP) undertook a sporadic guerilla war against Derg

personnel (Ponsi 1982), which the Derg referred to as White Terror. In response, in March of 1977, the Derg took this as justification for its campaign of Red Terror in Addis Ababa. Ideologues, informants and security officials swept most towns and cities of Ethiopia to crush opponents, their means of support, and to gather intelligence on dissidents. In Addis Ababa, Red Terror was expressed by house-to-house searches for dissidents, checkpoints, curfews, disappearances, the seizure of printing presses and other materials, and both judicial and extra-judicial killings.

Victims of the extra-judicial killings were left by the roadside, often in prominent places with placards that condemned them as anarchists, anti-people or counter-revolutionaries. Tens of hundreds were thrown into unmarked mass graves. Rarely was a notice about their death or disappearance delivered to their relatives. It was intended to torment the living (Gebru 2008: 196).

Across Ethiopia, during these decisive months, thousands died, and tens of thousands were imprisoned and tortured. The fates of many Derg victims from the Red Terror are still unknown today.

For many of the educated people now in middle age, who were Addis Ababa residents in the 1970s and 1980s, everyday life was fraught with risk. Young people and students were in particular suspected of plotting against the Derg. Planners old enough today to recall these challenges bore eloquent witness to the horrors they had seen and experienced first-hand during their formative years. A founding member of the Red Terror Martyrs Memorial Museum emphasized to me how a new politics of ethnic distinction impacted him. As a young man in Addis Ababa, Gebril was intrigued by the talk of Marxist-Leninist philosophy

that had become commonplace in his high school. He “participated against the King’s government and then the Derg’s government” (*Interview with Gebril*). When the Red Terror occurred in 1978, he learned that he was sought by authorities. Rather than face the deadly risks of interrogations in the city, he left his family and schooling behind for a challenging life in secrecy with extended family in a small town far from Addis Ababa. One day, local people noted he was an outsider with light skin, and gave him up for interrogation to local Derg security personnel. Without trial, he was tortured and imprisoned. There were many occasions in which Gebril thought he was about to be killed by his captors. But after five years, he was released and he returned to his family in the city at that time. In part, Gebril understood his time in prison as a reflection of his father’s admonition not to “deny God,” which he had done in his embrace of Marxist-Leninist philosophy. He was never able to reunite with his father, who had passed away in the intervening years (*interview with Gebril*).

By 1978, General Mengistu Haile Mariam had emerged from within the Derg as Ethiopia’s dictator and initiated a punitive form of rule. Under him, the Derg spoke with one public voice and abandoned any pretense to transferring power to civil administration. Instead, “Ethiopian Socialism” would mean the exercise of various means of social control toward the assumption of a unitary class interest. The significance of religious belief and ethnic difference which had long structured Ethiopia’s social order were shunted aside. Gradually, punitive projects of high modern planning were tried, reflecting in part the influence, material support and training of Soviet states, especially the GDR and USSR (Haile 2006). By the time the Derg created a vanguard parties, the COPWE and WPE in 1984, peasants had long been forced into new rural agricultural cooperatives, AAU professors were forced into seasonal construction

programs in the country, and accused “bourgeois” elements and everyday people alike found themselves in compulsory education programs (Markakis and Ayele 1986).

Like past regimes, the Derg turned to modernization programs for some of their political legitimation. Most significant among their reforms was the Ethiopian experience of the land question. While this issue had long been fundamental to the framing of anticolonial movements across the continent, in Ethiopia the Derg presented the politics of land as an attack on the outmoded, predatory aristocracy. Legacies of feudalism in the north, a plantation system in the south, the persistence of subsistence farming throughout the country, and the landlessness of many others all made for irresistible targets of punitive rule. The Derg moved to nationalize all land. In urban areas, the *Proclamation on Urban Lands and Extra Houses* (47/1975) established sweeping new approaches to urban landholding. In a reversal of decades of land administration policy since the Menilek era (Wubshet 2016), government became the final *owner* of all land, though *lease* holding and *lease* transfers were allowed. New *kebele* (at the time, ward-level) administrations became owners and landlords for tens of thousands of rudimentary, one-story homes. If one person owned multiple properties or businesses, they were forced to choose which to keep as their own, and vacate all other “extra houses”. Most of that redistributed housing would be rented by the *kebele* for extremely small monthly rents to the urban poor. The policy was a disciplinary measure against the city’s middle classes and elites, including Armenian, Greek and other national minorities who were easily accused of being opponents of national progress. It was also a boon to low-income people who by and large did not change residences, but could now better afford drastically reduced rents in them

which were set and collected the local *kebele*. But the measure would change Ethiopia's political economy and would alter social relations far beyond questions of land administration.

By substituting local administration for the ties between landholders and tenants, the Derg had effectively taken on the responsibility for poor peoples' housing in the city. Many functions of planning activities and local administration in Addis Ababa were altered as a result. A profusion of upgrading studies and site proposals followed. But by breaking up landholding arrangements and the hierarchical relationship of landlord/tenant in the past, the government opened the door to the seemingly inexorable informalization of housing, as planners recognized after a few years. Features of both "spontaneous" and "planned" typologies of housing¹² were to be included in urban surveys and other planning studies as master planning got underway. In an internal memorandum at the Addis Ababa Master Plan Project Office, top advisors Giovanni Comparini and Solomon Ketema put this urban complexity in historical context.

As it is very often the case in developing countries, the situation in Addis Ababa is emphasized by the fact that the city of Addis Ababa is fast expanding, mainly under *the uncontrolled pressure of people with very limited economical means*.

In addition ... the city of Addis Ababa also has *a problem of historical heritage*, connected with the land use, the way it has started and has developed through the years; in fact the primary function of Addis Ababa, as a politico-military capital, had a direct impact on the pattern of settlement employed at the time of its foundation: Menelik granted to his military chiefs and few ecclesiastic lords, large estates inside his new capital; offices and residences of lords and encircling them, modest houses belonging to their retainers were established following the physical structure of the mobile camp. *This situation prevailed more or less until the nationalization of urban*

¹² "Survey on Population needs related with space utilization: Criteria of Sample selection" Page 3. Memo of Comparini, Solomon and Yeraswork to municipal officials, Internal Memorandum of the Addis Ababa Master Plan Project Office (March 5, 1984). On file at the National Archives and Library of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa.

*land and extra houses in 1975, and acted as an obstacle on attempts of urban planning and zoning [sic].*¹³ [Italics added.]

The memo notes the dual challenges in the Ethiopian urban trajectory of “historical heritage” from the imperial era and the “uncontrolled pressure of people with very limited economical means.” This implicit acceptance of slums is broadly consonant with the logic for surveys of them articulated just the previous year. On the other hand, Addis Ababa is not so special, in that spontaneous housing is represented here as a common feature across the developing world. Further, the memo celebrates land nationalization as a turning point against slums, and not a catalyst for their growth, as in other internal comments. Writing just two years later, one scholar noted that the city’s housing stock had become “a revenue drainer instead of a revenue earner for the government” (Girma 1987: 16), as only very meager rents were affordable to most city residents. Existing housing, generally consisting of rudimentary one or two-room homes with corrugated roofing – much of it already many decades old – tended toward decay during the Derg years. Original property owners, local administration, and renters all lacked the capacity to rebuild or improve it. New housing was overwhelmingly of this “spontaneous” variety, and built from meager materials.

During the rule of the Derg, master planning in Addis Ababa would be undertaken once. However, the Master Plan of 1986 stood by far as the most comprehensive plan in the

¹³ *“Some general recommendations on up-grading (and urban renewal),”* Internal Memorandum of the Addis Ababa Master Plan Project Office (May 13, 1985). On file at the National Archives and Library of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa.

history of the city until that time. The planning process relied in part on demographic data and on data gathered in a survey of adults and children through dozens of enumerated questions regarding uses of space, service availability, housing and the like.¹⁴ The plan outlined some possibilities for better sanitation and other services in upgrading programs. But it was truly distinguished from previous plans by two linked features introduced into the local planning repertoire: the notion of urban renewal and a regional-scale framework for Addis Ababa's expansion. Urban renewal attempts that were tried were very modest, yielding for example the production of multi-storied tower in the Piassa neighborhood (*interview with Derege*), and a cluster of multi-story housing for government workers along Bole Road (*author's note*). There was also little in the way of urban expansion that would actually follow from this plan, in part because of the relatively little growth of the city during the Derg years.

As the plan was generated, however, internal documentation and a sketch map (**see Figure 6**) presciently suggested some long-term possibilities for both urban renewal and urban expansion. In their January 15, 1984 letter to municipal authorities, leading planners observed that “the city is supposed to expand during the next 20 years and reach the population of about 3 million inhabitants on 2006” – impressively close to the reality of the city's population by 2006 – and then identified five proposed actions that would foster such a transformation. The second action on the sketch map is glossed as “gradually relieve the urban city center from certain activities” with subsequent steps referring to the provision of new services in “expansion areas” beyond the city limits of the day.

¹⁴ “*First Draft Questionnaire for Sociological Survey in Addis Ababa*,” Internal Memorandum of the Addis Ababa Master Plan Project Office (April 5, 1984). On file at the National Archives and Library of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa.

On first glance, and through the recent experiences of urban renewal as it would come to be known, this would seem to refer to the displacement of the urban poor living in the core of the city as well as their “activities.” But according to lead planners in 1984, “Action 2” had a different meaning:

Gradually relieve the city center from certain activities, which does not constitute basic services (as defined in our tentative schedule) for the residential neighbourhoods. These are mainly big work-shops, garages, big stores, which in general had not necessity of bit [sic] investments, and are very often settled with a big waste of land.

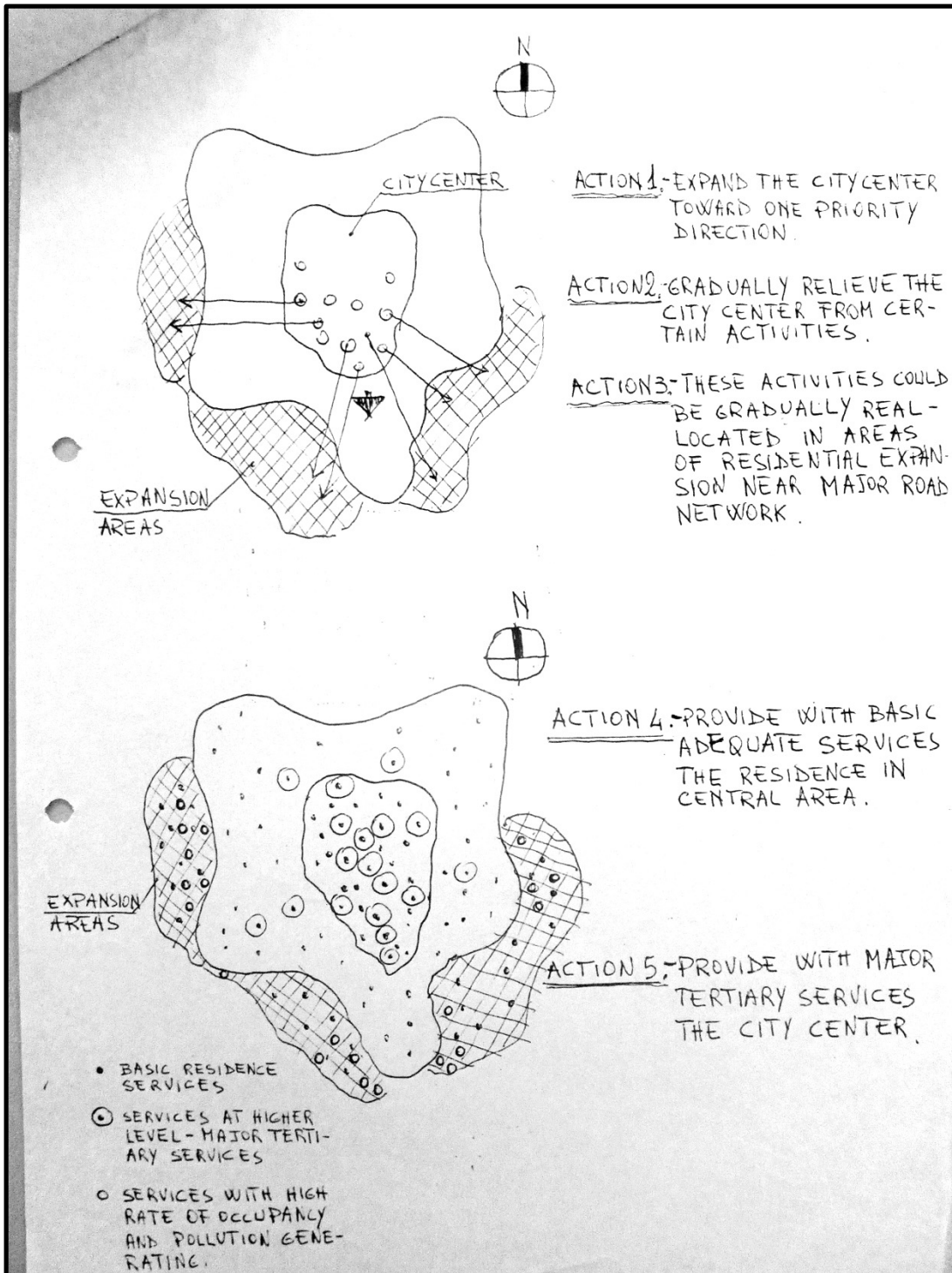
This action would have separated different urban functions, such as residential from economic and industrial zones, and thus a move against the fixity and density of the city. However, as was the case with other master plans for Addis Ababa, only some of the aspects of the 1986 plan were implemented (Yirgalem 2007), and the perceived confusion of uses would continue. The plan would only be released to the public only in 1994, after the Derg era had ended. Revisions of the plan would begin soon after in 1998 and completed in 2002 and 2003, and it presaged many of the subsequent concerns of the current plan.

Decades on, the more lasting contribution of the Derg era to planning was at the level of institutionalization. This was true in two respects, which again suggest a deepening strategic commitment to governance systems. First, urban administration and governance under the Derg was coordinated in 1987 at the federal level by the creation of the National Urban Planning Institute (NUPI), under the Ministry of Urban Works and Development. Among its key functions was the production of planning manuals that directed the means and aims of planning practices. The NUPI also centralized the process of producing master plans for many of

Ethiopia's large cities, then transferred the plans for implementation to regional and municipal governments. This approach to planning allowed for harmonization of planning designs, cost control, and of course the centralization of decision-making about development. The other change here as to institutionalization was the cultivation of planning talent. Many of my older informants suggested that the event of the 1986 Master Plan was their entry into planning as a vocation, or as the pivotal change in the shaping of planning as a vocation for their elders, professors, and managers. Curiously enough for a socialist bureaucracy in anti-colonial era, the Derg relied heavily on the leadership of an Italian team who relied on their Ethiopian counterparts for data collection. After an initial consultation in Addis Ababa, the plan was largely done in Italy and featured limited consultations with Ethiopian planners (interviews with Derege and Binyam). A series of internal memos and correspondence recovered from the National Archives reveals a high degree of coordination between team leaders and government officials in both Italy and Ethiopia.

Given the degree of coercion that the Derg secured in the late 1970s and well into the 1980s, it is curious that they struggled to engage more creatively with cities. In other circumstances, this might have been a period of relatively quick and concerted urban change and bold new constructions. There are at least three reasons for this. First, commodity production for export was a priority, as Ethiopia sought enmeshment with socialist trading partners and donors. However, unlike many other regimes in Africa at the time, the Derg were not administrators so much as proponents of military hierarchy. Second, the dictatorship sought to prioritize political control essentially over any other social or political aim. That the Derg not only failed to prevent the devastating famine of 1984-5, but even tried to weaponize

Figure 6: Sketch Map for the possible expansion of Addis Ababa, 1985



"Connection between up-grading programme in central areas and tendencies acting on the city according [to] economical [sic] demographic studies," Appendix to letter of Comparini, Solomon and Daniel to municipal officials (January 15, 1984). This sketch map by head planners corresponds to a vision for urban expansion to be begun in 1986, but it bears more resemblance to the expansion process that would actually unfold in the early 21st Century. On file at the National Archives and Library of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa.

its impoverishing effects was indicative of the regime's grim priorities. Similarly, while comfortable enough in cities as they already were, Derg leadership likely observed from the downfall of Haile Selassie that cities could harbor leftist or populist dissent, so that urban development might bolster the means of opposition or be perceived as out of step with the peasantry it hoped to mobilize. A third reason for hesitancy as to urban development, and perhaps most significantly, was the issue of budgetary commitments, especially given the cost of military and security functions. The Derg was at war with Somalia and had several low-intensity conflicts with secessionists and rebels in the Eritrea, Tigray, Oromia and Somali regions. Producing a plan with Italian support was one thing, but achieving longer-term urban development targets and seeing through urban plans was more complicated.

As the GDR and Soviet systems collapsed and military aid seemed less sure, Mengistu officially announced the end of socialism in Ethiopia. But this did not preserve Mengistu's regime. In 1991, following a long and drawn-out armed conflict, fighters of the Tigray Peoples' Liberation Front (TPLF) fighters advanced on Addis Ababa. An international delegation headed by the US negotiated Mengistu's exit from power and his passage into exile in Zimbabwe. By 1993, the TPLF positioned itself at the core of the EPRDF, a nominal coalition of parties, which has dominated formal Ethiopian politics ever since. While adapting the vanguardist nature of political rule under the Derg, the EPRDF would apply itself to problems in the fit between rural and urban areas that had bedeviled previous regimes.

Conclusion

This chapter demonstrated the tenuous and uneven role of city settlements within the articulation of political territory in Ethiopia's history. Addis Ababa emerged as a byproduct of a particular sort of statecraft, and is often treated as a symbol of an exceptional and proudly independent, even indigenous political project. Many regimes saw in the city an array of opportunities for political legitimation. But working against a dense and highly complex built environment with limited expertise and capital, successes of planning in Addis Ababa have largely been elusive. The slum infrastructures that emerged over time are explained by the fits and starts of the city's growth, by partially implemented or failed plans from above, as well as undeclared policies of neglect. When planning began as an ad-hoc, incremental enterprise of elite negotiations, it furthered the social mixity of classes.

Modernization, under both Emperor Haile Selassie and the Italian occupation, focused on a variety of planning sites and architectural projects throughout the city. Administration of planning became increasingly centralized and a regular feature of urban governance. However, neither regime provided real economic opportunity, or altered the diffuse spatial structure of the city and its tendency towards weak infrastructure. The city's poor majority were not targeted as beneficiaries of urban development priorities. By the time of the Derg regime in the late 20th Century, which set itself up in opposition to the capitalism of these regimes, rudimentary one-story homes had become the predominant housing typology across Addis Ababa, as in many of Ethiopia's cities and towns. Under the Derg, the municipality faced weak budgeting, internal contradictions in development policy, and political challenges prevented the municipality from carrying out interventions in housing and infrastructure.

Throughout the 20th Century, then, various regimes found Addis Ababa to be a city remarkably resistant to possibilities of high modern development. Among the leading signs of prolonged urban crisis are slum spaces. Such areas are intrinsic to urban systems and livelihoods in many of the world's cities, and not an aberration. They embody the alternative possibilities of urban living beyond the bounds of official sanction. Since socialism, what is new however is that the developmental state of the EPRDF has advanced urban renewal as the signature program for its massive redevelopment agenda for Addis Ababa.

Chapter 3. Dynamic geographies of the developmental state

Introduction

On the eleventh story of the Yeha City Center in the Stadium area of Addis Ababa, there is a large office with plain beige walls that has been made into a coffee shop. Planners drop by for a coffee when on breaks from their work at the *Addis Abeba and the Surrounding Oromia Special Zone Integrated Development Plan Project Office*, just upstairs. A television at one end of the shop broadcasts the EBC news bulletin. Three women working in the shop tidy up and brew traditional *bunna* over hotplates. During some work breaks that he would extend to accommodate my questions, I would meet there with Habtamu, a GIS expert and planner. Once, after a long interview and a few small cups of *bunna*, it was clear that he was ready for a change of pace. As I turned off the recorder, he began to question me. Ethiopia's development challenges were clear enough, Habtamu said. But how is it that the US can also fail in its development ambitions? What happened in Detroit? "How did you let that happen?"

After our long focus on Ethiopia, I was not prepared to give an account of development aspirations in the US. I reverted to something like David Harvey's (2010) adage that capitalism does not solve crises, but moves them around geographically. One could also try to explain Detroit's decline, by way of Sarah Safransky (2014), as just an interregnum between the abandonment of Detroit's factories by industrial capitalists, only for new financiers to arrive decades later and speculate on green capitalist futures. Some such account of shifting geographies of industrial production might help explain why modes of development have been abandoned by government in the US. Such an account might also help to explain the rise of

manufacturing in Ethiopia in that Peugeot and Lifan cars are now assembled in Tigray, and Kia cars are assembled in Oromia. But Habtamu already knew something of these shifts. Instead, Habtamu was really asking how the United States – “a great country,” as he put it – no longer could successfully promote industrialization in cities as it had in the past. Such an expectation derives from the foundational logic of the developmental state, wherein government preserves unique capacities to intervene in both society and economy. There is no necessary contradiction between Habtamu’s manner of comparing, contrasting or even contesting urban conditions and the work of producing space for the developmental state.

Figure 7: A Landscape of massive redevelopment, as seen from Yeha City Center



Photo by Author, 2015.

Habtamu's workplace at the Yeha City Center crystallizes diverse social and political forces in development in a particular material arrangement. When I would leave Habtamu or his colleagues on the 11th or 12th floor, I would take the stairwell, which was faster than waiting on the building's elevators, which tended to be slow and full of workers, or out of service. I would pass offices of the federal ombudsman and a federal sports agency, an anti-corruption poster on the wall, a few floors without any occupants, and a mezzanine level of shops with windows extending from ceiling to floor. On the ground floor, I would pass a DHL office, an ATM for a government-run bank, a stand selling underwear, a convenience store, and other small shops. Finally, walking through the broad entryway of the building, I would pass men and women security guards at the entrance to the building. They dressed in neat, powder-blue suits with matching baseball caps. As they patted down visitors and checked bags, they spoke Tigrigna as well as Amharic. From the slick marble floor at the broad entrance to the building, I would step almost a meter down to an uneven pit of rock and debris that has ringed the building since the time of its recent construction.

Yeha City Center's name sake is a town in the Tigray region that is home to an Axumite temple, Ethiopia's oldest standing building. The government agencies and private tenants found in the building rent from its owner, Yeha Real Estate, which has its main office there. Another planner, Habtamu's colleague in the Master Planning Office, Dawit, told me that this rental firm is a real estate enterprise of the TPLF. Initially, I was quite surprised that the building housing the key planning functions for a growing metropolitan area already blurs the lines between state, party, and business. Then, from conversation with their colleague, Binyam, I took on a new perspective about how such distinctions are melded together.

Are we talking about government choices or party choices to locate in that place? That building is only partly full in the first place, but I find that kind of an interesting irony itself, that the government would be renting from the party.

Why would it be an irony if you know that the government in this country – the party – actually owns the largest share of the business enterprises in Ethiopia? All this: the cement factory, the transportation companies, the biggest companies in Ethiopian are owned by the party... In ten years' time, you'll probably see hundreds of these types of buildings owned by the party.

Staking out positions within government and the private sector enables the party to model its own belonging in the city.

Whereas Chapter Two examined the growth of Addis Ababa in relation to changes in governance and urbanization over time, this Chapter looks at the “sites and situations” of governance today throughout Ethiopia’s dynamic geographies of development. First, I describe Ethiopia’s developmental state, which blends party and state together and preserves the right to intervene deep within private sectors, as well as everyday livelihoods. Second, I describe both the ongoing significance of rural development interventions, and the emergence of a new agenda for infrastructure-led development that spans urban and rural places. While geographies of development have different purposes in each locality, the production of new capacities and flows across the country also require particular expressions of state power. Chapters Four and Five carry this theme forward in relation to urban renewals and the institutional dimensions of planning.

Locating the developmental state as the referents of governance shift

To conceptualize a developmental state in Africa long after the era of structural adjustment may now seem an anachronistic, or even foolish, project. Of course, the notion of development as we understand it today first emerged in Africa as the objective of colonial sciences and services that sought to exploit African people and places for the enrichment of European elites. Since decolonization swept Africa, development “urged” African states

to ‘delink’, to reduce themselves, to stabilize the economy, to privatise [sic] the economy, to engage in ‘good governance’, to democratise [sic] themselves and society, to create an ‘enabling environment’ for the private sector, etc. In other words, to do what they cannot do. What we then have is, to paraphrase Gramsci, the pessimism of the diagnosis and the optimism of the prescription. Obviously such a contradictory position is unsatisfactory (Mkandawire 2001: 289).

On this view, the foundational challenge of development in Africa is the impossibility for pathways beyond the roles allowed in the extractive, violent colonial histories of the past.

Development has been an overdetermined discursive field and it has been deployed by an exceptionally broad array of political projects throughout the second half of the 20th Century. Usages and discourses¹⁵ of development morphed across time and space, both in the

¹⁵ According to Williams (1976: 64-5), the naturalistic connotations of “development” were already basic to the word’s usage in the mid-17th Century, as in the unfolding of a biological or evolutionary process. By the 19th Century, the term was in use in relation to “evolutionary stages” of growth and to “processes of an industrial and trading economy.” After the Second World War, the foundational distinction of developed and undeveloped societies arose, according to Williams. Development continued to naturalize a global order founded on principles of the Bretton Woods institutions, even after independence swept Africa.

furtherance of Euro-capitalism and later as reactions to it. According to leaders of Africa's so-called independence generation such as Nkrumah, the real work of development done by and for local peoples would be part of socialist "revolutionary struggle" (Nkrumah 1973). African socialisms typically relied on high modern development programs, as in those introduced by Nkrumah, Nyerere, and Mugabe. These ambitions tended to rely on coercive and authoritarian means as they struggled to overcome existential state crises of debt, internal fragmentation, clientelism, and predation by former colonial powers.

In reflecting on these entanglements, critical scholars of development have either pronounced development dead, or laid bare its inescapable limitations. For instance, Timothy Mitchell (2002: 231) traced the role of "recent methods of organizing social practice[s]" in particular institutions, such as the field of economics, to how places are opened to development interventions.

An individual nation-state appears to be a functional unit – something akin to a car, say, or a mechanical pump – that can be compared with and used as a model for improving other such units. This supposed comparability is emphasized by the annual volumes of statistics produced by the World Bank and other international development agencies. Economic features of one state appear to be neatly transferable to other states, without regard for their different position in larger economic and historical networks (*ibid.*).

Western policy prescriptions and models of development—some of the "larger economic and historical networks," in Mitchell's formulation—became routes for neo-colonial retrenchment. Themes such as structural adjustment, debt, and even the violence of humanitarianism were at the core of many of the defining works in the critical development studies pantheon (de Waal

1997, Ferguson 1994, Gaim 1987, Harrell-Bond 1986, Watts 1983). Even as national projects across many parts of the continent would be abandoned by major capital flows, extractive economies in Africa would grow in the 2000s (Ferguson 2006). Many scholars emphasized that an era of “post-development” had arisen (Rahnema 1997, Escobar 1995).

Yet if the close of the 20th Century was a time of sobering reassessments for developmental pathways in Africa, many East Asian countries seemed to be flourishing from economic globalization. Growth appeared possible even without the policy prescriptions of Western donor countries and Bretton Woods institutions. The paradigmatic “tiger economies” of South Korea, Malaysia and Singapore achieved historically rapid structural transformation, and Japan and China amassed new productive capacities across industrial sectors.

Developmental state models were held up in anticipation of African mimicry. Even gestures of acclaim for these developmental states relied on the teleological assumptions of Western progress. As Victoria Lawson (2007: 53) notes, “Africa is constructed as poor and fouled, East Asia is constructed as successful, both measured in terms of the West – the silent benchmark.”

Others contended, however, that many of the critiques of development relied on an overly broad caricature of development practices that left them inexorably tied to coloniality. For example, Jan Nederveen Pieterse (2000) and David Simon (2007) claimed that most critiques insisting on “alternatives to development” failed to offer a political account of just what these alternatives were, or where such alternatives were being realized. Vinay Gidwani emphasized that development’s critics had to confront the materiality of human suffering, rather than the critique of colonialist discourses:

It would be absurd to argue, in my view, that the experience and effects of poverty, hunger, or malnutrition would change or cease to exist if, for instance, one could magically supplant the Western discourse of development with other, more culturally grounded, discourses—as the new critics urge ... There is a corollary point: namely, that in reading development as the symptom of a Eurocentric modernity, the new critics not only assume implicitly that notions of development—as popularly understood in the industrialized West—had no precursors in non-European contexts (a point to which I am largely persuaded); but also that modernity had no non-European cognates (a prospect I am far less willing to concede) (Gidwani 2002: 11-12).

From this position, Gidwani locates the drive for development in “non-European contexts” and thus the many historical arcs implicit in that drive.

While these critical debates refined the key concepts and terms of development studies in 2000s, Ethiopia’s government advanced the notion of the developmental state. In his chapter in an edited volume from Oxford, Prime Minister Meles Zenawi (2011) wrote alongside development studies scholars to distinguish his notion of the developmental state from neoliberal governance. Meles claims that the “watchman state” imagined in neoliberalism would be inappropriate for Ethiopia; while safeguarding property rights and flows of information for the private sector, he claimed that such a state assumes the role of technology and capacities for growth that simply do not currently exist. Instead, Meles argues that when a politicized class—like the peasants and revolutionaries of the TPLF, of course—come to power, they can impose a “revolution from above” (Meles 2012: 166) so long as they advance two key components of state power.

Revolutions from above are thought to need to fulfill certain requirements if they are to be successful in carrying out accelerated development. They must possess: (1) a very able leadership that recognizes the need for such a revolution and that perseveres in the pursuit of its objectives, dragging along society and most particularly the old elite from which the faction that leads the revolution emerges; (2) a powerful bureaucratic apparatus, including powerful police and army to free itself from pressures both from the elite and the population at large (Meles 2012: 166).

Meles goes on to conceive of these two “components” in the developmental state as being

ideological and structural ... At the ideological level, accelerated development is the mission [of the state], its source of legitimacy. Moreover, the development project is a hegemonic project in the Gramscian sense—the key actors voluntarily adhere to its objectives and principles (Meles 2012: 167).

The fundamental question that arises here goes to just where the “ideological” and the “structural” leave off from one another. If popular consent to rule is truly the paramount concern in Ethiopian politics, why must the state remain an autonomous vanguard “dragging along society?”

Government strives to resolve this apparent contradiction through the experience of ‘democratic developmentalism,’ which is otherwise called ‘democratic centralism’ or ‘*aboyatawi democrasi*’ (revolutionary democracy). Throughout its militia years, the TPLF understood itself as a Marxist-Leninist project that would succeed in deliver development for Ethiopians where the floundering, quasi-socialism of the Derg had failed. After taking power, the EPRDF gradually came to accept economic liberalization as formal policy (Lefort 2015). Yet Ethiopia’s new political leaders were accorded stature and opportunity for having proven their meddle in the bush as fighters. Many had foregone formal education entirely in order to take

part in war. As was often the case in African post-revolutionary political transitions of the 1980s and 1990s, new leadership did not adapt themselves to existing political institutions through practice, but institutionalized the bounds of political participation in accordance with their vision of militarism (Bøås 2012, de Waal 2012). Ethnic federalism promises territorial sovereignty and autonomy through decentralization of decision-making to the regional scale, but maintains a tightly coordinated hold on populations in order to create consent for party dicta through official channels. In the main, policy innovation occurs at the federal level of the party coalition, with implementation done by lower levels of administration. Regions and charter cities thus work together in the centralized coordination of a unitary federal vision. The developmental state follows a vanguard party model that seeks to demonstrate leadership at every level of government and at every socio-spatial scale.

Now several years into the EPRDF era, Ethiopia's developmental state hopes to accelerate structural transformation. This is a model assembling aspects from a few different political projects and bears historical traces of many geopolitical encounters. On the one hand, Ethiopia welcomes foreign direct investment from a wide variety of foreign firms and from the Ethiopian diaspora, as well as aid from a variety of partner countries and agencies. The EPRDF seeks foreign currency, foreign consumers, and even foreign employers for its many "low-skilled" workers, as well as foreign buyers for many of the agricultural cooperatives that are relics of the Derg years. On the other hand, Ethiopia's government has not acceded to join the WTO and retains the notion of nationalization of land as set up by the Derg, in defiance of the policy prescriptions on private property by Hernando De Soto and the World Bank. The financial

sector has not been liberalized. State monopolies within sectors such as telecommunications and airlines are maintained to protect them from global competition.

The appeal of Ethiopia's developmental state for certain foreign partners lies precisely in the worn metrics of the development economists that Mitchell and other critical scholars have long criticized. In privileging Ethiopia's national economy, the World Bank (2016a) report *Ethiopia's Great Run* distinguishes the EPRDF era from lackluster growth under past regimes:

Economic growth has been remarkably rapid and stable over the past decade. Real GDP growth averaged 10.9 percent in 2004-2014, according to official data. By taking into consideration population growth of 2.4 percent per year, real GDP growth per capita averaged 8.0 percent per year in this period. This substantially exceeds per capita growth rates achieved in the first decade after the country's transition to a market-based economy (1992-2003: 1.3 percent; 1993-2004: 4.5 percent), under the communist Derg regime (1974-91: -1.0 percent), and during monarchy (1951-73: 1.5 percent).

The EPRDF's agenda exceeds many conventional development benchmarks while at the same time revealing their analytical limits. With the caveat that Ethiopia is still in the "early phases of development," the Bank applies Rostow's model of stages of growth to claim that 1992 was the crucial year in which "the introduction of market-oriented economic reforms that ensued [after] the demise of the socialist Derg regime" (World Bank 2016a: 8, 11). While foreign investors anticipate financial dividends from these results, the party itself expects continued legitimation.

The World Bank foreshadows future transformations for Ethiopia by noting that "a sizable agricultural economy was a point of departure for Japan, Korea, Taiwan (China) and

China” (World Bank 2016a: 20). In this sense, Ethiopia’s enmeshment in the global economy confirms the pattern of catch-up and policy learning from these countries. Yet, the Bank acknowledges that the “commonly used governance indices” it proffers do not adequately capture the

“authoritarian developmental state model’ with a mixed state-market approach ... These systems are not just heterodox from an economics point of view, they are also heterodox institutionally – i.e. they do not conform to the Western consensus of what is a good institutional mode” (World Bank 2016a: 20).

Indeed, to the extent that private sectors flourish in Ethiopia today, they typically do so through state coordination and support. Successful instances of development unfold under the glare of official media channels¹⁶ that aim for state legitimation more than esteem for the local entrepreneur or foreign partners.

Following Meles’ death in 2012, the developmental state model in Ethiopia has not flagged, but begun to take on new prominence at the continental level. The African Development Bank (2015) partnered with the Meles Zenawi Foundation to produce the *African Democratic Developmental State* symposium. The ADB claimed that “deliberations” at the symposium would be “submitted to the African Union, with the expectation that these will feed into the main AU development strategy” (*ibid.*). That Rwanda hosted the event with Prime

¹⁶ Few successes happen without official ceremonies in full view of the public, evoking the consent of the collective, rather than individual responsibility. Reportage of achievements and moments of success matter greatly, as when a factory, commercial farm, or newly finished construction project open. Such events have a visual culture all their own. A common trope in EBC news reports is for seated dignitaries and everyday people from local communities to sit together at meetings, wearing white cotton caps printed for the occasion.

Minister Paul Kagame present suggests the readiness of other African countries to adapt aspects of the developmental state. The developmental state was codified in the African Union's *Agenda 2063*, as nothing less than a "critical enabler for Africa's transformation" (see Goal 74-D, African Union 2015: 20).

Capable and democratic developmental states and institutions: Revitalise [sic] African development planning capacities and rebuild career, professional and capable public services. Strengthen and transform regional and continental institutions and the manner in which we do business, so as to effectively lead and drive the agenda for transformation and integration.

The framework document was even more specific, presenting a typology of the eight "Characteristics of a Developmental State."¹⁷

¹⁷ These eight characteristics were (African Union 2015):

- Vision setting, capable leadership and a developmental ideology (Capable [sic] (but not necessarily authoritarian) leadership constitutes a primary agency in the construction of a developmental state.
- Relative state autonomy, especially in formulating and implementing policy (the capacity of the state to formulate policies independent of contending social forces, to serve the best interests of the country as perceived by the managers of state power).
- State institutional capacity, notably a strong and competent bureaucracy
- Effective national development planning
- Coordination of economic activities and resources (effective coordination of economic activities includes creation of a pro-investment macroeconomic environment, effective supervision and monitoring of financial institutions, fiscal policies that provide incentives to the private sector, domestic resource mobilization and an effective public financial management system).
- Support for a national entrepreneurial class - make conscious efforts to expand and nurture its bourgeoisie, as it will facilitate industrialization and private sector-led economic growth.
- Commitment to expansion of human capacity
- Peace, political stability, rule of law and predictability in government business.

While the developmental state has had a long relationship to some forms of economic liberalization, at the urban scale the developmental state makes for an awkward fit with the urban booster and Marxist literatures. As described in Chapter One, research in both these schools generally presume that the chief function of urban governance is to promote certain kinds of market dynamics. Yet, many of the referents of governance in Ethiopia's cities often do as much for the state as they do for the private sector, they are not much better captured in the African urbanisms literature. Much of that work has presumed an absence of effective governance, if not its impossibility in the foreseeable future. The means by which people overcome urban crisis in the everyday has thus become a common, abiding theme.

For example, in Filip De Boeck's (2014 [2004]) spectral account of Kinshasa, everyday hazards are nonetheless linked to and partly answered by an invisible "second city" of spiritual powers and imagination where fresh possibilities for urban living are secured. Any ordinary referents of colonial order in Kinshasa, according to De Boeck, were eroded long ago in prolonged crises. Colonial subjugation and genocide under the Belgians gave way to postcolonial political crises, while extractive economies surged. Narratives of the explosion of Kinshasa's slum urbanism¹⁸, or even of Detroit's decline, come to be paradigmatic stories in the urban studies pantheon, and are easily adapted to accounts in global political economy. But new capacities and possibilities introduced in the local developmental state in Addis Ababa

¹⁸ Kinshasa has grown throughout a period of extended crisis, without the infrastructures, technologies, or local labor demand assumed of most cities growing in a global age. In 2016, Kinshasa was one of just three megacities in Africa, with a population exceeding 12 million; by 2030, it is projected to become the 13th largest city in the world, with 19.99 million people (UN 2016: 4).

seem an outlier here. Addis Ababa features a more engaged local state in many respects than does Detroit, or some other American cities.

Conceptions of urban development that are centered around technical and economic stories of modernization and adaptation need to be complemented by the consideration of the exigencies of history and politics. Only recently have the material possibilities emerged to remake the whole of a rapidly growing city like Addis Ababa in massive redevelopment, or to rethink the city's growth at a regional (that is, sub-national) scale. But it is political legitimation through development processes that distinguish this model. The EPRDF has made major commitments to deliver development in highly visible ways and within many of the same places or sectors in which past regimes failed. As rapid urbanization, globalization, and industrialization unfold together across Ethiopia, new linkages are formed between rural and urban places. As Addis Ababa changes, it is bound up in these broader, dynamic geographies of development.

From rural bias to infrastructure-led development bridging the rural/urban divide

A rural bias in development has long been the norm for Ethiopian regimes, which have aimed at the modernization of a wide array of activities and practices. The commercialization of agriculture brings farmers into formal, calculable circuits of exchange and could lead to higher agricultural yields at an industrialized scale. Such modernizing ambitions drove the move from feudalism to the capitalized plantation system, as well as the agricultural cooperatives and forced resettlement programs of the Derg era that were meant to integrate

Ethiopia with its socialist trading partners. Yet informal and subsistence modes of production have persisted, often as the only practicable option for rural peoples. This is a central tension in the politics of rural and agrarian development in Ethiopia.

Alex de Waal, perhaps the most influential scholar on the politics of famine and relief in the Horn of Africa, was for decades a friend and advisor to Prime Minister Meles Zenawi. Shortly after Meles' death in 2012, he recalled that TPLF leadership were already formulating their relationship to the struggle over rural development pathways while still in the bush, in the mid-1980s:

Meles was a convinced Marxist-Leninist, pragmatic but certain that the way of life of the Ethiopian peasants had to change or die. Having just completed my doctoral dissertation on famine survival strategies in Sudan, I tried to convince him that rural people were best served by diversified livelihoods, and that pastoral nomadism was an effective adaptation to the vagaries of life in a drought-prone ecosystem. He did his best to convince me that traditional livelihoods were doomed to stagnation and that Ethiopian peasants had to specialize in farming, trade, or livestock rearing.

The abiding impression left by Meles and the TPLF leadership was that their theory and practice were deeply rooted in the realities of Ethiopia, and that they would succeed or fail on their terms and no others. The TPLF had convinced the people, and that was all that mattered. They did not measure their record or their policies against external standards; on the contrary, they evaluated outside precepts against their own experience and logic. It was a refreshing, even inspiring, dose of intellectual self-reliance (de Waal 2012: 149–150).

In this salutary tone, de Waal's consideration of the developmental state as an "inspiring" project of "intellectual self-reliance" might share more with pro-EPRDF comment boards or government newsletters than it does with most academic journals. Yet de Waal also highlights something of the origins of EPRDF as a self-consciously exceptionalist project, a vanguard that can only be measured according to "experience and logic" of party leaders.

Thirty years on from Meles' first confidences with Alex de Waal, and five years since Meles' passing, Ethiopia is generally thought to have the largest rural population in any African country, estimated at 80.5% or 83% (World Bank 2017, Lefort 2015). Of Ethiopia's whole urban population, 17% live in Addis Ababa alone (UN-HABITAT 2017: 11). Yet agriculture still contributes a whopping 46% of all GDP in Ethiopia, compared to its average 12% share throughout Sub-Saharan Africa countries (Lefort 2015). Peasants make for a ready political constituency for the TPLF, as many have been eager to see a return on their wartime sacrifices for TPLF's rise to power (Lefort 2015). Legacies of grinding rural poverty, famine, and dependence on international aid all emphasize the deep significance of rural livelihoods to political legitimation. Indeed, if rural livelihoods cannot be meaningfully bettered, resistance movements have often followed; this was part of the *raison d'être* of TPLF in the first place (Gebru 2008). In many ways, the problem of meaningful improvements to rural livelihoods extends deeply into cities, too. Kinship ties and cultural associations with rural places and landscapes function powerfully to anchor identifications with regional and ethnic origins.

The EPRDF has sought structural transformation to produce these results. In that quest, the recent history of national development planning has gone through major transformations. Policy learning and internal debate as to course changes seem intrinsic to the model, as described in **Table 1**. Through the late 1990s, the EPRDF made an overwhelming emphasis on agricultural production, deeply inspired by the TPLF's self-understanding as a movement of peasant-revolutionaries. Through a "broad-based growth process involving smallholder farmers," federal government claimed that agricultural surpluses would be reinvested towards manufacturing and industrialization programs (EPRDF in Lefort 2015).

However, the economic results of this policy in the late 1990s were disappointing. Worse, flat production coincided with a costly and devastating border war of 1998-2000 with its newly independent neighbor, Eritrea (Michael and Young 2016). Rain shortages in 2002 and 2003 led to crop yields as low as at any time during the Derg years, comparable even to the devastating 1984-5 famine. Catastrophe was only narrowly averted through emergency coordination efforts that had been slightly improved over the years (Lefort 2015).

Table 1: National development plans, EPRDF era

~1996–2000	<i>Rural planning bias without multiyear national plans</i>
2002/3–2004/5	Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Program (SDPRP)
2005/6–2009/10	Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty (PASDEP)*
2010–2015	Growth and Transformation Plan I (GTP I)*
2015–2020	Growth and Transformation Plan II (GTP II)**

* Reflects UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

** Reflects UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), i.e. the global “post-2015 agenda”

Such tumultuous times were the backdrop an internal conference on the EPRDF coalition’s progress awaited since its founding. Grievances across the coalition were aired in the rhetoric of *gim gema*. This is “a method of public evaluation through bottom-up criticism and self-criticism” which arose as a TPLF custom during the militia years (Segers et al. 2008: 103), and later became normalized after reformation as a party. There were sharp debates both

within the TPLF itself, and between TPLF leaders and their critics in other coalition parties.¹⁹

One result of this was the purging and imprisonment of several figures in the broader EPRDF coalition, as Meles consolidated his position (Medhane and Young 2003). Internal politics of EPRDF came to accept the notion of liberalized markets; a “coalition of peasants, workers and revolutionary intelligentsia, would now open its ranks to the national bourgeoisie” and the party made clear that it sought enmeshment of the local economy with the global capitalist economy (ibid., 392). This period would later become known as *tehadso* (renewal) and it has defined many of the subsequent opportunities for transformation.

Development policy shifted, first with SDPRP in 2002/3 and then with PASDEP, in 2006. The SDPRP was the first comprehensive national development vision of the EPRDF, and it advanced Agricultural Development Led Industrialization (ADLI). Prior to rapid urbanization and the consumption of growing urban economies, the rationale of SDPRP was that there was a “critical constraint” to transformation through agriculture (MOFED 2002: iii), unless demand for Ethiopia’s agricultural goods could be commercialized for consumers abroad. Linking agriculture and smaller sectors together would help reduce poverty. Government would facilitate participation in this vision through “technical and political exercises” at *kebele* and *woreda* levels (*ibid.* 1). The PASDEP would further refine a national-scale agenda for transformation

¹⁹ In an unpublished but exhaustive account, Paulos Milkias (2001) describes these meetings based on official notes he acquired. According to Paulos, Meles accused several officials of various parties of corruption. TPLF leftists charged that Meles cared more in concluding the recent Eritrean war for Tigrayan-Eritrean solidarity than the federal project of EPRDF, which they claimed was in jeopardy. Meles also insisted that “Bonapartism” be discussed within the TPLF central committee. TPLF members tried to reject this invocation of Marxist-Leninist rhetoric about state formation, but could not table the issue and suffered for it. Allusions to Marxist-Leninist theory were common within the Derg, and various regional militia who fought the Derg (after all, the TPLF were at one stage committed to “non-revisionism” in the model of Enver Hoxha of Albania), as well as factions of the Ethiopian student movements of the 1960s and 1970s.

through agriculture. The key difference was the insistence that poverty alleviation and sustainable economic growth would only be satisfied through the long term goal of industrialization. As a “geographically differentiated strategy,” PASDEP recognized “differentiated ecological zones, varying landscape, and agricultural production practices”²⁰ (FDRE Ministry of Finance and Development 2006: 49). The plan also recognized the importance of rural-urban linkages, the geography of poverty, and a variety of policies that would speak to each issue.

Growth targets figured prominently in PASDEP, as Ethiopia was well into its boom years. Growth in GDP was projected to continue, from 10.6% GDP growth rate recorded in 2004/05 to a “period average of 7.3% per annum” predicted in 2009/10, while poverty was predicted to drop from 39% to 29% (*ibid.*, 55). But a broader pro-poor vocabulary was borrowed from discussion of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and in particular Goal 1. The plan thus spoke both to domestic expectations and to international valuations of successful development:

In the coming 20 to 30 years, Ethiopia's vision is to reach the level of middle-income countries where democracy and good governance are maintained through people's participation and where good will [*sic*] and social justice are secured. This Plan is the first 5-year phase to attain the goals and targets set in the MDGs at a minimum (*ibid.*, 44).

²⁰ The PASDEP strategy included “eight pillars” (2006: 46):

“Building all-inclusive implementation capacity; A massive push to accelerate growth; Creating the balance between economic development and population growth; Unleashing the potentials of Ethiopia's women; Strengthening the infrastructure backbone of the country; Strengthening human resource development; Managing risk and volatility; and, Creating employment opportunities.”

The invocation of “middle-income country status” would gradually become the key rationale for a wide range of development interventions in Ethiopia. Ten years on from the inception of SDPRP, foreign investment flows would turn out to have grown larger than incoming aid flows – a “virtuous circle” giving the sign of growing independence through enmeshment with the global market (Deloitte 2014).

Commitments to rural livelihoods are no longer the overwhelming focus of development in Ethiopia today, though rural areas of course remain significant to development. Two particular programs of rural development, (1) the mobilization of rural labor and (2) large-scale land transfers offer examples of how the developmental state remains strategically positioned to govern many distinct rural localities. As urbanization transforms Ethiopia’s rural and urban places alike, the political and economic dimensions of rural life are never far removed from what happens in the city.

(1) Mobilizing rural labor

In some respects, EPRDF engagements with rural livelihoods have deepened when compared to the Derg. So long as small-holder farmers and pastoralists grow crops and animals for family-level subsistence or petty trade in the cash economy, their production occurs outside of a calculable, taxed or planned agricultural sector. Farmers relying on rudimentary technology and artisanal production techniques have no clear role to play within PASDEP visions for the industrialization of agriculture and its assumedly more efficient production. Rural development furnishes government with intimate sites for the governance of livelihoods, but it is a scalar

project. Developmental policies and budgets, such as those derived from PASDEP, are formulated at the federal level. But the developmental state extends across regions down to the lowest levels of administration to both prove its technical meddle and to engender dependency on technical inputs. As Sabine Planel (2014) puts it,

The reality is that the force that dominates Ethiopia's rural space is bureaucratic power. Its institutional methods are imposed like a rule that is answerable to standards and reproduces a rationality which are not those of the peasant world, a world nevertheless familiar to it through long experience.

Three examples drawn from across rural Ethiopia capture encounters of the local developmental state with farmers, and reveal some strong commonalities.

First, in the Degua Temben *woreda* of Tigray region, the local development state promotes a "supply-driven" technical program for local farmers the maintenance of a pond, a well, an irrigation system, and a state-supplied fertilizer package (Segers et al. 2008). In the form of the *gim gema*, in which personal testimonies and self-criticisms are revealed in front of the group, one tends to accept the program. This involves a mixture of appeals to improved technical procedures and top-down invocations of duty imposed by onlookers (*ibid.*). Local memories of famine and of the revolutionary TPLF struggle against the Derg are profound and are frequent touchstones in state discourses of a contemporary "struggle" for development (*ibid.*). Second, in rural parts of Oromia, labor mobilization for local road construction is premised on the notion that unpaid labor is owed in exchange for access to services (Emmenegger 2016). A new level of administration, *garee* (sub-district) committees, were inserted below the *kebele* (precinct) administrations in 2005. Local people have been

summoned to meetings on the roads and other matters by armed militia and understand that if they do not fully participate in construction under the *garee* leadership, they may lose access to government-provided fertilizer (*ibid.*) They also may lose access to fertilizer if they do not support the OPDO branch of EPRDF in elections (*ibid.*). Third, in rather remote areas such as Awsa in Afar and Wolaita in SNNPR, agricultural extension programs found “Development Agents” lacking in knowledge of local farming techniques, but working for *kebele* representatives as promoting dependence on government fertilizer (Planel 2014). Planel confirms that local militia help coerce farmers to attend local meetings, but notes that mundane, bureaucratic decisions as to scheduling of fertilizer distribution, or the withholding of it, have the greatest ordering effect on local circumstances (*ibid.*).

Together, the work of Development Agents in Afar and SNNPR, *garee* leadership in Oromia, and local administrators upbraiding farmers in Tigray are comparable modes of intimately local governance interventions. To create consent for certain technical interventions, these local affiliates of the developmental state coordinate public gatherings at the lowest levels of administration. Such meetings become stages for the performance of citizenship and deservingness before the community. They aim at the achievement of order through the threat of withholding future state support, or at times, the subtle implication of recourse to violence. The National Planning Commission described such occasions as a “social learning” process of a “well-functioning agriculture development army” (FDRE 2016: 25).²¹

²¹ A certain fetishization of military structure is unmistakable in this sector, as in many others, and this distills the essence of “democratic developmentalism.” A similar notion is applied to health care extension in the “Health Development Army” which clusters its participants in groups of five, thereby enhancing the efficiency of

(2) Large-scale agricultural land transfers

Land is an element of nearly every rural development policy question in Ethiopia, as in much of the rest of Africa. By parceling, zoning and rationing access to rural land, many governments in Africa extend formal control through a variety of significant interventions: building new land markets, rewarding patronage networks, recognizing land rights, or settling territorial claims. Land is an instrument of negotiation and contestation for other extra-economic processes and relations, too. Like practices of urban planning, the strategic dimensions of land administration structure prospects of future administration and regulation of space. Centuries of *gult* tenure privileged highland elites and a few years of expropriations of land under the Derg led to the current moment in Ethiopia, in which government undertakes a kind of maximalist approach to land policy. Land certification schemes aim to improve tenure security in some areas, while new dams and highways bring about displacement and erode tenure security in other areas. While imagining that some rural land transfers will be the basis

monitoring.

The one-to-five network serves as a forum for exchange of concerns, priorities, problems and decisions related to the health status of women, which was designed to empower women in particular and the family in general in health decision making leading to democratization of health and to community partnership (Hailay and Awash 2013: 6).

According to colleagues at the AAU, a “development army” was being introduced in universities while I was in the field. At the level of departments, a cluster of five faculty members was meant to gather and exchange views. One of them making a report on ongoing research to a department chair, who would in turn pass this to university administrators. While ostensibly introduced to enhance research quality and to facilitate discussion, this system has been widely viewed as an attempt at gathering information on the political commitments of attendees.

for new commercial farms and their associated infrastructures, government tacitly accepts displacement as an aspect of development policy, even as outlined in PASDEP.

The EPRDF's most significant engagement with the land question by far has been in large-scale transfers of agricultural land to foreign firms. In some respects, the transfers are but part of a broader continental turn toward private-led agricultural policy. Global investors – including many firms that would become famous in Africa, but were virtually unknown in their home countries – undertook cheap, large-scale land leases in 12 countries in Africa, including Ethiopia (Cotula 2013), as well as a few countries in Asia.²² In Ethiopia, large-scale land transfers began in 1998 for coffee concessions in SNNPR, but by 2012, they had unfolded in eight of Ethiopia's nine regions – all but the small, relatively arid region of Harar (Keeley et al. 2014) – and followed PASDEP's vision for diversification of exports. Global demand for land access increased substantially with the global financial crisis of 2008-9, since resulting price shocks and food shortages caused investors to look for stable new assets. One estimate of Ethiopia's leased lands exceeded 1 Million hectares transferred between 2005 to 2012 (Keeley et al. 2014), whereas another study counted 3.6 Million hectares between just 2008 to 2011, an area comparable in size to the Netherlands (Human Rights Watch 2012). By 2011, Ethiopia announced that it had completed deals with investors from 36 countries²³ (Vidal 2011). Indian

²² Leasing Ethiopian land has been extraordinarily cheap. According to the first landmark study on transfers, the minimum price for leased land was B14.21 (roughly \$1) per hectare per year in Amhara, and the maximum price was B135 (roughly \$7) per hectare per year (Dessalegn 2011: 15). Dessalegn's interview with one investor revealed they regarded these costs as little more than "throwaway fees." Prices as low as \$1 per hectare were also found by Davison (2013).

²³ Contrary to assumptions of Chinese influence in most lucrative new sectors across Africa, there was only one Chinese firm to have signed a land lease in Ethiopia (Cotula 2013). The firm Hunan Dafungyuan entered into a lease for 25,000 hectares for sugarcane production in Gambella, but this was canceled in 2013 (Davison 2013).

and Saudi investors topped the list, while somewhat smaller parcels of land were leased to domestic and diaspora investors near the bottom of the list (Dessaiegn 2011, Keeley 2014).

Land transfers emerged as a course reversal from the Derg era back to something like capitalized plantation-style agriculture of the late imperial era. The land transfers created an instance in which layers and modes of governance came to know their own capacities and epistemic limits. Certainly, many so-called transitional economies since socialism have turned toward a DeSoto/World Bank conception of land as a bankable asset that might liberate the poor and rich alike through private ownership and legally-enforced contracts. But since the EPRDF retained the Derg-era norm of nationalized land in the 1995 Constitution, law allows for lease transfers of land in use rights, while the state remains the final landholder.²⁴ This legal framework has given the government considerable latitude to enter into the land market on its own terms and to engage in opportunistic, iterative experiments in land policy.

Large-scale land leasing has been a vital platform of rural development and an energized set of incentives for foreign investors. But here the roles and opportunities for governance also act in complicated, even contradictory, ways. At the regional and federal

²⁴ Article 40(3) of the FDRE Constitution (1995) lays out the fundamental basis for The Right to Property: The right to ownership of rural and urban land, as well as of all natural resources, is exclusively vested in the State and in the peoples of Ethiopia. Land is a common property of the Nations, Nationalities and Peoples of Ethiopia and shall not be subject to sale or to other means of exchange. In addition, Article 40(6) specifies the usufruct rights of private investors: Without prejudice to the right of Ethiopian Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples to the ownership of land, government shall ensure the right of private investors to the use of land on the basis of payment arrangements established by law... Lastly, Article 40(7) recognizes a distinction between landed property and immovable property and built structures, so that "Every Ethiopian shall have the full right to the immovable property he [sic] builds and to the permanent improvements he brings about on the land ..." This section of Article 40 also recognizes grounds for expropriation, in that "where the right of use expires" there is a right to "transfer his [sic] title, or claim compensation for it."

levels, Ethiopia's government has multiple, interlacing roles as negotiator of contracts, regulator of contracts, and as sole lessor of the land at the heart of the contract. Again, as the final owner of all land, government controls the supply of land entering into the market. Regulatory processes in a federalist system make harmonization across territories a challenge, too, since policy is set at the federal level, while land administration is done at the regional level, and use-rights are negotiated at the local *kebele* level. Across different locales and subject to different contractual agreements, the leases feature a variety of terms. The quality of data on the deals is not always reliable or current (Cotula 2013, Ofodile 2015).²⁵ The Indian firm, Karutari, has had access to the single largest parcel of leased land at 100,000 hectares in Gambella Region (Davison 2013). They acquired the land sight unseen, only to realize later that 80% of its land was on a flood plain and of little use for farming (*ibid.*). The precise pathways into and out of agricultural land leases have been complicated and at times have shrouded both investors and Ethiopians at large in confusion about the content of land leasing policies.

Federal-level authorization of these transfers were suspended in 2013, with regional authorizations continuing sporadically thereafter. At present, it is not clear if this policy will be broadly acknowledged as a failed experiment, or reformed in some new guise. The prospects for livelihoods and land claims of displaced pastoralists and smallholder farmers are also unclear. While local government uses coercion to back the expropriation and delivery of land,

²⁵ Foreign investors typically are required to have Ethiopian partners and may be required to make ancillary investments in roads, airstrips, housing or other infrastructures near their holdings. At other times, important amenities and tax breaks are extended to them. Some contracts require foreign firms to reserve shares of crops for emergency distribution in times of food scarcity. Often, attempts to scale up production run into stringent controls on the import of harvesters and other machinery, hardly any of which is manufactured locally or easily repaired locally. Government reserves the right to nullify leases if employment targets are not met or if crop yields are too low.

officials typically deny using force, or claim that villagization programs are broadly popular alternatives to villages and other settlements lacking modern infrastructures and services (Human Rights Watch 2012). In some areas, resentment of foreign seasonal worker-managers has led to various forms of resistance (Tsegaye 2015), even including sabotage and attacks on foreign-owned farms and farm workers (Davison 2016, Keeley 2014).

In search of capacity: Infrastructure-led development

Recent years have seen a new trajectory in national development planning, as Ethiopia's government seeks to leverage cheap labor, commodities and natural resources in its entry into various global markets. An almost banal intent here has been "to build an economy which has a modern and productive agricultural sector with enhanced technology and an industrial sector that plays a leading role in the economy" (FDRE Ministry of Finance, n.d.). In the main, this has meant the cultivation of several partners, either in the form of firms or state-owned enterprises, for the investments they can make. Foreign direct investment increased from \$1.2 Billion in 2010/11 to \$2 Billion in 2014/15, with Turkey, China, and India being the first, second and third investors, respectively (FDRE 2016: 19).

In carving out a place for the demands of new investors, national development planning has broadened interventions across new sites and scales. Classic objects of development, such as a better road for local transport or fertilizer for smallholder farmers, have long been presented as enhancing the productivity in particular localities. Transforming rural production was the key to the global marketplace, and may remain so for the near term. But

today the larger-scale objects of infrastructure-led development build capacity for multiple sectors, networked places, and newly rescaled flows of many kinds. The classic representation of marginalized people in rural peripheries contending with powers radiating from the *ketema* is perhaps less accurate today than in the past. A new geography of institutionalization and modernization in Ethiopia now resides “in concrete things”, as Haile, a professor of planning described. Urban spaces are more and more significant stages for this transformation. Infrastructure-led development fuses sectors together in new ways, so that different sectors can confer new capacities on each other. Among the many processes that are linking sectors together, I refer here to two sites emerging in various sites across Ethiopia: urban corridors and dams.

(1) Urban corridors of light manufacturing, shipping and transport

New urban corridors in Ethiopia are the site of many transformations of the light manufacturing, shipping, and transport sectors. This change is generally occurring along the classic east/west axis stretching from Addis Ababa across national borders to the port in Djibouti. Growth has been most intense along an emerging 25 km urban corridor between Addis Ababa and the growing city of Bishoftu, in Oromia, where prominent factories and shipping yards lie. Industrial zones have been built along the fringe of large cities like Addis Ababa and Hawassa, and industrial parks have been built in Addis Ababa and Jimma (Ethiopian Investment Commission 2016?).

These agglomerations tether local conditions to the emergence of new global partnerships with the FDRE. Foreign investors and construction financiers such as Turkey, China, India, and the World Bank see promise in the future of labor-intensive light manufacturing (Blattman and Dercon 2016). Three additional industrial parks are currently under construction by Chinese firms on contracts awarded by the Ethiopian Industrial Parks Development Corporation (Kaleyesus 2017). In the industrial parks, firms from China, India, Turkey and Japan pursue their own manufacturing plans with few export constraints and limited income tax, in accordance with the “plug and play” manufacturing model recommended by the World Bank (World Bank 2012). These firms typically produce textiles and leatherwork, since that light manufacturing can be done more cheaply in Ethiopia than in China (*ibid.*), as well as pharmaceuticals, wood, and metals. A variation on these industrial parks are four new “integrated agro-industrial parks” which are master-planned sites under construction in rural Tigray, Amhara, Oromia and SNNP (UNIDO 2016?).

Here, the model of the developmental state is taking on characteristics of a particular manufacturing models, as in the case of *kaizen*. Of course, foreign manufacturers have been warmly welcomed by the Ethiopian government in recent years, as they pursue cheaper manufacturing costs than those in Asia. For its part, the Ethiopian government is eager for a chance to demonstrate increases in employment and growing capacity in the manufacturing sector. Such globalizing partnerships may be solidifying into policy positions, as in the case of Japanese government’s promotion of the *kaizen* (continuous improvement) management model, which has gained Japan great influence alongside Chinese and other partners. Beginning in 2009, the FDRE Ministries of both Trade and Industry have worked with

the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) – the same agency that produced the *Ethiopia In Motion* film described in the Introduction – to promote *kaizen*. An implementation manual and a special unit at the Ministry of Industry followed to coordinate *kaizen's* uptake (JICA 2011). Ethiopian elites have sought to learn from Japanese modernization, a pathway seemingly unsullied by European colonization, dating back to the early years of Haile Selassie's rule (Bahru 2001).

Yet there are reasons to question the viability of these foreign manufacturing models and even the desirability of factory work Ethiopia. Ishiwata noted that in post-socialist Ethiopia, promoting *kaizen* is challenging, since “power is mainly concentrated in the hands of a top manager” and mitigates against the more open-ended dialogues that are so crucial to *kaizen* (Ishiwata in Asayegn 2011?: 4). Moreover, in a recent study of a handful of new factories, Blattman and Dercon (2016: 4) found high turnover and low levels of satisfaction among workers:

Young people used low-skill industrial jobs more as a safety net than a long-term job, and where self-employment and informal work were typically preferred to, and more profitable than, industrial jobs, at least when people had access to capital. More worryingly this industrial safety net seems to have come with serious health risks. Even short spells in industry resulted in significant increases in serious health problems a year later.

For the time being, many workers appear to prefer the flexibility and higher earnings of informal work to factory work (*ibid.*).

With the rise of light manufacturing has also come the upgrading of Ethiopia's national highway system and national rail. The most spectacular example of the new highway

infrastructures is the new six-lane expressway supporting an increase in large trucks, as well as national and international drivers. The initial stretch of this expressway opened in 2014 from Addis Ababa to Adama, with Bishoftu at its halfway point. A second southerly expressway connecting Mojo to Hawassa is under way at the cost of \$700 Million (Fasika 2017). A third expressway extending eastward from Adama to Awash will be completely financed by the China Export-Import Bank and done by a Chinese firm (*ibid.*). While the west/east national rail axis was introduced in Menilek's time, the system is being massively overhauled in new rail beds extending from Addis Ababa to Djibouti City's port on the Red Sea.

Ultimately, these extensive road and rail projects anticipate future connectivity to other infrastructures across Ethiopia's national borders. The East African Community (EAC) fosters these possibilities for integration. Ethiopia sits at the northern edge of a proposed rail network of the East African Railways Master Plan promoted by EAC. In the future, they would link Addis Ababa with locales across South Sudan, DRC, Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, and Zambia. New infrastructures would enhance capacities for shipping, and strengthen linkages between a few Indian Ocean ports, especially Kenya's port under construction at Lamu, as well as the cities, entrepôts, and manufacturing centers of landlocked countries in the EAC (UN-HABITAT 2014).

(2) Dams as catalysts for water, energy and agriculture

Another profound example of Ethiopia's search for capacity is the dam, which enable many kinds of flows at once. Dams catalyze the water, energy and agricultural sectors at new scales. As hydropower, dams produce capacity for Ethiopia's rural electrification programs,

may stabilize power supply amid large-scale construction projects, and may generate power to neighboring countries. Dams also produce stores of water that today enable irrigation prospects for which past governments lacked capacity. To the satisfaction of foreign and domestic investors in Ethiopian agricultural land, these irrigation programs support commercial production of crops such as rice, coffee, oil seeds and cut flowers. These crops are typically exported and take the benefits of irrigated water with them. Dams are hinges that fit local ecologies to nationally- and globally-scaled demands.

A national push for dams extends across regions, from the Tekezé River in Tigray, to the lakeside project by Lake Tana in Amhara, to the Omo Delta in SNNPR. But the ultimate application of this infrastructure has been the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD). The EPRDF and its international partners broke ground for this dam in a remote area of the Amhara region²⁶ in 2010. Projected to be completed in 2018, the GERD is expected to become the largest dam in Africa and the eighth-largest in the world (Salini 2016, Verhoeven 2016). The means of financing for the GERD, its overall costs, and the construction process itself, have all been the subject of intense debate about what development in Ethiopia means today and whose interests it advances. Salini Impregilo, a large Italian firm that is the lead contractor of the project put the price tag at €3.38 Billion (roughly \$3.69 Billion), whereas an Ethiopian government press outlet put the number at \$4.7 Billion (Salini 2016?, Gossaye 2017). The GERD

²⁶ This site, relatively close to the border with Sudan, was a practical choice for the projected capacities of the dam. But there is also an unmistakable aura associated with Abbay (Blue Nile) water, too. In ancient times, the headwaters of the Abbay at Lake Tana were associated with powerful water spirits. After the adoption of Orthodox Christianity, many churches and monasteries would later be founded on remote islands in Lake Tana. This remains a site of pilgrimage, as devout Christians still bathe there and bottle its restorative holy waters.

is one of 17 throughout Africa built with assistance from the Chinese government (Verhoeven 2016), and is thus a prominent expression of China's broader "going out" policy and the partnerships that bilateral financial agreements can engender across Africa. However, as Meles put it, the dam is also "a tangible manifestation of Ethiopians' robust commitment to development" (Ethiopian Embassy of London 2011: 12). These financial commitments have taken many forms, from 1.5B Birr bonds (the 2011 equivalent of \$885,000) purchased by a single influential investor-donor, Sheikh Mohammed Alamoudi (*ibid.*), to "pledges" by other citizens (*c.f.* Gosaye 2017), to the requirement that government workers tithe a month's wages to the project (author's note). In principle, these investments would be paid off in new revenue streams through energy exports of €2 Billion, according to Salini (2016?).

Official government outlets hail the GERD as an opportunity for employment and capacity building in different sectors. The Ethiopian News Agency notes that the Ethiopian Metals and Engineering Corporation (METEC) has played a key role in construction alongside Salini, and that construction "... has so far created job opportunities for 11 thousand Ethiopians and 350 expatriates drawn from 32 countries" (Gosaye 2017, n.p.). While the area is heavily securitized and generally shielded from popular view (author's note)²⁷, the visibility of the impressive dam is assured a virtual life through its representation in many media channels.

²⁷ Several journalists confirmed for me that day-long visits to the GERD are possible and are convened periodically for groups. One typically joins a tour on the basis of invitations from government officials. During these closely managed tours, journalists are addressed by a team of expert engineers and government officials, but they are not left unattended to explore on their own or to address workers. A significant portion of the day-long tour is spent driving from and returning to a separate facility of purpose-built barracks, effectively shortening the site visit. A combination of Ethiopian and foreign workers are contractually obligated to remain in a special work camp adjacent to the dam for months or even years at a time.

Computer-drafted images of the GERD, for example, are ubiquitous in advertising, news media, and government media such as billboards. *See Figure 8.*

Figure 8: Anticipating the GERD, Bole Area



A billboard from federal government communications at the top of Bole Road, Mesqel Square area, celebrates Genbot 20, 2006 (May 28, 2014 on the Gregorian calendar), the 23rd anniversary of the victory over the Derg. An Ethiopian map contains a collage of images, including a computer-generated image of the GERD following its completion, suggesting the harmonization of development achievements. *Photo: Benjamin Owen, April 2014.*

Of course, the importance of dam projects in Ethiopia extends far beyond official accounts and timetables to the national politics and geopolitics of water. While elites in both Abyssinian and modern Ethiopian history hoped to intervene in the politics of the Nile Basin by

diverting and using these waters, they never did.²⁸ The strong *keremt* (wet season) rains that feed the Blue Nile in Ethiopia are the source for perhaps 70-80% of the total flow of Nile water in Sudan and Egypt. Of course, as dams disrupt and alter the flow of river systems, they signal prestige and control of space (Verhoeven 2016). They also alter rural and urban Ethiopian livelihoods. Whereas the newly industrialized urban corridors in Ethiopia concentrate their capacities within agglomeration economies, dams project their capacities across vast distances to enable a variety of other projects.

Political frictions, as well as material flows

While the immediate vicinity of the GERD is not densely populated, the Omo Delta in far southwestern Ethiopia is. Here, dams as well as new flood plains have displaced thousands of people, some of whom have been channeled into villagization programs. The Constitution recognizes that “Ethiopian pastoralists have the right to free land for grazing and cultivation as well as the right not to be displaced from their own lands (Art. 40:5).” But for all the talk of local leadership in the development process, the displacement of several indigenous groups in the Omo Delta belies any notion of their consent (Girke 2013, Human Rights Watch 2012), exemplifying the locational conflicts intrinsic to many development projects and the state’s recourse to violence that attends them. According to Girke (2013: 2), local people understand

²⁸ In the 15th Century, the Abyssinian Emperor Zara Yakob famously threatened the Egyptians downriver that he would divert the course of the Blue Nile into the Red Sea – a wildly impractical feat. Later, with hopes to expand cotton production in the 1920s and 1930s, Emperor Haile Selassie undertook negotiations with British, American, and even Italian governments to build a dam at Lake Tana, though no deal was reached (McCann 1981). Egypt would later build its own massive dam by Aswan in the 1950s, and the Blue Nile is central to the diplomatic relations of Egypt and Ethiopia.

the lower Omo to be their “homeland” and a refuge from taxation and government intervention. At the same time, officials of the developmental state have understood the lower Omo as “boundary” between different peoples in the region, and as a “resource” in infrastructure-led development (*ibid.*). In this sense, modernization of infrastructure is a chance to inscribe cultural difference.

While foreign criticism of the developmental state on these grounds has been hotly politicized, planners take a more ambivalent position. As one planner, Tigist, said on the topic of grand visions:

Our proudest moment is the dam, right? The Renaissance Dam. Its of course controversial internationally, but for us its really something we’re proud of. And you would find people saying that this was the vision of Haile Selassie, the King. They even say that – I’ve never seen it, I don’t know whether its true or not – but people tell me that the dam was just sketched and designed on one of his notes. Done. Being visionary is obviously important.

Here, Tigist shows some of the reverence for high modernist visions that attended Haile Selassie’s rule, while acknowledging that a project like the GERD is “controversial internationally.” Still, she claims that “being visionary is obviously important” in the face of opposition. Binyam also suspends his judgment on this megaproject, in part because of his cautious expectations of its success:

One thing which makes me happy now is [*pauses 5 beats*] things are going in the right direction. They may not be democratically [legitimate], but whatever happens, the government is concerned on the development of the country. You know, sometimes as a government, you will be concerned about yourself as well, because

if things go out of control, if you cannot provide food on the table of every citizen today, in 5 years, you know that's going to backfire. So this whole development of the Millennium Dam, electrification of the country, exploring different sources of income, etc., is part of this concern for the national development ... I would say, that if the government [... can ...] realize the advantage of this planning approach, it would be a success. But I don't know if that's going to be the reality, because you see, there are ... so many unpredictable factors that can hinder the success of these kinds of men.

There is a strong connection here between "being visionary" and the interests both of a government and its people in any development strategy that would not "backfire."

If foreign observers fail to appreciate this logic, it is still the mainstay of explanations by the EPRDF leadership. The Oakland Institute, one of the staunchest foreign NGO critics of the EPRDF, warns of the "irreversible consequences" of Omo Valley development both for the environment and its "rich cultural traditions," as well as the "livelihood" and rights of agropastoral peoples there (Oakland Institute 2011: 4, 5). In response to foreign critics as much as to their criticisms, Meles claimed that "they don't want to see developed Africa; they want us to remain undeveloped and backward to serve their tourists as a museum ... These people talk about the hazard of building dams after they have already completed building dams in their country" (Meles in Moszynski 2011). Here, Meles asserts a sovereign claim to the same developmental pathways as those adopted in the West. But instead of presenting the developmental state as a mimic of Western industrialization, he presents development as a rejoinder to the trope of the *museo di populi* long assumed in the Western colonial order. The key claim here is that the developmental state is uniquely capable of protecting culture and livelihoods of Ethiopia's peoples, and must be defended from domestic or foreign critics.

While domestic criticisms are also common, they lead to different effect. There seem few public occasions when officials do not see fit to defend the credibility of the developmental state. In 2014, I attended an interdisciplinary conference at the University of Hawassa on the theme of Culture, Technology and Development. During one panel, an Ethiopian graduate student in anthropology presented evidence from his study on displacement from dam construction in the Omo Delta. In noting many of the exclusionary qualities of such high modern development, he was decidedly more critical than Tigist or Binyam above. When his presentation was over, a Dean who had been sitting in the front raised his hand and said, "I must reserve two minutes." During discussion, the session chair recognized the Dean first. Standing at the front of the room, he questioned the graduate student and claimed that the student's presentation was imbalanced because it lacked discussion of any of the benefits of the dam. The graduate student replied that he could not include such discussion in his study because his informants gave no evidence that they had seen them. The Dean went on to question the graduate student's credibility and the reliability of data within the discipline of anthropology as a whole. He positioned himself as the voice of authority in this way a few times throughout the conference. Other attendees later informed me that the Dean had recently been appointed to his position and they understood the core of his job to be reinforcing party interests at the university. He was rumored to be seeking a promotion into federal government.

Another concern which undercuts consent derives from the networked nature of the production and conveyance of electrical power encompassing urban, as well as rural sites. Shortages constrain prospects for the pace and organization of development programs. In

Ethiopia's cities, power and water outages abound, even as more dams are being produced that would seem to respond to both problems. In his research on infrastructure in the city of Jimma, for example, Daniel Mains (2012a) noted an intensification of power outages, even as a local dam seemed to be full of water and its turbines were functioning properly. The absence or breakdowns of infrastructure may give foreign observers cause for Afro-pessimism, and cause frustration and uncertainty for locals. Rumors about the outages and attempts to adapt to them are a weekly, if not daily, occurrence. Reliable flows of energy, water and telecom infrastructures have an inverse function: their absence continues to order the relations of people, places and things.

To varying degrees, such outages can be managed and channeled. In Qebena neighborhood, I often heard suggestions about these outages from neighbors, backed by more or less plausible accounts. I heard that electrical outages were caused by weak Chinese parts prone to failure. I heard that demand for power simply was growing faster than supply, while major construction projects surged in the city. At times, it seemed to me that occasional power outages were not distributed through the whole city, but magnified in certain districts. The Bole area, home to wealthier residents, embassies, and larger commercial properties, was strategically spared the worst of the outages while the lack of power was distributed among other areas. Qebena is an older area in the northeast of Addis Ababa that had only seen some new construction in the last decade. *Kebele* representatives sometimes would apprise residents of these outages in advance, and sometimes even the reasons for them. But they could not apprise us of all the countless power outages. There never seemed to be one reason for all outages, or a clear pattern of them. Some lasted a few hours, while other outages lasted up to

four days. At such times, only a few large businesses on the main roads were able to function by virtue of privately owned power generators. Other businesses would rely on candlelight to stay open at night, or close. While telecom services and the power grid operated independently of each other, but sometimes both would be down at the same time.

At other times, I heard that these various outages were deliberate, and motivated because of security concerns. When the death of Alemayehu Atomsa, the President of the Oromia Region, was announced in March of 2014, I noted that the network in Addis Ababa was down for three days, as armed federal police emerged at key locations throughout the city. While Ethio-telecom has at different times suspended internet services for several days on the grounds that it is protecting the integrity of college entrance exam testing, some suspect other security-oriented reasons for the outages (Hern 2017, Schemm 2016). Human Rights Watch has found that “the government can very easily turn off phone and Internet networks whenever it perceives a threat. It has used this ability to impact peaceful protests throughout the country, during counter-insurgency operations in the Ogaden, and during and after sensitive elections” (Human Rights Watch 2014: 49). According to one former engineer for Ethio-telecom, shut-offs can be achieved at precise times and locations, down to the scale of a five-minute outage along Bole Road, the common route for diplomatic motorcades (*ibid.*).

Evidently, the FDRE’s centralization of the means for management of certain infrastructures and services opens up particular possibilities for influencing and securitizing society. This goes beyond monitoring through the one-to-five system, or technological means of eavesdropping, to the nullification of access to infrastructure by anyone. In a certain sense, the

management of these infrastructures is of course decentralized according to federalist territoriality. But provisions are vertically integrated according to policy production and administration from the federal level down to the local. All this generates a particular kind of uncertainty as to whether government is failing to plan for shared and rationed use of infrastructures, or somehow calculating against the possibility of political contestation.

Conclusion

The shift from a rural regional development bias to infrastructure-led development confers new capacities on a variety of sectors and produce new territories of governance. In the case of labor mobilization in rural areas, intimate negotiations at public meetings secure local consent for the improvement of particular localities. These gestures are backed by implicit threats of coercive force or of the withdrawal of material support from farmers. In the case of new large-scale land transfers, new commercial farms are a reversal of the Derg agrarian development agenda that had resettled and concentrated people together in agricultural cooperatives. So apart from these interventions, infrastructure-led development furthers a new geography of sites and situations that convey capacities across the rural/urban divide, and across regional or even national boundaries. As they extend, they erode previous socio-spatial practices and enable some new possibilities for governance done from increasingly remote sites. The developmental state is able to present itself as uniquely capable of delivering development and to be present across sectors, sites and scales in ways that previous

governments could not. Massive redevelopment of Addis Ababa is the local manifestation of this broader geography of national development.

Chapter 4. Knowledges and Practices of Urban renewal

Introduction

At the corner of the Arat Kilo roundabout in Addis Ababa, the everyday role of connectivity and design is evident. Each weekday, tens of thousands of commuters board buses and minibuses here. Students arrive for high school and university campuses. Shoppers go to stationers, grocers, cafes, coffeehouses, bookshops, leafy garden restaurants. Along the street, microbusiness stands line the exterior walls of these buildings, each with their own small roofs. Current or recently graduated university students, most of them men, arrive each day to look at billboard postings for jobs with companies, universities and foreign-funded NGOs. **See Figure 9(a-b).**

Here, from tables propped slightly off the sidewalk, Arat Kilo's news sellers can be found. They provide all the local newspapers, in Amharic and English, as well as new and used magazines, study guides and reference books. They also offer a secondary service in photocopies of job postings which are stapled together into packets. One rents a packet of job listings for a few minutes to review it, then returns it. Competition for a professional job is intense and the chances of landing one are low. But whatever it is worth, the packets are an affordable and comprehensive way to keep up with announcements.

I observed that the constancy of these news vendors on the street as being nearly as essential to their business as well as the goods they sell. Six days a week, from sun-up to sun-down, they provide an information infrastructure, impervious to moments when Ethio-telecom

goes down, and or power outages that can close nearby internet cafes. Vendors sometimes eat at their tables and when one needs to leave, a partner picks up from them. When police occasionally sweep through Arat Kilo in search of illicit vendors, many run with their goods wrapped up in small tarps or bags. But the news sellers, like the dozen *listros* (shoe-shiners) at their own stands around the corner, have permits from the *kebele* and so they stay put. At times, while traffic moves by in the street, every person in the small crowd is silent at once, reading, thinking, or jotting down notes. Public cultures of reading and middle-class aspiration thrive.

These activities suggest that planning epistemologies find their object. A built environment can only be distinguished from the rest of the city through the simplifications of solids and voids, stocks and flows, centers and edges. But beyond the intended purpose of helping people across a busy road, though, the cool shade cast by the overpass more subtly supports public gathering. Amid the emphasis on infrastructure and megaprojects and the things that are so crucial to the development process in Ethiopia today, these everyday uses of infrastructure are easily overlooked. Of course, next to these ineffable modes of connectivity, planners and designers continue imagining a new order for the city through drawings, maps, tables, indices, or land use models.

Crossing Arat Kilo, whether by the overpass or by jumping the guardrail and stepping through traffic at the roundabout, one passes a few tall government buildings. After a few more paces, one comes to what is left of Eri Bekentu. This neighborhood has an entirely different sort

of landscape: jagged forms of demolished ones-story buildings and skeletons of new, taller, more imposing replacements. The only people in this part of Eri Bekentu are construction

Figure 9(a-b): Everyday social infrastructures of information, Arat Kilo



Photos: Author, 2014.

workers, pedestrians walking through, or a few people who live rough in the demolition ruins. Before demolitions and new construction began in Eri Bekentu, it was widely thought to be one of the more dangerous parts of the city. In 2012, I walked through Eri Bekentu after a major round of demolitions, accompanied by Hilano, a young professional who lived in the area with his mother in a small apartment complex. Hilano advised me against going beyond a certain point toward the river. He said a woman had been robbed and killed by a local gang there. On his account, even suspected local police felt afraid to enter the area. Yet in most respects, Hilano did not seem particularly concerned about his own well-being and was satisfied to continue living in the area with his mother until they would be forced to leave. Later, a planner named Binyam told me that the master planning round of 2012 began in an office building in Eri Bekentu. But he also told me the office had been moved because planners did not feel safe crossing into and out of the parking lot at the foot of the building.

In countless observations like this, urban form in massive redevelopment different worlds stand just adjacent to each other. The work of renewal is done in relation to street-level practices, whether infrastructure has been taken up at Arat Kilo, or if it can only be demolished in modernization just across the road. Planning epistemologies are present in the adaptations of urban space for assembling, selling, reading and aspiring at Arat Kilo, as well as the stakes of urban renewal that are dramatically raised in places like Eri Bekentu. The planner's imperative is not just to arrange objects in urban space, but to govern through urbanism: to fashion an improved everyday life beyond objects. New possibilities in the city are still emerging and the contours of this new urban order are still unknown. If planners had a tenuous grip on the city in

the past, their capabilities to reshape space in the city have become an undeniable feature of governance today.

This Chapter explores the knowledges and practices of urban renewal that are central to the massive redevelopment of Addis Ababa. Renewal is in many ways the local manifestation of the broader infrastructural turn in development described in Chapter Three. In exploring the ways that urban renewal is carried out, the major contention here is that planners are thinking actors who balance competing notions of order. In mediating between the materiality of the city and the inner workings of the local state, planners have to learn from and engage with existing socio-spatial practices in the city. Their work is a craft of negotiation between different orders more than a science of how and where to impose pure forms and principles.

The Chapter gives an account of the urban renewal program in Addis Ababa in three sections. In the first section of the chapter, I show the enabling role of urban renewal in massive redevelopment, and how slum spaces came to be so significant to this project of governance. I do this by describing three stages in the assertion of political territory, resulting in changing spatialities in the city: (1) longstanding relationships between infrastructure and social mixity in the production of social order; (2) shifts in slum epistemology and the growth of governance capacity in Ethiopia; (3) an emerging zonal spatiality in the city after massive redevelopment. In the second section of the chapter, I explain the functioning of the urban renewal complex, and how it enrolls land and housing policies of the developmental state. The

third section of the chapter treats planners who seek to influence the municipality by suggesting upgrading plans as potential alternatives to renewal.

Urban renewals and massive redevelopment in Addis Ababa

In Addis Ababa, planning never quite produced the differentiation of sectors, social classes or urban quarters. There was no long legacy of colonial urbanism or other such means of master planning to produce space. While the rules of private real estate markets have gradually begun to produce new social and residential geographies in the age of massive redevelopment, for most of the city's history, the vast majority of residents have simply been too poor to buy or rent at market rates. Chapter Two describes that until 1974 the ownership of land was almost entirely vested in the Orthodox Church and in wealthy aristocratic families. There have long been tendencies throughout Addis Ababa for the clustering of certain trades, markets, and residents. There are several blocks of hardware, plumbing, and electronics shops in Kazanchis, tall shopping malls featuring imported clothes along Bole Road, and the massive recycling and petty trading networks of Mercato—almost an *entrepôt* within the city. There are clusters marked by ethnic and regional associations, as in the Tigray Christians living close to the Teklehaimanot Church by Piassa, or Somali Muslims who predominate in the Bole Mikael area near the southern ring road. But such tendencies toward clustering did not rise to the level of lasting spatial differentiation.

Through the everyday uses and demands of its poor majority, the city's fabric has been kept permeable, and open to low-cost adaptations and innovations. Without blocks and

grids, an accretion of vernacular and affordable materials and designs has characterized most neighborhoods. This reflects something of Asef Bayat's (1997) formulation: a "quiet encroachment of the ordinary" proceeds and flourishes so long as it is beyond the grasp of state action. When material opportunities of state intervention are limited, evasive tactics are safer and more durable than direct confrontations with the state. For example, the form of the *chereka bet* (moonlight house) has been refined in recent years, often emerging in settlements at the fringes of the city where governance of land can be weakest (Heisel and Bisrat 2012a). The foundations and exterior features of these one-story homes are built in just one night, often by a small team of specialist builders. Together, the intensive, hard work of the builders and the adjacency of the completed home to existing structures create an impression of it being just one of the other homes in a dense settlement. This makes it easier for occupants to evade detection by *kebele* officials. To be clear, such a structure may not evade notice or sanction forever and may be demolished. Nor is this model of construction something that could scale up to address structural problems in housing sectors or the urban economy. Instead, what evasive tactics like this do is allow people to interpose themselves within the material and socioeconomic streams of city life, and thus to find their bearings in jarring and unpredictable circumstances.

Examining such everyday socio-spatial practices through the optic of formality/informality poses compelling, yet distorted, opportunities for understanding cities. Planning's formalizing impacts have become an indispensable institutional means of rethinking and reregulating the city. Planners are municipal employees who work within legally proscribed guidelines of both municipal and federal governance. Their projections for economic growth

refer to government census data collected by surveys of federal workers. When they prepare their own studies, they rely on spatial data from sub-city workers. Planners no longer focus on intervening in several parts of Addis Ababa alone, but take up the grander ambition of rethinking the whole of Addis Ababa in relation to a regional context, which is also in flux. This broadening purview reflects the organizational capacity of EPRDF-era government institutions, which align across scales, and in many ways link urban situations to federalist notions of territory. In all these ways, planners could be said to be formalizing existing relations.

Still, this formal/informal dichotomy occludes many of the historical contingencies that continue to produce urban space. The dichotomy suggests an image of a unified state operating “from above” while a range of messy informalities sits idly, awaiting good governance “from below”. But that image anticipates the city already in some sense fixed in place by massive redevelopment. The record of Addis Ababa’s history shows that signs of the formal and the informal have been entangled. Affordability and necessity outmatched official visions for order in Addis Ababa. But as Chapter Two described, weak and patchy urban governance under the Derg opened up a glaring paradox. The predominant typology of housing in the city, often glossed in the literature as “informal housing stock,” was expropriated by the state in 1974 and redistributed as state-owned rental units, just as the property of Ethiopia’s wealthy elites. So the moment that *kebeleyoch* became landlords to the poor, local government muddied what might be called the formal and informal distinction. Further decay of housing in the following years could then be ascribed to state neglect. After the Derg, a crisis in urban housing and infrastructure would be inherited by the current EPRDF regime. Since the 1990s, at both local and federal scales, the EPRDF has probed policy arenas for ways to disentangle itself

from responsibilities to this dilapidated housing. While the municipality sought to deal with squatting through “periodic demolition” and “partial regulation,” squatting proliferated (Minwuyelet 2005: 24).

The formal/informal distinction also lacks specificity as regards the regulation of social and economic practices. In Addis Ababa, like a great many cities in the world, a cash economy often extends beyond taxation or other regulatory capacities. Like other forms of economy, this cash economy is always embedded in social relations and politics (see Polanyi 1944, Gibson-Graham 2006). In order to cope with pervasive and extended situations of poverty, food scarcity, and uncertainty about the future, many socio-spatial practices have been employed and refined in Addis Ababa. Not all of them would be counted as work in a conventional sense or could be easily regulated. Work could be regular and even salaried, but for many paid work was profoundly contingent. Temporary or seasonal service work is common, as in the traditionally male service arenas of construction²⁹, driving, delivery, or guarding. Day labor connected with small-scale demand, too, as in home production of food or drinks like *tella* (traditional beer), petty trading of food and materials; waste processing through scavenging, rag-picking, recycling and reselling; foraging (especially for fuel wood); livestock

²⁹ While division of labor and pay are gendered in numerous ways, Ethiopian women are present in many sectors and highly visible in the city. Women and men both run small shops. Sewing and tailoring may be men’s work or women’s work. With more demand for low-skilled workers on construction sites, low-skilled women workers have been a common presence on construction sites. In some cases, this may be mandated for the small and microenterprises that the state engages for condominium construction. When women are present in a variety of government agencies, they are overrepresented in clerical and support roles, but underrepresented in programmatic roles. Planning is little exception here, though the number of women in planning is on the rise.

herding and selling; sewing, tailoring, hairstyling or other craft work; and domestic service through cleaning and child care.

Less desirable work often took the form of dirty work. After the fall of the Derg and the onset of structural adjustment, permanent jobs became more scarce, so that the city's "poor and even destitute" majority became "either unemployed or work[ing] in extremely low-paid jobs" (Degefa 2010: 179). Government work in particular remains sought after, especially when some of the most available work is dirty and undesirable, and thus a marker of one's immobility and low social status (Mains 2012b). Dirty work, such as shoe-shining, has been a mainstay for boys and young men arriving from the countryside, and may be imagined as a transitory form of work before the "real work" in the city begins. One's neighbors and family back home might be spared the indignity of knowing about it.

Even though certain forms of work are illegal, they persist and are sometimes openly tolerated. On the other hand, though some activities pose health and safety risks. While often topics of debate, they are not always subject to regulation.³⁰ For some, begging and theft have

³⁰ My everyday experiences led to many observations on complex relationships between social order, risk and regulation in the city. Of course, such occasions were colored by my otherness, as a white *farengi* man. On many occasions, while walking in the city, I came into contact with illicit, street-level economies, such as offers of prostitution and currency trading. I learned by experience that according to the time of day, my being alone, and my proximity to certain shops, my affect seemed to mark me either as a likely customer or as a pushover, or perhaps both. On a couple of occasions, my being a car passenger could trigger a shakedown by local police for small amounts of bribe money.

A more immediate concern came from those moments when I was the target of pickpocket attempts. Usually this was done by children operating in pairs or small groups, or sometimes by young men working together. This happened in different sorts of neighborhoods, either when I was alone, or sometimes if I was walking with friends. I did lose a cellphone in one case. But usually I found ways to rebuff would-be thieves and I was never assaulted. One night, while walking alone at night, as a group of young men were walking near me, a man asked if I felt afraid to walk in the neighborhood. I cautiously said I was not, and that I liked to walk and felt safe. They simply wished me well and said they were glad that I enjoyed my time in Ethiopia. The cumulative impact of such encounters verified for me a sense that a *farengi* like me could never really blend in.

been a means of livelihood and yet are not really in this category. Begging is widely tolerated, and it is undertaken by many people, but especially single mothers, elderly or ill or disabled people, or orphaned children. Norms of piety and mutuality countenance support for the poor, at least until such begging is perceived as a serious annoyance or threat. One might beg alone, or as part of a family network or gang, in which case proceeds from a shared territory may be distributed, and might be coerced to take part in such activities, or might do so as a less coerced choice. Swindling is also a common, though more amorphous, livelihood. Such practices can entail greater degrees of risk than other forms of work, but also can lead to quick pay.

Since residents of Addis Ababa have sought to contend with scarcity in many ways, pooling and redistributing cash and other resources present crucial and resilient tactics. For example, certain stakes in social networks secure access to foods, resources and places from which to work. Without state-led social protections, bank lending, or insurance mechanisms,

Often, I was warned by Ethiopians not to walk the streets alone, not to use busses, and not to trust all taxi drivers. One refrain among older people I met was that less scrupulous young people, especially young men, were arriving in the city all the time from the countryside, and had brought a kind of opportunism to the city which was changing it for the worse. A US Embassy official that briefed me on safety made a similar case. Whatever my discomforts and fears, I knew from my experiences that the risks of going around the city alone were relatively minor and that Addis Ababa *felt* safe compared to most other cities I had been in. I believe that some of the features that marked me as an outsider may also have meant I had some privileges accorded to a foreign passport, and thus I was insulated me from the risks of life in the city. In any case, my encounters in the city worked against the grain of many of the stories I had been told. Perhaps I was skillful or choosy in my maneuvers, and perhaps I was just lucky. While I may have been an outsider on the street, I was at the most a temporary novelty, and usually not a lasting presence.

Stories of street hassles, harassment or attempted robberies told by other foreigners (and in a few cases, assault) informed my perceptions in a few ways. They also left me feeling quizzical and, I admit, even self-righteous. I found myself questioning the motives of the *farengi* protagonists in these stories. The raced or classed or even ableist discomfort of Westerners living in a large African city can be profound, and I did not usually enjoy hearing another *farengi* tell negative or fearful stories about Ethiopians when they came in place of curiosity. However, I also would share stories of my own discomfort with Ethiopian and *farengi* friends when I would try to grapple with the meanings of them.

savings have been rare and often impossible. Instead, community-based credit networks have flourished for decades. These networks include the *idir* (burial association) which give families the flexibility to properly receive neighbors during the mourning period on short notice, and the *iqub* (savings association) with a more regular timetable to help in home building or other ventures. At times, these neighborhood-level institutions also open pathways for certain marginalized people to acquire stakes in neighborhood leadership, such as disabled women. Recently, for those with relatives abroad or wealthier family elsewhere in country, remittances also have become an important supplemental income, too, and often people find illicit ways of moving such money. Currency trading often intersects with illicit financial networks, some of which I observed to operate in the open.³¹ All these tactics for the concentration and exchange of money do not stop at cash itself. Work is also buttressed by even more ‘properly’ social and customary reciprocities, such as the caring relations of families and kin, and the religious duties of charity in Orthodox, Sunni and other religious communities. This discussion of diverse socio-spatial practices in the section below I stress the interactions and circulations that have contributed to social order in extremely challenging and cash-poor circumstances.

Urban spatiality (1) Infrastructure and mixity in the production of social order

³¹ I found myself a bystander in an illegal currency exchange when my Ethiopian friend Sisay took me on a walk in a leafy, central area of the city. We entered a simple shop that appeared to be a convenience store. In a typical *souk*, a range of other products would usually lie throughout many shelves, bins, and boxes. But here there were just a few stacks of freeze-dried noodle packets in neat rows on a countertop, and a few bottled drinks in a cooler, and a loan attendant sitting alone quietly. When Sisay set a few Euro notes on the counter, I realized the arrangement of these items was just a ruse. After negotiating the rate, the attendant went to a back room to count out the appropriate amount of Birr. As we walked out, Sisay expressed no worry, and told me this was her favorite place for currency exchange. Such encounters may be illegal, but they are also ordinary.

Social order in the neighborhoods of Addis Ababa have long been produced through two urban orders, or two registers that lie adjacent to each other. The interplay of the two not preceded the institutionalization of planning, and thus also the recognition of slum spaces. While recent calls for demolition of slum spaces ultimately target both of these two registers, they have outlasted such attempts in the past. These registers also embody the very landscapes that today's planners themselves grew up in and took for granted. For example, Haile, the professor of planning, described himself to me as a "child of the slum". He had rich memories of playing under the gaze of family and neighbors near an area that has recently been demolished in Amist Kilo.

One urban register runs along the city's wide, tarmac roads. These infrastructures have been the primary organizing principle for city space for many decades. These roads are professionally designed, measured, graded and paved. Some, as described in Chapter Two, have long been the sites of official processions. As they follow the rolling, hilly topography of the city, main roads attract large commercial buildings, apartment blocks, permanent shops, houses of worship and other impressive and iconic architectures. People find their way along these places in relation to landmarks, squares, intersections, or even the names of notable buildings that used to exist but now have moved, or have been destroyed. If the major roads extend for kilometers, they stick to a rhythm of city squares and roundabouts more than any grid structure. Traffic lights are uncommon and only began to emerge at a few key intersections in 2011 (Author's note), so circulation on roads is typically negotiated by drivers themselves, or sometimes by traffic police at rush hour. At the landscape scale, main roads often feature ground-level cafes, coffee shops, and pastry shops where leisure and commuting intersect.

Circulation into and around these buildings is mediated by many street-level practices. Building owners typically employ guards or parking attendants who join in and also guide street life in front of buildings. These workers are often uniformed. They produce order on public sidewalks, parking lots and even streets by laying claim with boulders, cordons, chairs, as well as words and their own bodies. Customers and certain recognized vendors are welcomed, parking tips are accepted with a quick handshake or salute, and occasionally small receipts are even written out. Guards and parking attendants also sort out undesired or troublesome people, such as beggars, drunks, groups of street children, or certain vendors that are not recognized. In this way, a membrane of private security presses outward from large buildings, marking them as special places in which certain forms of leisure and work are welcome. Others also work at street-level outside of buildings, too, like *listros* (shoe-shiners), car cleaners, taxi drivers, roving young men selling books and phone cards, and roving young women who might sell hot tea or snacks. These workers may help to complement guarding efforts, or they may stay just beyond the security membrane of a large building to derive benefits from its order and the flow of customers. They may also push back against the spatial claims of the guards and claim their own rights to sidewalk and street space.

Just off of the main roads of the city, though, another register thrives and persists across most scales and places. Here, roads are made of large pavestones, whether gravel or dirt, and in recent years some have been repaved with cobblestones in upgrading and beautification schemes. These roads usually are no longer than a few hundred meters and can extend in many directions. They often meander, adjoining to other roads of similar size, but are not typically named. When homes are recognized by the local *kebele*, they feature a metal plate

with a house number instead of an address. This number is used for all municipal purposes, and in principle if someone has a number, they enjoy public provisions of water, electricity, and sewerage. Even smaller homes of one or two rooms may sit adjacent to recognized homes, but without legal access to such services. Most of the city's homes are one story tall, are self-built, and draw from just a few classic materials. Corrugated iron roofing is ubiquitous. *Chika* walls of compressed mud and wood are typical for many small businesses and perhaps as much as 88% of "small houses and sheds" in the city (Heisel 2012: 267). Some older homes originally of royal kin, once part of an original *sefer*, are sometimes found off of the main roads. They can be distinguished by decorative crowns or ornaments on their roofs. But from the main roads or from above, the dense arrangement of so many homes surround them in everyday residential landscapes. **See Figure 10(a-b).**

Figure 10(a-b): Everyday residential landscapes, Qebena



Left: Seen from behind a main road, one-story houses predominate in the neighborhood. In the top-center of the photo, a slightly taller home with a steeper roof dates from the *sefer* era. **Right:** A view from a small residential road of an exterior *chika* wall of a home featuring a stone seating area, as if the road space constitutes its own destination. Chilis have been left out in the small road to dry, in front of a stack of fuel wood and sacks of charcoal. I translate the script on the house, *iwunatna wubt kurat naw*, as reading, "Beauty is certainly vanity." *Photos by Author, 2014 and 2015.*

Slower circulation on small roads opens up the movement of passerby to all sorts of interactions. Greetings, handshakes, hugs, and quick bows during everyday chance encounters are almost constant, as I found while living off of a small road in Qebena. Some roads can sometimes be too narrow or jagged for cars, they can sometimes be more like footpaths. It seems that the the slowness of movement on these roads promotes familial and neighborly projects, such as the searches for security, friendship and belonging. Social and economic spaces of domestic life are exteriorized, and pressed out into yards between adjacent homes, thereby blurring the lines between homes and roads. Even a small yard of a few square meters helps to stretch capacities for social reproduction, as well as production in the cash economy. Here, cooking and cleaning, bathing children, resting, meeting with neighbors, and storing or repairing goods all take place. For many children, these are important spaces of play. Some yards are large enough to allow for the feeding and slaughtering of kept animals, or for car parking.

While yards and small roads enable space for the relations of families and neighbors, fences and gates are crucial boundary markers. Yeraswork (2008) traced the morphology of what he called “inner-city gated communities” and showed they have become the norm since the Derg era. Gates may surround individual homes, or compounds of a few homes, and may be tended by owners, by guards living in a small guard house, or guard dogs. Shared walls or fences sometimes are like sheltering trees that provide a small shop or a small house with the first of their four walls. Sometimes whole roads and cul-de-sacs are gated at night, too. A *kebele*

may install a swinging gate on a road for nighttime security at the behest of residents.³² Spaces of the home, yard and of a small road are thus shared while they are partitioned, and may take up many purposes and apportionments throughout a day.

Across most of the city, then, the neighborhood scale encompasses two registers of urban life that are organized around two adjacent infrastructural forms: main roads and their generally taller buildings, and small roads with homes that house the majority of the city's people. Crossing between the two registers is not an act of trespass or transgression, but a part of everyday circulation. Governance helps to shape both these registers, though legal regulation is just a small part of the many practices that have mediated and negotiated belonging in each. One becomes grounded in the city by interposing oneself into these dense landscapes and the flows and opportunities embedded in them. In extended urban experiences of social and political crisis, which inevitably include crumbling and distended urban infrastructures, an absence of an engaged local state is often described. These coeval registers for the production of space in Addis Ababa, however, have long endured. This complicates the sign of either state engagement or neglect.

Many of the planners who are my informants celebrate the city's built environment as well as the practices born of necessity that have produced it. The Introduction of the dissertation remarked on this local expression of pride. For some planners, such as Tigist, an urban design specialist at EiABC, everyday life in the city is an inspiration for the improvement

³² A guard may be employed to maintain the gate throughout the night, sleeping on site. In the part of Qebena I lived in, many families had fences and gates around their own home, but none had their own guards. Several young men took the gate-minding job on our road for brief stints, and often left because of low pay.

of professional practice. She helped to manage the EiABC's partnership with the Addis Ababa Master Planning Office in its downtown redesign work:

We were talking about what identity was. And the one thing that we were coming up [with] was mixity: the mixity of different income groups, mixity of different ethnic groups, different religions. Mixity is our identity, our quality. The discussion was how to maintain that. You might find people who want to have this gated community outside [the city] where they are going with their cars. But how can we make the downtown accessible for it all? This is the city where it is mixed, that's the quality of it. So I think ... going towards more public elements where it is open for all is one way of actually trying to maintain that mixity.

Tigist describes negotiations of planners that are agonistic; having recognized the mixity that is intrinsic to the city's identity, they also seek to alter the grounds for its continuance.

Modernizing the CBD area is tacitly understood as the goal of these meetings, so the meaningful debate centers on how to produce downtown spaces that are "open for all."

Of course, in Addis Ababa's era of massive redevelopment, mixity is undoubtedly undergoing a rapid, historic transformation. With economic growth and an influx in foreign investment, urban renewal has become the signature program of massive redevelopment in Addis Ababa. When urban renewal clears space, it opens up possibilities for the local manifestation of Ethiopia's infrastructural turn in development. Yet the program of urban renewal must also be read in terms of a new discourse on the spatial order of the two registers just described. Slums have been *discovered* in Addis Ababa as impediments to the rise of a new vision of urban order. In what follows, I argue that this process has partly derived from the thickening of global governance notions of the slum.

Urban spatiality (2): shifting itineraries of slum epistemology

Moralizing discourses on slums have been promulgated by a variety of state actors, policy networks, and by radicals and reformists outside the state. Here, what matters is not so much the multiple definitions of a slum, but the changing itineraries of these definitions and the way they have come to shape (or at least name) policy in Addis Ababa. As slums are typically constructed as disorderly places and proof of the weakness of proper urban governance systems, calls for better governance of them typically hail the superior technical features, hygiene, security, or moral codes associated with middle class and elite society. Such calls may be driven by caring or charitable sentiments of paternalistic concern for the poor, by a demand for spatial justice, or by the selection for law's exclusionary effects. Earlier failures of institutions and infrastructures become the rationale for new, better interventions and former slum spaces become discernible as the space of fresh possibility. For example, the UN-HABITAT describes the original definition of a slum as being "a place *apart from* all that was decent and wholesome" [italics added] (UN-HABITAT 2003b: 9), it is more accurate to consider these areas inextricably linked to class and ethnic inequalities in urban life. Slum improvement discourses typically shift attention from causal accounts to the instrumental question of how best to intervene in slums through either demolition or upgrading.

Social life in slums played a unique role in the foundation of Marxist claims of inequality. Friedrich Engels focused on the gaping inequality of English cities such as Manchester, where a large and impoverished community of Irish migrant workers had settled:

A horde of ragged women and children swarm about here, as filthy as the swine that thrive upon the garbage heaps and in the puddles. In short, the whole rookery furnishes such a *hateful and repulsive spectacle* as can hardly be equaled in the worst court on the Irk. The race that lives in these ruinous cottages, behind broken windows, mended with oilskin ... penned in as if with a purpose ... must really have reached the lowest stage of humanity. This is the impression and *the line of thought which the exterior of this district forces upon the beholder...* In spite of everything, in this year of grace 1844, it is in almost the same state as in 1831! (Engels 1844: 58-59, 60).

Here, the slum is said to reduce the urban poor to a beastly and meaningless existence. Visual cues about the landscape lend the text an authoritative quality. His outrage at the indignities of urban poverty is complemented by the sense that theft, prostitution and drinking act almost as pollutants on the character of residents:

When one considers, apart from the usual consequences of intemperance, that men and women, even children, often mothers with babies in their arms, come into contact in these places with the most degraded victims of the bourgeois regime, with thieves, swindlers and prostitutes; when one reflects that many a mother gives the baby on her arm gin to drink, the demoralising [*sic*] effects of frequenting such places cannot be denied (Engels 1844: 127).

In Engels's accounts, the slum constrains the health and wellbeing of the urban poor and preventing them from joining in revolutionary social formations. Riis' (1891) notion of the "other half" of New York City—its poor, exploited, and immigrant peoples—would present a reformist appeal on similar grounds. The book was illustrated by Riis' own photos, in which he arranged "rogues," "street urchins," prostitutes and other pitiable characters within tenement stairwells, streets and bars. In a later work, *The Battle With The Slum*, Riis reflected on the impact of his work on slum clearances in New York, and exclaimed "We haven't reached the

millennium yet. But let us be glad. A hundred years ago they hanged a woman on Tyburn Hill for stealing a loaf of bread. To-day we destroy the den that helped make her a thief" (Riis 1902: 35). The industrial capitalist Charles Booth (1902) would take aim at London's slums.³³ Booth's long-form studies on poverty relied partly on multicolored "poverty maps" that would render slums visible in new ways and acted essentially as recommended targets for clearance.

Developmentalist framings of slums in our own time extend this Progressive Era lineage, without much of a revolutionary Marxist flair. Expectations of urban disorder have been deployed in a variety of ways and in a variety of cities. In his study of racialized social order in the UK, for example, Stuart Hall (1978) traced how media outlets drew from images of slum spaces as vectors of black criminality. These moralizing representations were indispensable to the formation of new anti-crime discourses in that they "provided the venue of the crime and the background of the criminal" (Hall 1978: 115). Black peoples' everyday lives in the slum were useful in building the consent of white voters in the social and economic reforms of Thatcherism. In the decades that followed, gentrification would later weaken the

³³ In his writing, Charles Booth adopted the metaphor of social disease: he presupposed that the only social "cure" for slums was their demolition.

So long as the low class exists at all, it must evidently lodge somewhere. This class tends (very naturally) to herd together; it is this tendency which must be combated, for by herding together, they—both the quarters they occupy, and their denizens—tend to get worse. When this comes about *destruction is the only cure, and in this neighbourhood [sic] there has been of late years a great change brought about by the demolition of bad property. If much remains to do, still much has been done in the clearing away of vile spots, which contained dwellings unfit for human use, and matched only by the people who inhabited them ...* Meanwhile the inhabitants of the slums have been scattered, and though they must carry contamination with them wherever they go, it seems certain that such hotbeds of vice, misery, and disease as those from which they have been ousted are not again created [ital. added] (Booth 1902: 69-70).

hold of poor, black and immigrant residents on neighborhoods throughout many British cities, and disperse them.

Stigmas around crime and poverty have also been at the root of certain conditions for slum clearance in many African cities as well, though the precise contexts vary. Most notably, in the early 2000s, as Zimbabwe was rocked by debt and new political opposition movements threatened Mugabe's hold on power, he associated crime and disorder with the Mbare area of markets in downtown Harare. Civil codes first drawn up in the Rhodesian era were a ready pretext for anti-poor demolitions of homes and public markets, and the forced "return" of urban dwellers to their supposed proper residences in the countryside. However, the true aim of Operation *Murambatsvina* (Clear the Filth) was partly to break up the urban electoral base of Zimbabwe's largest opposition party (Kamete 2009). Authoritarian views of the slum turn to slum clearance to discipline and disperse slum dwellers.

Today, it is possible to see these discourses assuming a new and emboldened itinerary in the global south. As a post-industrial age dawns in North American and European cities, elites have reclaimed urban space in many ways, especially through the creative destruction of aggressive real estate markets. Iconic public housing experiments of the 1960s once signified proactive alternatives to slums, but nevertheless tended to become stigmatized as zones of criminality and social anomie (Wacquant 2008). For decades, cities have undertaken policies to demolish such infrastructures and thus to disperse their former residents. The tenements that provoked Riis in the late 19th Century live on as the *Lower East Side Tenement Museum*. Without affordable housing options, the housing crisis deepens and the urban poor

find themselves in lengthening waitlists for dwindling reserves of public housing units. The mixed-income housing born of New Urbanism have not kept up with demand. Impoverishment continues and intensifies across cities, suburbs, and small towns, it assumes new geographic expressions. As global urbanization takes a southern turn, geographical imaginaries of the slum are being redeployed, rescaled, and redefined in a new urban governance agenda.

New policy prescriptions for slum interventions emerged in global governance institutions just as Africa's urban revolution began to unfold. For Addis Ababa in particular, these global governance discourses have been crucial to the broader project of massive redevelopment, and the foundation of new urban possibilities. In place of the two adjacent urban registers described above, the recognition of disorderly, unclean and inefficient urban quarters grounded ambitions for a more legible city. In turn, that urban spatiality would be thought amenable to further interventions both by local government and future private sectors in many policy domains.

The lead proponent of slum governance has been the Cities Alliance, "a multi-donor alliance of cities and their development partners" (Cities Alliance 1999: 16) which was initiated by UNCHS (soon to be called UN-HABITAT) and the World Bank. The inaugural publication of Cities Alliance, *Cities Without Slums*, was an attempt to set a common agenda for urban development across the world, unfolding through the year 2020. Rather than grounding their policy recommendations on slums in relation to the fullness of everyday activities or productive capacity in neighborhoods as I sought to present above, the conceptual starting point for the Cities Alliance was through lack and failure:

Slums and squatter settlements lack the most basic infrastructure and services. Their populations are marginalized and largely disenfranchised. They are exposed to disease, crime and vulnerable to natural disasters. Slum and squatter settlements are growing at alarming rates, projected to double in 25 years... Slums are the products of failed policies, bad governance, corruption, inappropriate regulation, dysfunctional land markets, unresponsive financial systems, and a fundamental lack of political will. Each of these failures adds to the toll on people already deeply burdened by poverty and constrains the enormous opportunity for human development that urban life offers. (Cities Alliance 1999: 1).

As the name *Cities Without Slums* makes clear, the Action Plan presupposed slums as territories distinct and separable from cities. More subtly, by showcasing completed urban upgrading programs from around the “developing world,” the plan argued that *urban upgrading* was a preferred alternative to the disruptive impacts of *urban renewal*. Discussion of best practices of upgrading would become an abiding feature of slum governance.

The following year, the UN General Assembly would take up the situation of slums within its emerging policy consensus on “millennial” anti-poverty strategies. The UN Millennium Declaration claimed that “by 2020” the UN will “have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers as proposed in the ‘Cities Without Slums’ initiative” (UNGA 2000). As an aspect of the environmental sustainability, this clause became Target 11 of Goal 7 of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).³⁴ In this way, the governance of slums

³⁴ By 2015, the UNDESA would claim significant global progress in this regard, but reported that progress in Sub-Saharan Africa lagged. “The proportion of urban population living in slums in the developing regions fell from approximately 39.4 per cent in 2000 to 29.7 per cent in 2014” (UNDESA 2015: 7, 52). The study also estimated that some “880 million people” were living in “slum-like conditions in the developing world’s cities” (UNDESA 2015: 9). Extreme poverty appeared to be down globally, though the change had been distributed unevenly. The average of the world’s “developing regions” (here, simply all regions of the world beyond North America and Europe) saw a dramatic dip in the amount of workers in extreme poverty: with 52% in 2000 (in which families subsisted on \$1.25/day or less), and with just 11% projected for 2015 (UNDESA 2015: 18). But sub-Saharan Africa was above average on both counts, with 57% in 2000 and then 36% projected for 2015 (*ibid.*). This unevenness

became an imperative within the UN's cross-cutting development policy focus and held up as a policy target for UN member states, especially those thought to be least developed countries.

In 2003, the UN-HABITAT (2003b) would publish *The Challenge of Slums*, the first ever truly globally encompassing survey of them. From the first sentence of Kofi Annan's forward, the report is full of factual claims, statistical projections, photographs, maps, charts, tables, survey results, and topical sidebars. This report was the imprimatur of new, bolder institutional arrangements that had the capacity to conduct comparative work across many urban locales. This was "boundary work" (Gieryn 1983) that secured an interdisciplinary field of scholarship slum studies for global policy institutions. Instead of grounding slum interventions in moral or political appeals,³⁵ now an epistemic community of specialists already committed to broadly held views of urban transformation would advance and refine indicators.

The UN-HABITAT and a series of partner INGOs and governments then built momentum for the agenda. A kind of natural experiment emerged across many cities, in which universal aims were balanced against particular case studies and situations, and the continual drive to refine slum definitions and indicators continued. Attempts to define slums ranged in their focus from design questions of household infrastructure, to areal considerations, to the extent of government interventions. The UN-HABITAT offered a definition that emphasized infrastructural qualities at the *household* scale:

was underscored in the report's acknowledgement that 80% of the world's "working poor reside in sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia" (*ibid.*).

³⁵ *Slums of the World* acknowledged Riis and Booth as forerunners in the slum policy studies pantheon. A footnote from that report was inspiration for much of Mike Davis' (2006) book, *Planet of Slums*.

UN-HABITAT defines a slum household as a group of individuals living under the same roof in an urban area who lack one or more of the following:

1. Durable housing of a permanent nature that protects against extreme climate conditions.
2. Sufficient living space which means not more than three people sharing the same room.
3. Easy access to safe water in sufficient amounts at an affordable price.
4. Access to adequate sanitation in the form of a private or public toilet shared by a reasonable number of people.
5. Security of tenure that prevents forced eviction. (UN-HABITAT 2006: 1)

Versions of this first definition soon became a standard in the corpus of slum governance. Here, the issue of tenure rights dovetailed with the search for global indicators of adequacy in housing rights, as well as its connection to the right to an “adequate standard of living” in the broader human rights corpus (see comments of UN Special Rapporteur Miloon Kothari in UNHRC 2006, *see also* McClelland 2008).

Two examples of *areal definitions* suggested a push for recognition of slums at the scale of quarters or neighborhoods. One was an early attempt from Cities Alliance that emphasized the multiple causes of slums, whereas the other came from the UN-HABITAT, borrowing in turn from the Merriam-Webster dictionary:

Slums are neglected parts of cities where housing and living conditions are appallingly poor. Slums range from high density, squalid central city tenements to spontaneous squatter settlements without legal recognition or rights, sprawling at the edge of cities. Some are more than fifty years old, some are land invasions just underway. Slums have various names, Favelas, Kampung, Bidonvilles, Tugurios, yet share the same miserable living conditions (Cities Alliance 1999: 1).

‘Slum’ at its simplest, is ‘a heavily populated urban area characterized by substandard housing and squalor’. This definition encapsulates the essential characteristics of slums: high densities and low standards of housing (structure and

services), and 'squalor'. The first two criteria are physical and spatial, while the third is social and behavioral (UN-HABITAT 2003b: 8).

On these views, slums have multiple names and multiple causes. They are not just vestiges of an earlier era of failed governance, but could still be "just underway" in the present. Moreover, these views recognize that relations across many slum households share certain common social practices and common objectives as functional urban units.

The same report, *The Challenge of Slums 2003*, offered a third sort of slum definition. While eluding to the first class of definitions, it also brought government action in to read slums through the formal/informal distinction:

The conclusion is that slums are a multidimensional concept involving aspects of poor housing, overcrowding, a lack of services and insecure tenure, and the indicators relating to these can be combined in different ways to give thresholds that provide estimates of numbers of slum dwellers ... The proportion in Africa is rising rapidly as populations increase and urban housing shortages continue, while it is falling in Latin America due to regularization and slum improvement (UN-HABITAT 2003b: 1).

Not all slums are squatter or illegal settlements, and not all illegal or squatter settlements are slums. Therefore, *legality and resident perception of its relative vulnerability* are important considerations, both to the process and nature of viable development interventions. [ital. added] (UN-HABITAT 2003b: 92).³⁶

³⁶ Compare to a more nuanced approach in UN-HABITAT's *The State of African Cities 2014*. The report claimed "It is, however, important to distinguish between *older dilapidated urban areas and informal settlements*, both of which may be regarded as subcategories of slums requiring different treatment, especially when it comes to the provision of public utilities" [ital. original] (UN-HABITAT 2014: 81.) Many reports reflected the emerging recognition that there was neither a unitary character of slum spaces or a single historical process driving their emergence.

Of course, the aim in drawing up these three sorts of definitions was to ground a set of best practices for upgrading in a way that might travel globally. A desire for intervention is prior to a clear identification of just what slums are or how they are formed, and yet it is this discourse that enables their recognition.

This emerging tradition of slum studies begs two critical concerns. First, while definitions and indicators are basic to the measurement of progress on an agenda for cities without slums, they necessarily leave out many social and historical dimensions of slums. As described in Chapter Two, Addis Ababa's own history suggests a rather unique origin story for slum spaces. Everyday life in such places is complex, and human ingenuity in overcoming physical or spatial dimensions of slums resists easy description or comparison. Even cautious acceptance of that complexity still winds up emphasizing recourse to measurable units already animating slum studies:

Planning theory in past African urban studies *had been focused on removing informal development* rather than identifying, and rectifying, existing segregatory practices. The rate and scale of urbanization in Africa requires a balance between embracing informality while planning for sustainable services delivery. The systemic drivers of dysfunctionality need to be rectified, which requires focus on urban reform, accountability and effective data analysis [ital. added] (UN-HABITAT 2014: 37).

Here, UN-HABITAT calls for a shift of “focus” that would “embrace informality.” But that shift would only come through better data analysis, and not a broadening of the terms of data or the

manner of data construct. Furthermore, while it seems that the notion of “systemic drivers of dysfunctionality” would refer to the role of state institutions, there seems little in this particular call for a shift beyond state leadership.

A second major critique goes to how ideal types of urban upgrading are proffered. In principle, upgrading is preferable to urban renewal because it depends on consultation or even leadership by community “stakeholders” outside of government, whereas renewal is driven by planners and often tends toward inequitable distributions of the burdens of development. In the formulation of UN-HABITAT, “resident perception” is critical to the process of upgrading interventions, and urban managers and planners are seen as its facilitators or enablers. Given this more participatory outlook, it is noteworthy that experts have created and refined slum definitions and indicators, not the ordinary slum dwellers themselves. Preference for expert knowledge was evident beginning with the UN-HABITAT Expert Group Meeting in 2002 (Arimah 2010), and is a mainstay in this work (see for example UN-HABITAT 2003a: 5). Ordinary people are rarely held up as subjects who create knowledge. More often they are objects of study. Whether they figure in as “local voices,” survey respondents, or photographed characters, they help to ratify or focus the report’s main assertions. This is not to suggest that many slum dwellers are not aggrieved by, or harmed by, desperate and dangerous circumstances of life in the city. Rather, the point is that slum interventions driven by the vision of *Cities Without Slums* make these territories out to be excesses of urbanization, as if they are wholly outside of governance systems, if not modernity.

Urban spatiality (3): from new governance capacity to an emerging zonal spatiality

As global institutional knowledge about slums and about Africa's urban revolution converged, slum governance institutions began to touch down in Ethiopian cities in various ways. Addis Ababa would be taken up repeatedly as a worst-case scenario for city life in the most impoverished countries in Africa and in the world. The most astonishing estimate of the prevalence of slums in Ethiopia was that 99.4% of urban residents lived in them (Davis 2006: 24).³⁷ But this was not so far out of the norm. In both 1990 and 1995, UN-HABITAT (2014: 165) estimated that a whopping 95.5% of Ethiopia's urban residents lived in slums. By 2007, UN-HABITAT's estimate had dropped to 79.1% (*ibid.*), whereas Ethiopia's federal government had already lowered its estimate to 70% for 2005 (FDRE Ministry of Works and Urban Development 2005: 4). By 2017, UN-HABITAT (2017: 54) made a more refined estimate of some 80% of just those "inner-city areas" of Addis Ababa as slums, so that "70% of homes in the city" are "dilapidated and lacking basic facilities and urban infrastructure." Many of these "inner-city areas" still contain many *kebele* homes today. As recently as 2014, Ethiopia was thought to have "both the highest proportion and the highest absolute number of slum dwellers" in Eastern Africa (UN-HABITAT 2014: 163). Such statistics paint a stark, enduring picture of prolonged urban policy failure and material deprivation. Through nearly dystopic representations, certain cities become represented as "terminal conditions of modernity" (Rao 2006).

³⁷ Davis claims that his country comparison "estimates are derived from the 2003 UN-HABITAT case-studies and an averaging of dozens of diverse sources too numerous to cite" (Davis 2006: 24). Ethiopia has the largest per capita slum population on the list, with Tanzania (at 92.1%) and Sudan (at 85.7) at second and third on the list. However, the validity of any measure approaching so close to 100% should be questioned.

The Ethiopian-Canadian writer Yohannes Edemariam (2007) gave a dispiriting, tragic account of the Eri Bekentu neighborhood, the same place I described at the beginning of this chapter. Yohannes describes spaces of sexual violence, hunger, and physical insecurity, and opines on the causes of it all:

Addis is the mess created when the twentieth century collided with a medieval and feudal culture that still exists in parts of the Ethiopian countryside, almost untouched: oxen-pulled ploughs, centuries-old myths, castles, blood feuds, arranged marriages, rock-hewn churches, and priests who know the gospels by heart in Geez, the all but extinct Semitic ancestor of Amharic, the language dominant over nearly eighty others in the country (Yohannes 2007: 70).

For Yohannes, the undifferentiated “mess” of the city is no contemporary sign of crisis, but the outgrowth of a backwards, pre-industrial culture. Proponents of slum governance, Italian fascist-era planners, as well as many of the early European visitors to Addis Ababa also saw the city as an unworkable place, a place of lack. It would seem on such accounts that nothing in such a place is worth saving – much less replicating.

Among practitioners, there are competing understandings of the vernacular built environment and how it can be better ordered by experts. My Ethiopian informants often accept the notion of a slum as a mere areal descriptor, but present the notion with few moral sentiments attached. Kibram, a senior planning expert at the Planning Office is blunt on the matter:

If you read some literature or documents about Addis Ababa, most part of Addis Ababa is said to be slum. I don't know if you walk around, also, most of the area *is* slum. Most of the infrastructure [is] there. But the housing condition, the social

condition, other condition is not livable [in] the area.

Slums are part of an historical arc that Kibram already knows well from his decades-long career. He eagerly and steadily works against them.

My own observations of local and foreign planners at a symposium on Addis Ababa³⁸ suggests that the categories of “city” and “slum” are a charged area of debate. One of the keynote lectures was given by Zegeye Chernet, a former Chair and Deputy Managing Director at the EiABC, as well as a professor in Hamburg. Zegeye claimed that as “modern education systems” sought to centralize scientific knowledge, they had revered “simplification of cities” instead of their complexity (Zegeye 2014). By extension, Zegeye claimed that this vantage point had long been a model for “how Germans think” and “how Americans think” about urban forms, in sharp contrast to local contexts, such as Ethiopia’s cities. Sitting in the audience, I wondered if Zegeye had not created his own simplification, or if he truly had captured the opinions of scholars in Germany.

Two days later at the Symposium, as a German professor sat next to Zegeye during open discussion in a breakout session. I found myself partly persuaded by Zegeye’s comment, when after only arriving in Ethiopia for the first time a few days before, the German professor referred to Addis Ababa as having a “rural structure.” He noted the persistence of rudimentary structures which may as well have been in the countryside, and tight neighborhoods that

³⁸ The *Symposium on Climate Adapted Urban Infrastructure*, hosted by the Goethe-Institut in Addis Ababa (December 2014) included site visits, comments by city officials, presentations by local and foreign planners and designers, and some break-out discussion sessions. Attendees were mainly technical specialists: architects, designers, engineers, and planners, who were also professors in either Ethiopian universities, experts from elsewhere in Africa, and a handful of senior scholars from German and Swiss universities.

suggested intimate village units rather than an urban system. A few others in the room chafed at this and saw it as a dismissive and ahistorical comment. He became more emphatic in his claims when a woman colleague of his, who was also from Germany but who had more local research experience in Ethiopia, disagreed with him. Her position was that there were many distinctions between living in Addis Ababa and the countryside, including the essential material designs and structures of urban homes. Their disagreement was heightened, I believe, by the desire to demonstrate European expertise in a room of many Ethiopians of varying ages who were already experts on the local situation. The breakout group gradually arrived at main concepts, wrote them on tag board, and would later share them for further discussion in the full symposium group.

When all the groups had completed their review of key concepts and dilemmas in Addis Ababa, the Symposium reconvened as a whole for its concluding remarks. I was surprised again, when a German organizer of the Symposium enthusiastically announced the founding of the “Emerging City Lab Addis Ababa”. This would soon become a platform for later workshops, teaching and research exchanges funded by German partners, toward the aims of ongoing research, materials testing, and collaboration, and thus a new node of ongoing support for the EiABC (see Bauhaus.ifex 2015).³⁹ The pronouncement of this “lab” and its aims posed yet again

³⁹ I have reason to think that Addis Ababa may continue to be the site for more such labs and foreign-driven studies. In September of 2017, I received an announcement from the Technology University Delft on an academic listserv, seeking input from local specialists in Ethiopia, partly on behalf of EiABC.

The Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment of the TU Delft has a vision for strengthening ties with Africa. This is because we wish to have a positive impact on African’s rapid urbanisation [*sic*] in the next years. In order to accomplish our vision effectively, we believe our priority is to engage

a seemingly irresolvable question of Addis Ababa's status. Could Addis Ababa be counted among real cities through technical interventions in place of slums? Or in some sense, is the city's emergence the emergence of local experts becoming the interlocutors of a global network of experts?⁴⁰

Ethiopia's planners have also long acknowledged the lack of capacity to respond to such intimations of policy failure. In 2003, at a conference of the National Urban Planning Institute, Teka Halefom called for "a drastic shift of approaches in urban management and planning that responds to the development demands of the growing urban communities in the country" (Teka 2004: 85). Teka acknowledged a frustrating situation, in which

... existing planning practices applied to cities have as elsewhere in the world documented failures. One such instrument is urban planning through which cities pursue to achieve their respective land development policy objectives. Well over 100 urban centers in the country have used master plans, zoning, land subdivision regulations, and other policies to shape/guide their respective physical development. Nonetheless, these types of instruments have failed in providing effective response to the multifaceted problems gripping cities in the country (Teka 2004: 85).

Ethiopia's federalist system of governance that insists its commitments to decentralization and "democratic developmentalism" would recommend leadership by local administrations. Yet Teka claimed that NUPI invested "all its efforts in search of its organizational legitimacy as a

with African scholars, who can inform us about the challenges of African urbanisation [*sic*] and can advise us on the path to follow. (*Full text on file with author.*)

⁴⁰ I was very interested in interviewing a few of these European experts, whether they were visitors or semi-permanent residents. But though a few claimed they were open to speaking with me, my repeated attempts to speak to them were politely declined.

planning agency in the eyes of local authorities” (Teka 2004: 87) instead of more practical and urgent efforts.

Teka called for a “drastic shift” in urban governance, and shifts certainly would take place throughout the 2000s and into the 2010s, as governance institutions rescaled in a variety of ways. These changes reflected a new party/state consensus across multiple scales, since policy in federalism is essentially made at the highest levels of government and then implemented by agencies down to the lowest level. *See Table 2.* There are two major institutional changes to consider here. First, in 2004, Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa would both become Charter Cities, and thus self-governing territories with co-equal sovereignty to the other national territories. Addis Ababa became completely surrounded by and separate from the Oromia region, so that it would manage its own structural plan in response to local situations, as set out by proclamation (*see* FDRE proclamation 16/2004). The city was then broken up into ten sub-city units. As to planning functions, each of these administrative units would have agencies tasked with collecting data on their own built environments. In consultation with the municipality, they would also oversee the production of local development plans (LDPs), which were to coordinate action around urban renewal and associated projects.

A second change came through the convergence of streams of technical guidance for and by planners in government agencies. This occurred in the form of manuals for planning from the Federal Urban Planning Institute (FUPI), as well as the Ministry of Urban Development,

Table 2: Rescaling and redistributing planning labor after decentralization

Planning policy (Federal scale)

Federal Urban Planning Institute (at MoUHCD)

- Sets rules, writes planning policy guidelines and manuals
- Builds capacity through trainings

Planning Practice (usually Regional Scale)

In case of Addis Ababa, a Charter City, this body is the Addis Ababa municipality

- Convenes Structural Planning round (in concept, every 10 years)
- Hires consultants and employees
- Assembles social and spatial data collected by Sub-Cities

Plan Implementation (Sub-City Scale)

- Production of Local Development Plans (LDP)
- Gathering of local data

Housing and Construction (MoUDHC) through federal planning manuals. The manuals are meant to vertically integrate means of planning across scales. They are also important artifacts of growing experience – whether from foreign technical partners, or from local planners in the planning round of 2002/03 – that are revised over time.

In addition to these changes in local governance institutions, new institutional mash-ups and partnerships proliferated. Work carried out in these new platforms ranged from the programmatic to the technical, and proffered planning advice in various ways. As a partner of the Cities Alliance since 2003, the MoUDHC welcomed a variety of consultations at local and national level over the years (UN-HABITAT 2003b). This partnership would lead to two major platforms for assessment and policy enmeshment. One was the founding of the Ethiopian Cities Prosperity Initiative. This was a project of situating local case studies for the “CPI index,” a measure (of first four, then later) “six dimensions of prosperity – productivity, infrastructure,

quality of life, equity and inclusion, environmental sustainability and urban governance and legislation” (UN-HABITAT 2015: 12). The second was Future Cities Africa, which partnered with municipalities of Dire Dawa and Mekelle, and produced a synthetic account of prospects for urban growth (Cities Alliance 2015). In addition, partnerships with the aforementioned EiABC and three other prominent partnerships with European and American agencies emerged for the first time, or were significantly thickened.⁴¹ While the Cities Alliance shaped several policy platforms, direct relations appear to have been very significant in the shaping of local planning practice. Less significant are some other new institutions, such as the Ethiopian Cities Association, which appears to convene so infrequently that they are more a proof of government’s own understanding as handling the challenges of urbanization. All the while, aspects of the Master Plan of 2003 were being implemented across Addis Ababa and knowledge was being refined through practice.

⁴¹ European partners on local planning efforts long relied on individual contractors and ministry-appointed specialists of British, Swiss, French, Hungarian, and Italian nationality. In principle, it is the technical expertise of such partners, rather than policy guidance, at the heart of such partnerships. But in recent years, four major European and American partners have supported municipal planning efforts through semi-permanent institutional formations:

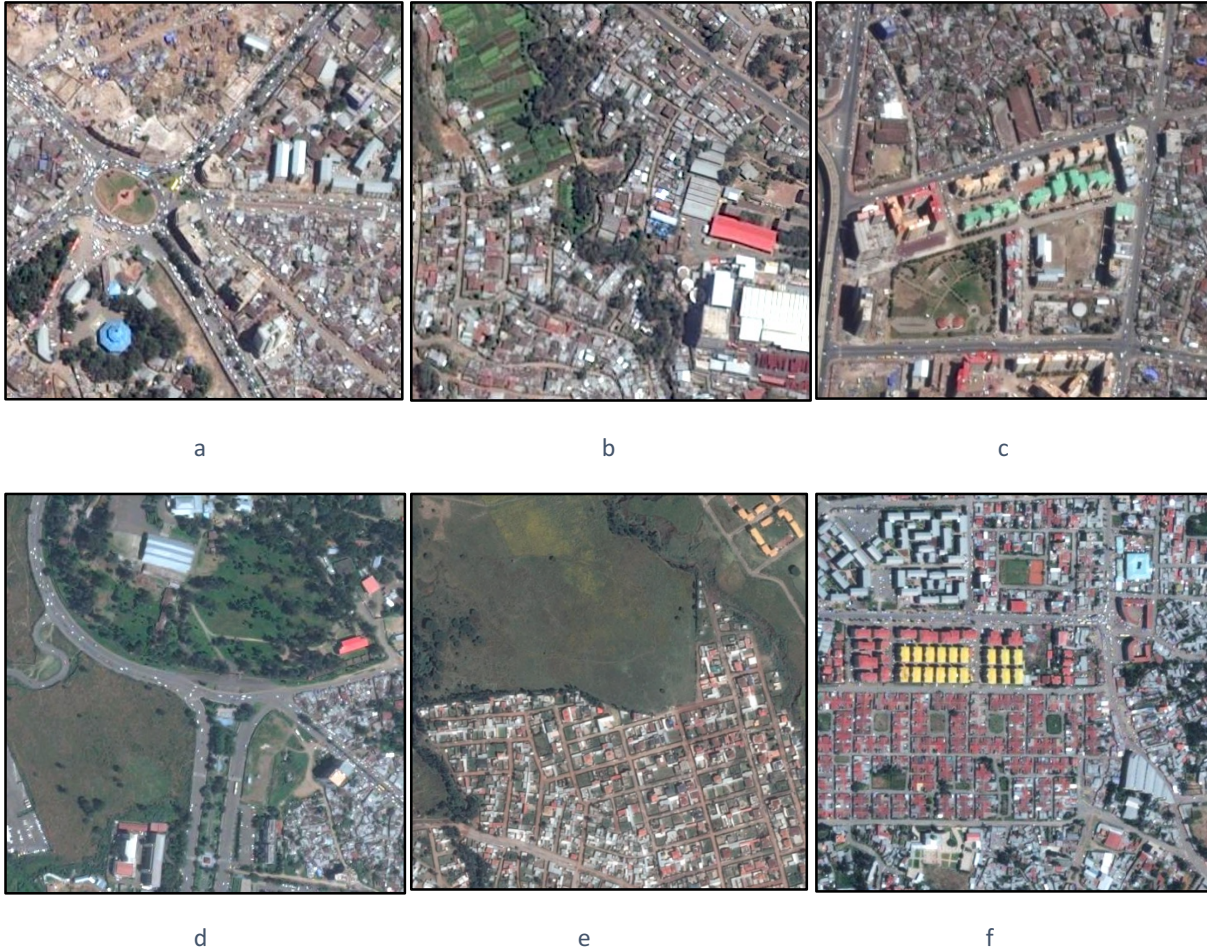
- (1) Since the 1960s, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) has been a fixture in ministry and municipal levels. In an earlier incarnation as GTZ, this was the implementing agency for the condominium program that coordinated purchasing and organization of labor and supplies, though the Project Office directing its work remained a project of Ethiopian personnel.
- (2) In 1999, Lyon Town Planning began to assist the municipality of Addis Ababa in technical work, especially in surveying and planning functions and continues to the present on a periodic basis.
- (3) In 2010, the AAU City Building College was refounded as the Ethiopian Institute of Architecture, Building Construction and City Development (EiABC). This co-program of the Addis Ababa University and the Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule – Zürich (ETH) combines a Swiss model of technical education and several Swiss and German personnel, Swiss funding, and a roster of faculty, students and other personnel who were overwhelmingly Ethiopian. Instruction is done in English. Faculty and students in Addis Ababa have thus joined a transnational research network of ETH affiliates in Singapore and Nigeria, as well as newer relations with the Bauhaus Universität Weimar.
- (4) In 2012, the Urban Expansion Initiative of the NYU Stern Business School began consultations with city managers and planners across a handful of Ethiopian cities.

Planning practices are reformed and implicitly contested while various players and institutions have taken aim at conventional modalities of planning in Ethiopia. Some aspect of these contestations were clear at the Symposium, for example. But it is also clear in each planning round, and in these new global institutional mash-ups that would weigh many emerging local and national policy targets and ambitions. UN-HABITAT and the World Bank would both celebrate particular anti-poverty interventions, as well as Ethiopia's desire for "MIC status" by 2023, to which they are related (UN-HABITAT 2008, 2011, 2015; World Bank 2012). PASDEP was celebrated for its prospects to "reduce slum areas (from 70 to 35%)," in step with the global anti-slum agenda and MDGs (UN-HABITAT 2008: 18). State-led development, especially in the form of the Grand Addis Ababa Housing Development Programme, represented the lead opportunity for transforming the housing sector (*ibid.*).

The combination of these forces have strong impacts on urban policy in Ethiopia. But there have been two broad challenges to the old spatiality of everyday life. First, as urban renewal erases aspects of the built environment, it makes space for a differently legible, differently scaled and integrated system. The whole of the city is meant to enable new functions, rhythms and possibilities for urban living, including a city more amenable to planning in the future. What is emerging is a patchwork of clusters and quarters of new housing and other infrastructures. New condominium blocks sit both within the old city and fill out its peri-urban fringe, as well as new private gated communities and squatter settlements.

A second challenge to the city's spatiality has come in the form of liminal spaces undergoing extended transitions. After a plot is selected for renewal, the sub-city surrounds the

Figure 11(a-f): Urban forms at the neighborhood scale, Addis Ababa



Each of these aerial photos represents urban land at roughly 0.4 km^2 so as to show the variety of forms at the neighborhood scale. Row One. In **(a)**, two registers in the built environment are easily read: first a prominent roundabout, the grounds of Teklehaimanot Church (with blue roof), and some large structures along main roads, and second the irregularly set one-story homes off the roads. In **(b)**, in Torhayloch / Lideta area, just off a main road, one story homes sit adjacent to farm plots by a river and a major industrial plant. In **(c)**, in the near-west neighborhood of Lideta, an upgrading program resulted in new condominiums and park space within the existing urban structure. One story homes continue to predominate beyond the condo blocks, and the new light rail tracks can be seen at the far-left edge of the photo.

Row Two. In **(d)**, in the center of the city, demolitions in Eri Bekentu (at left of photo) made space for the expansion of the Sheraton Hotel grounds and new commercial properties yet to come. To the southeast of Gebhi Palace grounds (top of photo), though other old settlements remain (at right of photo). This area features in the next set of street-level photos. In **(e)**, Residential areas in Kolfe Keranio, at the western fringe of Addis Ababa. Residential areas with varying densities in a grid system sit near a demolished area (at top of photo), while new condominium blocks suggest the future residential plan (top-right of photo). In **(f)**, grids in Gerji, near the eastern fringe of Addis Ababa, emerged before recent construction. Condominium blocks with grey, red and yellow roofs, as well as smaller red roofed units with courtyards built by the private sector. Images: Google Maps, 2016 and 2017.

vertical green and yellow stripes. This “development fencing” might encompass a single building, or a whole neighborhood, as would end up the case for Eri Bekentu in 2011. This fencing is the sign that a final decision as to the redevelopment of land has been made and that any unauthorized new constructions on such land would be demolished again. While demolitions can take place very quickly, and sometimes without much notice at all, they may also come about with periods of rest between them. Also, while demolitions unfold subject to the particular legal statues and orders of the municipality, certain rules guiding them are applied in unclear or unpredictable ways.

After demolitions, weeks, months or even several years pass in which rubble remains. Progress may be hard to ascertain. Development fencing may stay put for years, or it may be beaten down and then restored multiple times. For example, I asked several planners about the future of a particular steep hillside area of Eri Bekentu I got a variety of answers as to why portions of cleared land had not been built upon. Nobody could be sure, but when I asked Kibram what would happen on the cleared hillside near the Sheraton, he had suspicions as good as anyone else’s.

The open area? I don’t know exactly, but it is owned by the owner of Sheraton. They have to bring their proposals. Still they didn’t build their proposal [about] what they will do there. As my thinking, there will be a mixed development there. There will be offices, there will be some residential areas also.

To be precise, this *owner* is actually the *leaseholder* of this parcel. When their proposal for development of that land is worked out, they will negotiate with officials from the municipality, not anyone at the planning office.

So in this period when demolished areas sit behind development fencing, former residents or newcomers to the area may set up short-term shelters or live rough in the shells of partially-demolished buildings. Reciprocities and customs that had been so vital to economic life no longer can be counted on. New commercial buildings may start to come up quickly, with two dozen people on a construction crew working intensively throughout the day. But construction of these buildings is often incremental and prone to interruptions. One multistory commercial building may be partially built and then it may sit idle as negotiations around building permits stall, financial banking stops, or other obstacles emerge.⁴²

Figure 12(a-d): Landscapes of demolition and salvage, Eri Bekentu



In **(a)**, the northeastern edge of Eri Bekentu runs along a main road by the iconic Gebhi Palace and Parliament and has for years been marked by development fencing, running for roughly 1 kilometer. Downhill some 700 meters, in **(b)**, some properties owned by the kebele are demolished pursuant to local statute, whereas others remain standing. After evictions and demolitions, demolition crews working for the sub-city take part of their salary by selling parts of demolished properties into budding street markets for housing parts. In **(c)**, within Eri Bekentu, parts of demolished homes in the immediate vicinity are grouped together in street-side markets, next to sacks of charcoal, vegetables and other goods. In **(d)**, along a main road extending through Eri Bekentu, sellers display parts for sale by leaning them against the development fencing, as a customer drives off with the gate of a demolished home. Photos: Author, 2011.

⁴² Sometimes when money has run short in the construction process, funds for the completion of the whole structure may come from rent collection from tenants on completed lower floors of the building. A partially habituated building may still lack major safety features such as handrails, windows, or complete stairwells.

The debris wrought by massive redevelopment extends beyond particular properties and development fencing. Often debris spills out onto roads, making development a public and imminently visible matter. **See Figure 12(a-d)**. Closed roads, pits and trenches intensify the very bottlenecks that the fulfilled massive redevelopment agenda is meant to address. New piles of concrete forms, pipes, poles, machinery, and other building materials can present strange and unmarked hazards. At night, if street lights are low, cars can strike them or passerby may stumble into open pits. When a new road is widened, raised, or lowered, the surrounding roadside buildings are left jutting out, perched above, or below. With their old positions made obsolete by the road's new position, such structures become relics no longer harmonized with their outlying exteriors, which would have earlier been the advantage of the vernacular styles and materials. The future exacts a huge toll on the present.

Figure 13(a-c): Everyday liminal spaces of debris



During massive redevelopment, debris has become a constant presence in most neighborhoods in the city. **Left:** Incremental demolitions unfold on alternating shops on one street, Kizanchis. **Center:** A new, partially completed commercial building overlooks ground-level rail tracks where debris created bottlenecks, Kizanchis/Mesqel area. **Right:** Existing roads and structures are demolished before rail arrives, leaving gravel pits behind. All vehicle access is halted, and rubble becomes urban furniture. Mexico/Lideta area. *Photos: Author, 2014-2015.*

The rise of urban quarters and the rubble of these liminal spaces together challenge the city's classic spatiality, represented by the two registers described in the previous section. Of course this is as much about the social geographies of mixity in the city as with technical questions of land use and urban form. Neighbors are cleaved apart, strangers become resettled together, and many people are left homeless to fend for themselves. The following section describes how in many ways reordering the city through urban renewal is the hinge on which massive redevelopment turns.

The urban renewal complex

As local governance institutions accrued the means to intervene in the city and recognized slums as obstacles to proper urban development pathways, urban renewal became an indispensable program of governance. Urban renewal recognizes land and housing as policy instruments. Inefficiencies, risks, and disorderly uses in land use across "core areas" of the city are thought to be improved and reconciled. But this would be a relatively thin reading of urban renewal. Renewal remakes two different sorts of places: the "core areas" of the city where slums have been discovered and where they will be razed, as well as the fringe of the city, where evictees are spun out into new condominiums and others start to settle as well. Urban renewal is as a program of development that regrounds everyday life in a new urban structure. The future of the city's growth and expansion – that is, one city's capacity to advance harmonious development in concert with other sites and scales – depends on urban renewal for loosening and rearranging these social relations to place.

Distinguishing renewal from upgrading

In the local planning discourse and practice, urban upgrading and urban renewal feature important distinctions. Sometimes government policy documents elide this difference by using the word “upgrading” when the word “renewal” would be more accurate, as in the *GTP II* here:

Strategy for tackling finical [*sic*] constraints will be developed and implemented in order to *develop urban expansion areas and upgrade slum areas of cities* and reconstruction of old centres of cities and towns. Transfer and upgrading of private land landholdings to the lease system will be also implemented by facilitating different incentive mechanisms. [ital. added] (FDRE National Planning Commission 2016: 161).

As an ideal type, the practice of upgrading could occur in the urban core or any place, but it does not necessarily involve access to new land. On the contrary, upgrading is adaptive; whether by minimizing disruption to surrounding zones, or by cultivating local participation (as leadership could unfold completely apart from the planning bureaucracy), upgrading promises less disruption to existing land uses than other kinds of intervention. Neighborhood-scale features, cultural traditions and architecture might be preserved, even as some infrastructure is meant to be improved. The great drawback for most planning bureaucracies is that the timescale of upgrading programs is slow and incremental, and the prospects for uniform adoption may need to be negotiated repeatedly.

The closest brush with upgrading in the era of massive redevelopment occurred in the near-southwest side of the city, in the Senga Tera-Fird Bet project in Lideta neighborhood.

To be clear, the case in Lideta is not much like a “participatory development” model. All the *kebele* homes and other infrastructures in a relatively small parcel were destroyed, but multistory condominium housing on the very same site was produced in their place. Ezana Haddis (2011) shows that Lideta was a pilot project for later renewals, though some aspects of the project remain unique. He explains that hundreds of *kebele* home renters as well as private owners opted to take up residence in condominiums. Land that was opened up by demolition led to park space, commercial buildings and many high-rise condominiums. Former residents either left to their allotted condominiums in other districts, while some stayed for new condominiums. The project was a bold effort at refashioning urban land use at the scale of just a few hectares, while preserving the social mixity of the existing neighborhood. In many of my interviews, Lideta figures prominently as a proof of concept, but since then, the municipality has expressed a clear preference for renewal.

Renewal, by some contrast, is often a rapidly imposed and decisive intervention. The relationship between project in Lideta and the broader array of renewal interventions suggests is that urban renewal is an open-ended situation in which the means of governance are refined recursively. Renewal is the occasion through which planners resituate the built environment and the socio-spatial practices within it. For this reason, their knowledge of the existing socio-spatial practices and their ambitions for its transformation are not reducible to expertise. Rather, planners work against a screen of competing desires of investors for commercial and residential locations, the protocols of laws and policies, and the politics of the EPRDF-run municipality that proscribes the coordination for their action. While at other moments in the

transformation of the city, planning was one of a few significant features of urban governance, at this time, planners may have the most to teach about this constellation of urban forces.

Figure 14(a-b): Landscape after upgrading, Lideta



On the northern third of the grounds of the Senga Tera/Fird Bet project, upgrading has resulted in an utterly new sort of landscape. Taken together, all of the elements in this photo are new, from the cobblestones in the foreground, to the light rail tracks at the left, to the multistory condominiums and the park space they overlook. *Photo: Author, 2014.*

Land as an instrument in urban renewal

Binyam is a senior planner who outlines the urban renewal complex in reference both to his own long practical experience, and some more philosophical observations. During the Derg years, he studied at Addis Ababa University with hopes of becoming a doctor. But

upon graduation, his good grades led him to be selected for advanced architecture studies, which government had more demand for at the time, in Cuba. He lived there for six years. Upon return to Ethiopia, he contributed in various ways to the Master Plan of 1986, the Master Plan of 2002/03, and took part in the new round of planning studies beginning in 2013, in preparation for the Master Plan of 2015. From his experiences over time, Binyam connects the preference of urban renewal to contemporary financial drivers:

So during the Derg regime, renewal or upgrading was not a priority... [G]overnment intervention in urban improvement and the improvement of the way of life of people was not that much a priority because, you know the country was also involved in this long civil war. In this [EPRDF] government, the issue of renewal got more priority, more relevance because of the price of land in the city, you know? Because there is a serious shortage of land in the city, or as land is controlled by government, for me its an artificial shortage because the supply [*sic*] is only one. So they make sure that the price of land goes up and up and up until it reaches a certain peak. It is just like a speculator, for the government in this country is like a speculator... For the government at this moment ... priority number one is to get money, whether its through taxation, through the sale of land, or whatever mechanism ... because there are so many projects being financed.

Pressures on land use in Addis Ababa have intensified greatly in recent years. Rapid population growth in the city, new constraints to urban expansion since Addis Ababa gained Charter City status, and the emergence of new investors (*see* Duroyaume 2015) are all drivers here.

During my interview with Derege, the Director of the master planning office, this issue of the boundedness of the city was top of his mind. He is arguably Ethiopia's most senior and most influential planner. Since the recognition of Addis Ababa as a Charter City, Derege suggests, new city limits constrain spaces of development during a time of growth:

[H]istorically during the previous regime of monarchy and the Communist regime, there was no problem for a city to expand the way the government liked, horizontally even. Before, there was no limit for the physical and geographical extent for the city of Addis. But when this new [EPRDF] government came, due to our new policy and due to our constitution, then the physical boundary of Addis was limited by that constitution. And what we see, all we see beyond the current administrative boundary belongs to the regional state. Therefore there is no possibility of expanding or bringing expansion land into the administration of Addis for the last 25 years.

At the time of our interview, what was implicit in our conversation but not stated outright was that Derege was head of an office whose remit was to erode some of these boundaries through integrated planning. The jurisdiction of the planners working under him was to be spread out towards outlying cities in Oromia. So “expansion land” is a significant issue. Expansion indeed could place more land within the purview of planners in Addis Ababa, or redistribute the burdens on land use and housing. But instead of addressing that point, Derege claims there are two complimentary ways of safeguarding development prospects. “We can reuse the land more efficiently and the infrastructure more efficiently by bringing in more densification and of course by improving facilities and services.” On this view, density and efficiency would be worthy byproducts of a local state carefully confined to its own territory. So the key issue, on that reading, is the pathway toward “reuse” – the work of renewal – which is necessarily required in order to arrive at densification and efficiency. Derege’s vision is determined and resolute:

There isn’t a hectare of free land that could be developed in the coming 10 years. Therefore the major development strategy will be renewal ... Of course, when we

say renewal, it shouldn't be understood as if you are simply going to bulldoze *everything in all situations*. Of course in some situations, yes, like we did in Lideta, like we have done in Kazanchis, in some other areas. But in other areas, there are also areas for redevelopment and upgrading as well. But the major investment will be coming in the renewal sites.

Derege explains that renewal's unique impact in the city is what attracts "major investment," and that this is why it has been privileged above other urban policy options.

While the shortage of "free land" constrains development, but also clearly makes land a valuable financial instrument. While Derege treats the state-led land market as a matter of course, Binyam questions it. As the final owner of all land, Binyam says the state is free to act "like a speculator" within the market, even while it is regulator of the land market. By strategically adding recently cleared land to the market over time new land leases spike in value and so too do new state revenue flows. The irony in the state's role as a "speculator" is that the the pretense of the developmental state is that having that role may not be so different from the "rent-seeking behavior" of nascent capitalist class.

There is a variegated geography for the selection of renewal areas. Binyam suggests that "locational advantage" in respect to high land value makes selection of an area more likely, but notes that some "places of resistance" may deter, or slow, selection of another area. While Binyam says he has not made these selections himself, he surmises that an "area which fetches the highest amount of land price" is targeted first. According to his observation, "They demolish all the houses, they sell their plots, they get [a] huge amount of money, so they build these condominiums for people to be relocated and they get more money for other purposes:

infrastructure provision, or whatever they call it.” Urban renewal appears to Binyam as an indispensable financial opportunity to support massive redevelopment.

Investors desiring new leases on this “core urban land” take part in a unique, but rather murky, process of land redistribution. After parcellation of various plots on the cleared land is done, most of it is transferred in an auction process. Some critics of urban land policy are particularly concerned about the lack of information available to potential investors and the rest of the public, given the asymmetries in knowledge that the state preserves for itself.⁴³

Binyam notes that the stakes of the policy have raised over time, as the value of land has increased:

the price of land has reached I think in the range of B50,000, B60,000, which is 3,000, 4,000 Dollars for meter squared. And if you compare that with how much people earn a month, which is 50, 100, 200 Dollars, you can imagine the discrepancy, the gap between land price [and salary] ... The government is interested in renewal [because] the moment you clear these slum areas, you have this centrally located, huge amount of land which you can sell at astronomical prices and you get that money and you use it. Ok, theoretically, from a policy perspective, that money is supposed to be used for the provision of infrastructure, building of roads. Ok, you see the construction of new roads, but also the government build houses for the

⁴³ A few months after my interview with Binyam, *Fortune*, the premier English-language local newspaper for business news, claimed that a land lease auction had garnered an all-time high price of B300,000/m² (Fortune 2014). The commentary connected the rapidly spiraling “bubble” in land prices in Addis Ababa to the logic of the developmental state, which keeps its operations opaque.

Even if the constitution states that land is owned by the people, there is little information about it that the people could use to make informed decision. This is even worse in urban areas where there is huge competition for the resource... Whatever information available about urban lands is disproportionately owned by city administrations. Though run by elected officials, the administrations feel no responsibility in releasing this information to the public. It seems that they enjoy both the asymmetric privilege they have and the very market leverage they buy through the same... [T]he state also wants to collect maximum rent from the resources it commands, even if it means through high forgone benefits, lagging supply and longer lead time.

low-income, these condominiums at very low prices. And how are those houses subsidized? Its selling this land at that price and the money goes into that social housing. That's the whole idea.

On this view, different institutions of the local state work together to allow government to speculate on rising land values over time. Increases in revenue are essential to next outlays for projects that would house people evicted from prime land.

Compared with developers who have a unique opportunity to invest in land, evictees have much less agency. No legal appeals to eviction orders are possible. Though administrative appeals are possible, by definition they are simply at the behest of government officials and rarely have results. Compensation is often given for built structures on land, though the means of calculating the value of many rudimentary and often dilapidated homes is unclear. But compensation is never for the land itself, which of course always remains held by the state. Occasionally, new lease titles are given to evictees on other land, but usually compensation of a sort is rendered by offering evictees new housing in state-built condominiums.

Housing as an instrument in urban renewal

By setting values of land, managing the transfer process, and building new housing for evictees, agencies of the local state create multiple means for redistribution. Poor residents are drawn out from “core areas” of the city – areas of increasing value -- to the city's edges, while investors bid for and jockey for influence. **See Table 3.** Of course, such movement

emerges in the context of particular housing alternatives, and especially the condominiums recently built by government. From the founding in 2004 of the Grand Addis Ababa Housing Development Programme to its later incarnation as the Integrated Housing Development Programme (IHDP), Addis Ababa has been the premier showcase for this collaboration of the state and private sector in the production of housing. The IHDP has multifaceted aims, as described here by UN-HABITAT, which has lauded the program:

- a) Increase housing supply for the low-income population
- b) Recognise existing urban slum areas and mitigate their expansion in the future
- c) Increase job opportunities for micro and small enterprises and unskilled labourers [sic], which will in turn provide income for their families to afford their own housing
- d) Improve wealth creation and wealth distribution for the nation (UN-HABITAT 2011: 10).

The initial goal of this extremely ambitious program was to produce 360,000 condominium units across Ethiopia from 2006-2010, with 175,000 of them in Addis Ababa alone (ibid.) Rental housing and attempts at low income housing are not new. But when clustered together, these buildings give the visual sign of a stark, wholly new form in contrast to the landscapes of the past.

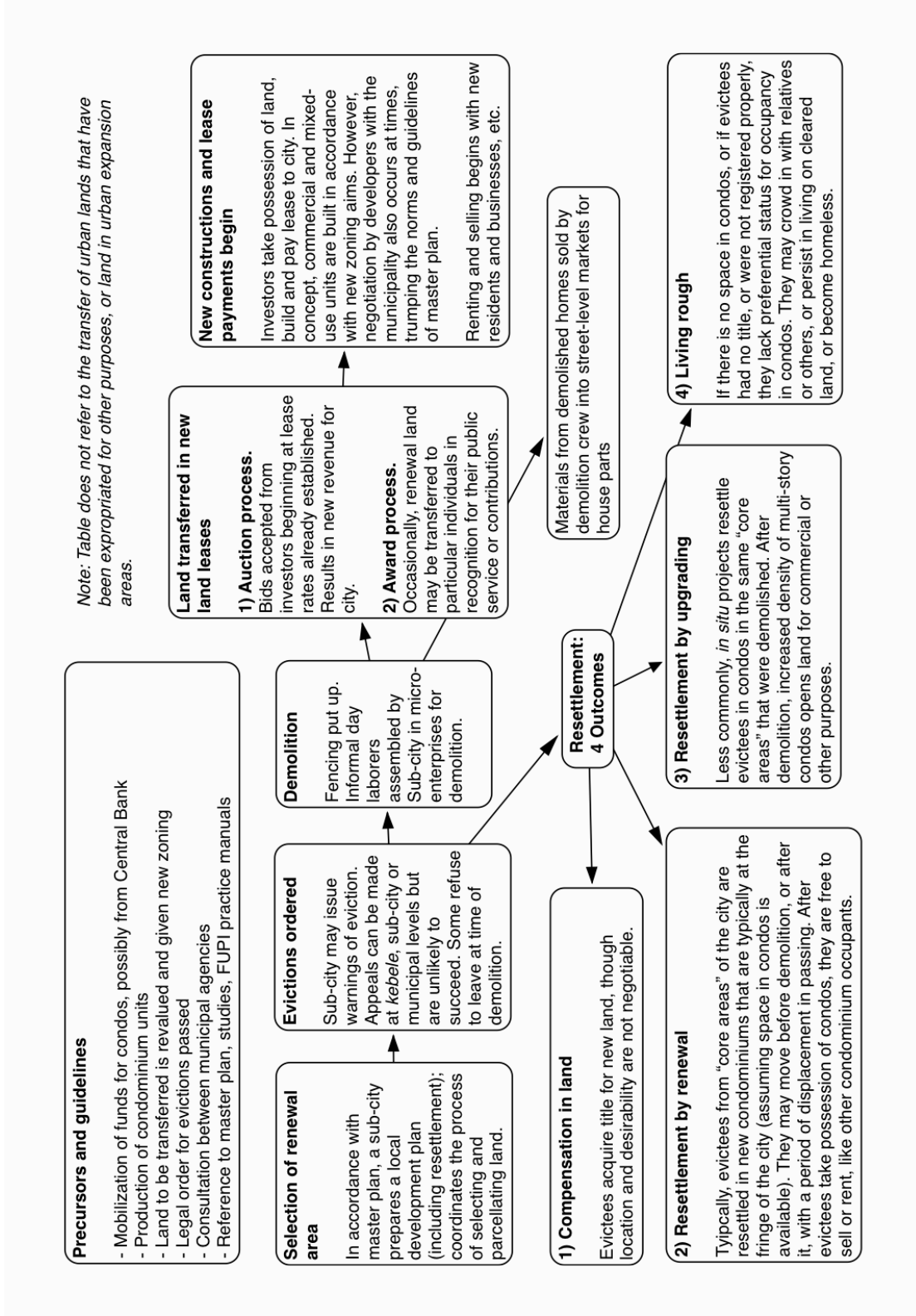
While the condominiums resemble a social housing program that would uplift everyday lives of city residents through improved infrastructure, the manner of their distribution has been more complex. There have been many ambiguous impacts, some of which and not all of them were anticipated. By entering lottery assignments, one does not know

where or when they may end up in their new condominium. When condos are built at the edge of the city without much finished infrastructure around them, there are few mechanisms to ease the social transition into them. Minibus routes, health and education services, and employment options may not be comparable to the old “core areas.” With the customary relationships of one household to its original neighborhood and the city as a whole severed, future livelihoods in the new condominiums must be built anew.

In concept, people with title who are uprooted from cleared areas have their names added to a registry of preferential status for emerging condominium units. But this presents three unintended consequences in the experience of condominium housing. The first concerns the assumption of affordability of condominium housing. Once awarded a unit, resettled people observe the law but inveigh against the stated mission of the condos. They can choose to retain a condo unit as a residence, or rent it, or resell it to others. For many, the better paying jobs with which to repay loans to the government are unattainable. Sequencing of all parts of massive redevelopment is critical, and so staying in the new condominiums can amount to a major financial risk. If evictees prefer to rent to others than to move in and stay, the awarded unit may be rented out for years, while a family continues to live in housing with quality similar to, or even worse than, their previous demolished home.

A second unintended consequence stems from the morphing of the initial design of particular condominiums and condominium blocks into new adaptations. Retrofits within the home are common, such as building new walls, converting the presumed function of different rooms, or reclaiming more cooking or sleeping space by walling off balcony areas. While not

Table 3: Modalities of Urban Renewal



always sanctioned by the micro-level systems of condominium governance (*see* City Government of Addis Ababa Proc. 12/2004), these retrofits are common and often tolerated. Urban designers were eager to see these retrofits in order to rethink grounding assumptions about the culture and economy of the household beyond a unitary or functionalist model (*see* Heisel and Bisrat 2012b).

Such opportunities for adaptation, or even subversion, of intended designs extend into the condo courtyard areas, where communal buildings lay. In concept, these small, cube-like buildings are meant to be reserved as shared cooking areas or meeting spaces. But Tigist, the architect, is one of many who notes that these communal buildings take on surprising new functions as shops, hair parlors, or a private gym; the space is effectively shared as a financial asset instead of its intended function as a common space of cultural production. But as Tigist describes, it also happens that they can be captured by residents for other purposes:

I was visiting a friend who was renting a condominium and I was asking her – because they have these communal buildings in the center – and I was asking her, “So, do you really use the communal [buildings] you have down there?” “No, its not even part of the deal,” she said. The owner of this house, he used to be a daily laborer. You know, because the first drawings were just lotteries; whoever was registered just got them. Savings was not part of the issue, so this guy was lucky enough to get that condominium, but he couldn’t afford to live in it. He still was working as a daily laborer. So what he [the daily laborer] did is he tried to finish it up. Actually, my friend did the final touch-up, the paintings and the like before they moved in, which was to be deducted from the monthly rentals. So they actually finished it up and then they moved in. And they told me that the guy who was actually owning that house was living in one of the communals, which was supposed to be a traditional kitchen. So he transformed it into a home where he and his wife were living there. And I really wanted to see that place but, you know, it was amazing how people transform that space. For me, it was an amazing transformation.

The “daily laborer” in Tigist’s account is a kind of tragic hero. He and his wife were fortunate to be allocated a home. But he can only afford to rent it out to a wealthier person because a lack of savings prevent him from occupying it.⁴⁴ Condo blocks built for the transformation of housing have moved many such squatter strategies around, without a direct uptake of housing alternatives.

My own observations on daily life in the new condominiums are drawn largely from my time visiting friends at the Balderas Condominiums on the near northeast side of Addis Ababa, not far from Qebena. Decades before demolitions came to the area, this was the site of royal stables and the quarters of imperial servants. Today, Balderas is the grounds of an aspiring middle class, in which young couples, children, and single professionals live as owners and renters. From my encounters there, I found it is common that an owner might keep a unit for themselves, might give their unit to older relatives or relatives without means, or rent them out at high rates to young professionals. Life in multistory condominium blocks can be an atomizing lifestyle alongside new neighbors. Laundry is hung out to dry in common areas, but not for too long, as reports of theft are common. Though guards stand at the gates of condo complexes and restrict the flow of people and vehicles and even goods that people carry, security is weak and not all neighbors can be trusted. But the condos do take on new forms of sociality. Neighbors do check in on one another, share coffee and meals together, and celebrate

⁴⁴ I observed a comparable case in the Balderas condominiums. A former storage area on the ground floor had been claimed by a man residing nearby who was doing a small carpentry business.

holidays together. Shared courtyard areas can be lively places where children play, and they can also be places of cleaning or piecemeal work in the cash economy.

At street level, the exteriors of the condo blocks are also lively places of a new kind of urbanism. Along main roads, whether in Balderas, as in many other condominium blocks, the ground-level units are occupied by small businesses like restaurants, hair salons, and convenience stores. A version of street life as on the old main roads forms here again: leisure activities, shopping and walking all converge at street level and mingle on the sidewalk. With time, people invent a new means of belonging in the area, though the exigencies of a quickly changing city mean that they may not stay put for long.

A third consequence of the condominiums is the displacement of urban residents who lacked any title to begin with and cannot find a place in the new condominiums. The pace of condominium production lags far behind the full sweep of demand for them. Part of that demand includes evictees with and without title and preferential resettlement status, as well as many sorts of people who have never been evicted. In the EPRDF parlance, a few in this latter category are “rent-seekers” in the most literal sense. The most vulnerable of the uprooted people include *dabal* (extended family members rooming in exchange for work), or squatters who by definition never had land title. People who may have settled within or between *kebele* homes and were thus invisible to the view of governance in the past, now become visible. They end up in far more precarious situations, and especially face the possibility of homelessness. So if they try their luck in a lottery which includes all comers, they may be on an interminably long waiting list with slim chances for better housing several years off into the future. In this sense at

least, exposing the urban poor to new risks is very much a feature of the urban renewal program.

As to the production of space, such consequences are profoundly linked to the iterative nature of the roll-out of condominium construction. Choices as to sizing, siting and design of the condominiums have all changed over the years. While condo designs began in 2005 as units rarely taller than 4 or 5 stories (author's note), designs would grow to 12 and even 24 stories in height (Abdi Tsegaye 2014). Beyond their initial purpose in providing low-cost housing alternatives, condominiums became a vehicle deployed to solve a widening array of problems. Financial logics have been especially pronounced drivers in that shift; as lags in repayment from poor resettled families became evident, the municipality hoped to rely upon such families less, while keeping condominium production on track for development targets in the longer term.

Through a variety of proclamations, the municipality offered enhanced incentives to people with stable, higher incomes, leading to a shift in the burden from a combination of down payments and loan terms that privilege the stakes of upper-income people in urban development. By 2013, separate lottery pathways were produced that open up the growing likelihood of condos as a class sorting mechanism:

The more popularised of the government public housing programmes are the 10/90 housing scheme – a rebranded version of the old condominium housing scheme, now dubbed 20/80 – and the 40/60 housing scheme. These schemes – designed for lower incomers, the lower middle class and upper middle class, respectively – all have a savings scheme attached to them, from which their names are derived (Elleni Araya 2013).

The municipality even began to use condos as investment assets to attract the return of Ethiopians in diaspora, essentially assuring the possibility of local and diaspora competition for government-built housing. According to the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia responsible for mortgage arrangements, in 2013, an estimated 430,000 people had registered for condominiums (Elleni 2013), while in the next year, the number had jumped to 780,000 people (Abdi Tsegaye 2014). The actual number of finished and delivered condo units is unclear but is not nearly this high. According to Addis Ababa's Deputy Mayor, 175,000 units had been transferred by mid-2017 (Ethiopia Semonegna 2017). Given the outsized demand for the condos, the channels for their distribution are the subject of great concern and rumors. Allegations of corruption and mismanagement are common. For lower-income people who have sat on the registration rolls for many years, the apparent fast-tracking of the interests of wealthier people is particularly galling, as it represents a detraction from the original purpose of being a social housing program.

The IHDP model of condominium production is still just one of many typologies of housing in Addis Ababa. At smaller scales, government is producing other sorts of housing. Given the flexibility of the land leasing system, private developers also have a share of new commercial constructions. Still, the IHDP condos have a special role in assisting with the erasure of slums across the city and the production of a new zonal geography. In turn, the condos represent specialized pathways that further the project of socio-spatial distinction.

Imagining and promoting alternatives to renewal

As a program of urban development, urban renewal is remarkably plastic as it catalyzes massive redevelopment of the city as a whole. For the more critical proponents of planning in Addis Ababa, a common belief is that while certain aspects of the program may change, they will be implemented across almost the whole of the city over time. The municipality aims for fast solutions and is eager to get ahead of urbanization's curve. Even if the more critical planners believe the gist of Derege's claim, that bulldozing "everything in all situations" would not happen, they see the municipality's deep commitment to it and expect that reliance on the program will continue. Under conditions of rapid urban change, there seems little time to waste in the search for alternatives. There are two main alternatives to note here that I encountered in the field.

One upgrading alternative adopts the scale of a single building, and enjoys the backing of the EiABC. As Chapter Five describes, the EiABC is the leading planning and design institute in Ethiopia. Government leans on the institute in various ways, especially as a roster of would-be planners, and as a training resource for planning students. In turn, however, this institution and many actors within it hope to present local government officials with demonstrated alternatives.

From my own observations on a tour given by EiABC personnel, as well as conversations with planners, the major attempt to alter conceptions of upgrading lies in the Sustainable Incremental Construction Unit (SICU). On a small parcel of land directly across the street from the Lideta site, EiABC and partners from Juba University and Bauhaus University

built a first SICU prototype in 2012 (*Designboom* [n.a.] 2015). This is a two-story design for a home made of “standardized modules” of cheap, locally sourced and recycled parts and materials that can “achieve various permutations” (*ibid.*). For EiABC, urban renewal presents a chance to engage local policy-makers and officials and steer their perceptions of the possibility of planning through tours and demonstrations. Their alternative housing construction would increase density through designs that are also meant to be environmentally sustainable. Though not as stealthy as the *chereka bet*, SICU also mirrors some of the features of vernacular architecture in Addis Ababa and features a construction time of several days, which is short by almost every other measure. EiABC promotes SICU among its other design concepts, and is also building prototypes in Kenya.

A second alternative is being proposed at the neighborhood scale. This strategy derives from the firm of a private sector developer, which I will call Riverside. After more than twenty years of experience as a structural engineer spanning the Derg and the EPRDF eras, Zelalem took a master’s degree in engineering from an Indian university. He then sensed that real estate market dynamics were shifting and that “one can make money selling affordable homes.” He started what is today a prominent construction firm that I will call Riverside. Zelalem inherited the old gated villa of his parents in a neighborhood I will call Arangwade Meda, where he was raised and where he still lives today. Zelalem expects that the overwhelmingly low-income residential area surrounding his property and a few prominent streets in the area does not hold much value in its current land use pattern, and is a prime candidate for selection for renewal in the future.

In advance of eviction notices that Zelalem thinks are a foregone conclusion, he has hoped to work jointly with others in Arangwade Meda to present a counterplan to the municipality. Zelalem pulled together a small project staff for the project by recruiting some workers from Riverside's roster, as well as a few college interns. They conducted surveys and questionnaires in the area and helped him to prepare studies of commuting, income, household costs and other features broadly related to housing. He made several pitches to people in the area and invited them to his property, where he showed them "before" and "after" models that his young colleagues had constructed in his yard. Zelalem said that once the neighboring community has truly embraced the project, he would ceremoniously burn the models to show that he was completely open to new input from scratch. **See Figure 15(a-b).**

The vision for Arangwade Meda is an intriguing blend of ideas that have as much to do with changing the modalities of planning as design. In the words of Belay, an architect for Riverside in his twenties, it represents the kernel of a "joint venture" for government and private sector collaborations. Belay speaks enthusiastically, but guardedly, about the contrast between conventional modalities of urban renewal and the alternatives that Riverside imagines.

Government have to open up. But I'm not criticizing, as I told you. We've seen lots and lots of movement, but this far at least, its behind closed doors. I'm saying together with the private companies, private developers, we can work lots of changes...

Now we are working on a top-down approach. That is [to say] the government is here, they design the process, they design the vision, they design the goals, they design the objectives, they design the strategies. And then impose it and give it back to the public.

Belay suggests that in Arangwade Meda, alternatives can be tried:

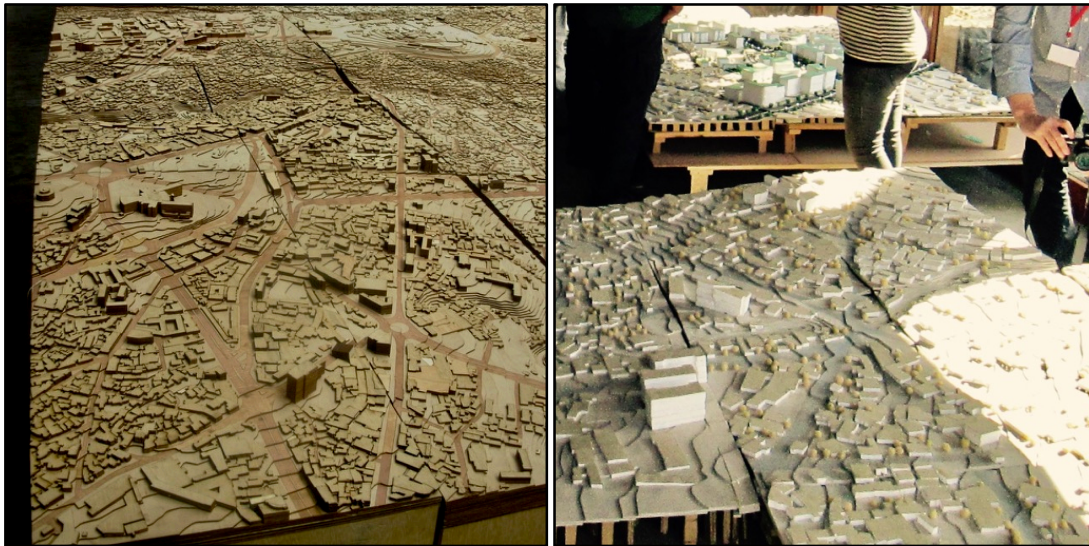
We'll design a strategy together with the public. And then, we go down. We'll implement it. Then there will be government as the mitigator, in between. So there will be a balance. There will be interest from the government point, there will be interest from the society, there will be interest from the professionals. So the government balances things. That way, things will be transparent. They will avoid [chuckles] that word, actually [chuckles]—rent-seeking activity. So the citizens [are] empowered, so there will not be anyone left to do the rent-seeking activity. Do you understand what's happening? There will be win-win scenario. You can imagine. We have urban design powered by the people. You can see how it can be replicated. That's what we're working on.

Here, and in other comments, Belay specifies that his own work as a “professional” has to do with consulting closely with local people. For Belay, housing through IHDP is a sop to party politics and functions without the engagement with local people, which is what he craves.

In Riverside's vision in Arangwade Meda, a resident would sign away the rights to their current home or business, then before such property is demolished, they would move into nearby newly built mixed-income apartments. They could live in new, multi-story units at below-market rates, while their neighbors might be professionals paying market rates. Locals would experience minimal disruption and could remain in their own neighborhood. The win-win scenario of Belay's description has everything to do with a pact in the relationship of state and society actors. Riverside would make good on its own construction investments by renting out new apartment housing at market rates. Government would enjoy a more legible built environment of newly graded roads and densification, and because of the transparency of the

project. All of this could be delivered while government could present development without “rent-seeking activity.”

Figure 15(a-b): Scale models of Addis Ababa by students



Left: A large team of students at the EiABC worked for many months to put together a huge model of most of Addis Ababa for the municipality. The pictured section looks from west to east across Piassa neighborhood. Wood for the model was cut on a rare laser-guided lathe, and assembled in thin layers to reveal the existing built environment down to the scale of a garden shed. This was based on remote sensing data held by the municipality. *Photo by Author, 2011.* **Right:** A team of Riverside workers and interns produced these models of Arangwade Meda out of paper, wood and foam to show the possibility of a cooperative upgrading project imagined. A “before” model of *chika* constructions and other incremental forms today sits in the foreground, and an “after” model of dense new forms sits in the background. *Photo by Author, 2014.*

As the logic of this “joint venture” suggests, Zelalem and his colleagues are as interested in altering the course of state-led planning as they are in improvement of the area, as the two are intertwined. Zelalem’s interests even extend outside Addis, including designs he promotes for compact towns that could be master-planned by the private sector. Zelalem relishes change and believes in the power of big ideas, and welcomed me to his new officespace on many occasions for interviews and chats with him and his workers. But it was at

the Hilton Hotel one day after he had attended a reception for some Indian colleagues, that he explained how he hoped to influence government when he was outside of the public sector.

Gradually, there are parallel ideas where different things are predicted. At the same time, you know, I think its Roosevelt who said that “If you don’t claim credit, you can move the world.”

[Both laugh]

Something like that. It’s a great thing. Nowadays, I am more visible because I say things openly. Its very unlikely that my ideas will be taken. As recently as 3, 4 years ago, I gave people [in government] some brochures or links in Google to some ideas, I see them creeping up in strategies and plans and proclamations. And actually, those ideas, the thing that we showed at those exhibitions or those things we discussed earlier have come up somewhere. So the condominiums that are meant for rent are mostly used for that kind of thing. But rent-seeking operates by creating policies that favor the incumbents. Because of that, both incumbent officials and big business would make sure that these ideas have derailed from the beginning. So you see my ideas being promoted with a weak tone and the ideas that I’m opposed to overtaking or overcoming via the small ideas. So that tells me, although I have no proof, that tells me there is an ideological fight *within* the EPRDF. And yet, otherwise, it wouldn’t be possible. [ital. show emphasis in recording]

Notwithstanding the credit Zelalem claims for himself in an interview setting, he seems keenly aware that the “incumbents” only wish to move forward with projects for which they can claim credit. Adopting a “weak tone” compared with theirs is essential, as it plays to their sense of authority. I noted that Zelalem is a figure well-known by many of the faculty and students at EiABC; at times, he is asked to provide critiques of student projects and he has also hired several graduates of EiABC. But when I asked Derege if he knew of Zelalem’s ambitions for a new approach to upgrading, he did not seem to know of them and did not seem to have heard of Riverside. I was left wondering if Zelalem really was successful in putting some of his ideas into play quietly, or if he was perhaps a more marginal player than he had claimed.

When I put my observation to Zelalem that one of Riverside's flagship projects sits on land cleared by urban renewal, he confirmed it was true. Most of Riverside's private construction projects sit near the dynamic edges of the city. In these respects, while Zelalem seeks to challenge urban renewal in his own neighborhood, his firm has clearly been a beneficiary of urban renewal. In one sense, the proposal at Arangwade Meda seems reminiscent of the private/public partnerships advanced in neoliberalism. In another sense, Zelalem is a community member promoting a model of bottom-up, participatory development that would help government present itself as against "rent-seeking."

Experts within Riverside and EiABC promote alternative conceptions of both what upgrading is, and how it might be achieved. To do so is to challenge conventions of state-led development that have been so forceful at the current moment; the assumptions of high modern development are what are at stake. The positioning of both institutions is significant here, as both are in a sense partners of the local developmental state. EiABC is the local node in a transnational research network of planners and other development practitioners. For many years, they have been advisers to local government and they have helped young, talented professionals into government careers. Riverside is positioned as a significant player in the local real estate market and looks forward to a future of deepened private-led investment, as well as public/private partnerships.

Conclusion

In many ways, the massive redevelopment of Addis Ababa is synched with a broader national approach to infrastructure-led development. Reorganization of urban space are being fit into a framework for an industrializing economy of the future in which light manufacturing, rail transport, and a diversifying labor force coalesce. This Chapter has shown how the knowledge and practice of Ethiopia's planners make the work of renewal so crucial to urban governance. Planners do not just attend to the particular arrangement of objects in, but strive for a synthesis of new designs woven into socio-spatial practices.

As planners in Addis Ababa strive to reorder the city in massive redevelopment, urban renewal has become an indispensable program of governance. The logic of urban renewal is multifaceted. By drawing on legal and financial logics of the developmental state, the program of urban renewal can secure certain inexpensive, rapid and direct means for development interventions at a large scale. By activating land and housing as policy instruments and by incentivizing resettlement, renewal enables the spatial reorganization of essentially the whole city. In global governance terms, a key byproduct of this is the transformation of city slums, which to the present time had been ubiquitous. Intervention has become a priority, and so the local approach to urban governance has in a sense brought the local situation into alignment with slum epistemologies of global governance.

Through renewal, the social mixity that has long typified neighborhood life in the city is giving way to a zonal structure. As middle class aspirations intensify amid rapid urbanization, class differentiation is likely to become a more profound force in the city's emerging zonal geography. There is a gap between local practices of renewal and the slum epistemologies of

global governance that would instead counsel upgrading. By uprooting the urban poor from central neighborhoods in urban renewal programs, local government shows its resolve to engage with development programs at street level and can attract new revenue from investment capital which in turn may further support massive redevelopment.

Still, the politics of urban renewal are not quite reducible to the contest of state power and popular resistance. Urban renewal can advance some important opportunities for low-income residents and it enjoys a measure of their consent. During the considerable uncertainties wrought by rapid urban change, there has been a more ambivalent play by urban dwellers of waiting and seeing, and riding out new challenges in the hope of more and better opportunities to come. Like other city residents, some planners are striving to develop alternatives to the prevailing vision of citywide renewal that might be less disruptive and leave the city's mixity intact. But these advocacy efforts by planners face a short time line against the rapid unfolding of massive redevelopment, and they have few pathways for presenting and popularizing these notions among their colleagues and among municipal officials.

Chapter 5. A 'revolution from above?' Planners in the developmental state

Introduction

Chapter Four presents planners as reflexive actors who know urban renewal from the inside out as a particular program of urban development. This Chapter turns to the institutional dimensions of planning, and situates this work more specifically in relation to the developmental state. Even more than their accrued technical knowledge, the greatest value to the planning profession is found in practical knowledge formed against the screen of party politics. Here it can be difficult to distinguish the role of technical expertise from cultural knowledge, since both are practical domains improved through lived experience in the workplace. But the technical is always defined in part by the political, through the bounds and guidelines of the institutions planners work within and across. The first half of the Chapter focuses on the building of this professional cadre. The second half relates the self-understanding of planners as technical agents, as they negotiate the dicta of the ruling EPRDF party.

Building a professional cadre of planners

Urban renewal is a program of development that inscribes a new order in the city. For this and other specialized tasks, the local state relies upon a professional cadre of planners. They are to produce, revise and implement aspects of master plans in the short run, and in the longer run, to reproduce their own expertise in future planners. For the coordination of state action on urban planning to become a regularized, seemingly permanent feature of governance, a professional cadre is needed.

By “professional cadre” here I simply refer to a group of specialists furthering an aspect of state or party organization. I like this notion because it emphasizes that there is a kind of sociology of planning practices emerging that has novel implications for the ruling party’s power. After all, the constant recourse to engage and transform slums in Addis Ababa derives partly from the presumption that the local state has lacked a professional cadre to do such work in the past. However, I need to distinguish this sort of usage of the notion of “cadre” from Clapham’s (2002) notion of “encadrement,” a strategic framing of space that he observed as EPRDF sought to cultivate party members in rural Ethiopia. Of course, in a sense the work of renewal certainly enframes urban space and is meant in part to derive the consent of potential party supporters. But it would be inaccurate to trade on Clapham’s notion of “encadrement” here because my research has not found evidence that planners themselves are targets of party recruitment efforts.

This distinction cuts to the heart of the particular sort of bureaucracy at play in Addis Ababa. Under the EPRDF era, Party and state have been essentially dissolved together. Planners are employed by the local state and yet they are rare public servants: there is no assumption that they must be party members. While some are likely appointed for their party loyalty, they are generally sought after for their merit and on the basis of acclaim by their colleagues. Yet the essence of their work is arguably craft derived from hard won experience on previous projects and occasions. The open-ended, even failure-prone, project of urban development is iterative; as practices are refined, their referents keep changing as well. Planners negotiate these institutional contexts while their roles as the city around them continues to take shape. This section addresses the making of a professional cadre in three major respects: (1) itineraries of

education and professionalization, (2) the consolidation of Ethiopian expertise, (3) the rise of consultancies.

Shifting itineraries of education and professionalization

Partnerships of Ethiopian elites with foreign experts in planning is not new, as Chapter Two described. A reliance by political elites on talented foreigners was evident from the prominence of migrant designers, builders and craftspeople during the Menelik era, as well as Haile Selassie's reliance on French and Swedish planning advisors, and foreign architects, and the Derg's reliance on Italian planners. Since the EPRDF took power, local institutions have developed much more capacity for planning. As demand for planning and related technical fields has increased during Ethiopia's infrastructural turn in development, the capacity of planning education has also increased.

Most planners in Addis Ababa have taken education at a mix of local and foreign sites. New professional itineraries are different from those of the past, however, and are concentrated along more specific routes and opportunities. During the Derg era in Ethiopia, as was the case for many other socialist countries of Africa, higher education was enmeshed in socialist networks in a variety of ways. Derg reforms in Ethiopian society extended across various levels of education institutions, and far beyond them, even down to the level of villages and peasant councils (Markakis and Ayele 1986). Moreover, Ethiopians who sought advanced study beyond a first degree could secure Derg support for study within a network of socialist

partners abroad, or could sometimes pursue foreign scholarships that would enable study outside the socialist network.

My more senior informants, such as Binyam and Aklilu, were professionalized in that period. They describe their experiences of higher education during the Derg era with a combination of mirth and relief at the acknowledgement of the constraints imposed on them. As the AAU was the only university in the whole country until 1985, prospects for training and professional advancement within Ethiopia were extremely limited. Binyam reflects on his rather surprising experience of higher education in Cuba:

I was not born in Addis... So I was kind of a country boy. So I came to Addis when I was about 12 years old, barefoot, so that's how my history starts. In terms of education, when I finished my 12th grade ... I went to Cuba ... because there was this policy of this socialist block; one country helping the other. So, you know, by that time there were so many students going to Russia, East Germany the whole group of people moving to the Eastern Bloc.

Were there Ethiopians studying alongside you at that time?

Oh, yeah, there were about 100 Ethiopians studying there – engineering, architecture, economics. All kind of disciplines.

How much choice did you have as far as your studies were concerned at that time?

Well, to go to Cuba, I had actually two options, because when I did my secondary school final exam, I was entitled to go to Addis Ababa University. But you know by chance the Cuban government scholarship arrived and they asked us whether we wanted to go to Cuba or to continue in the university. And you know as a young man by that time, my ambition was not even to go to Cuba. It was to go to Cuba, and when I finish, to go to the United States. You see, to run away!

[Author laughs]

That was just an opportunity, so then I decided to go to Cuba. In terms of, you know, choosing the architecture field, it was unfortunate because I have never thought I would be an architect, because my interest was more on medicine, engineering, [inaudible] I was good at that. But you know when they give you a scholarship they put certain conditions:

that I have to study architecture. And I really had a very hard time because that was a discipline which I haven't been aware of. I was not even good at making lines ... But so for one year I have to pass through that *pain* ... And after that, actually, I became a very good student.

In the end, Binyam never tried to “run away” to the United States. Instead, at the end of his BA studies in the Camagüey region of Cuba, he returned to Addis Ababa in 1985 with rare credentials and as an exemplar of the possibilities of socialist networks. Though trained as an architect, he was quickly picked up as a planner by the NUPI for “one or two years.” However, growing tired of his work preparing plans for various Ethiopian cities, he became more interested in planning theory. With the combination of his first degree and some professional experience, he landed a professorship at the AAU while still in his mid-twenties.

Cuba was perhaps one of the more remote among potential destinations for state-sponsored socialist education, but Binyam's was not an uncommon itinerary. His preferred interest in medicine was evidently not nearly as valuable to the Derg as his potential role within national development. Soon after the fall of the Derg, he went to the Netherlands for a MA degree. In two subsequent master planning rounds for Addis Ababa, 2002/03 and the recent round convened in 2012/13, he took on senior roles as a specialist on housing policy.

Like many Ethiopian professors in the past, Binyam began work at the AAU with just a BA degree. Over thirty years later, with his MA in hand, he has educated thousands of students, and now holds a Chair at EiABC. When Binyam invited me along to a critique of BA student term projects for new tourist-friendly lakefront designs at Bahir Dar, I noted that he relied on a combination of jokes to sustain a good rapport with the often nervous students.

Meanwhile, he and the other critique panelists positioned themselves as client-judges of student work, modeling in a sense the rigors and frustrations of design. Binyam's career exemplifies the national turn from a profession relying primarily on foreign consultants and advisors to the reproduction of Ethiopian talent by Ethiopians.

While Aklilu has taken a somewhat different professional path, he also enjoys a lot of esteem as a senior in his field. Long an educator of planners and architects, Aklilu heads a large architecture firm, and is an advocate for the preservation of Ethiopia's built heritage. For Aklilu, the notion of built heritage encompasses ancient sites, the multiethnic décor and crafts of Addis Ababa's early years, and even remnants of Italian fascist architecture. He is regarded by his colleagues as a measured critic of the destructive force of planning, and acknowledged as a professional mentor by Tigist and others. He took a BA degree in Ethiopia in 1985, and then a MA degree while on scholarship in Finland as the Derg years ended.

However, in the time between his two degrees, Aklilu was a government worker and thus was subject to political trainings required of all public servants. Working within Ethiopia meant that the reach of party ideology was inescapable, though Aklilu recalls that both foreign and Ethiopian educators delivered these trainings:

When you work in the university, you are a government employee. And there was a time when we had to wear these government-imposed uniforms, khaki uniforms, like they do in communist countries. We all had a difficulty to wear that, but it was obligatory. And then one thing was if you are a university instructor, you're supposed to go to a summer training course to study Marxist-Leninist ideology. People would come from GDR and from Russia, teach you this philosophy, you know, that Scientific Communism and so on. So I was sent to Gondar for two and a half months and you know, being taught every day from noon up until 5 o'clock. And

what I can tell you is that it was really boring. It was really long [chuckles] and so people started writing poems and some actually really improved their poetry!

[We both laugh]

Well, it was interesting. But what I noticed also was, also from the Russians, for instance, [a] philosophy professor who was teaching us: you could already feel that something was cracking, something was going on. And he was critical about certain individuals. For instance, he was critical of Stalin and things like that, so you could see that things were going on.

In this and other accounts, Aklilu suggests there was some nuance in the face of the Derg's socialist teachings, and even some possibility for critical inquiry from students. But there were also limits to how vocal a critic could be in front of their colleagues. Aklilu recalls a moment in which the roles of instructor and student were reversed, suggesting the punitive and ironic nature of Derg rule:

Funny enough, when I was in the undergraduate training in the third year, we had a course called political economy. They called it economics, but actually it was political economy of Marxist-Leninist ideology. The guy who taught us, an Ethiopian, was later on – he was a university instructor – and I found himself sitting in the same hall as me being trained again.

In such settings, the instructor's command of subject matter was often reducible to their fidelity to party ideology. In turn, the Derg sought to shape a worthy professional cadre of planners by their adherence to party ideology and a revolutionary grammar that would bind them together in their work. However, planners were hardly unique here; workers in all bureaucracies faced some version of these mandatory trainings.

Under the EPRDF, technical training in planning and STEM fields has undergone massive changes and has attracted more and more financial support. The expansion of capacity for development, as set out in GTP I and GTP II, requires workers of all skill levels in the production of new infrastructure. Higher education has undergone a rapid expansion; there are over 30 public universities today, with at least one in each regional capital. A few private universities and training institutes are also emerging. Within EPRDF's promotion of higher education, however, they have also introduced new budget metrics prioritizing science and technology over social sciences and humanities. The goal is to produce more STEM graduates so as to stabilize a larger labor force for the kinds of work favored by the developmental state. In part, these young skilled workers are expected to be public sector workers, such as planners, and the labor force to fill out the private construction sector.

For both students and practitioners of planning in particular, major new opportunities opened up in 2010 when EiABC was refounded in place of the AAU Building College and its Swedish affiliates. EiABC has connected planning institutions in Ethiopia to a globalizing network to Nigeria, Singapore, and of course the network hub in ETH-Zürich. The EiABC introduced three Competence Centers on architecture, building technology, and project management, amounting to 15 Chairships. Administration at EiABC is generally run by personnel first affiliated with ETH, while Chairs and the overwhelming majority of students tend to be Ethiopian. At times, some junior workers at EiABC perceive this as a block on the full development of Ethiopian potential.

Young professionals like Adimasu and Tigist are among the first Ethiopians benefiting from the EiABC's educational pipeline, and their professional world looks different compared to that of their older colleagues. Though Adimasu is just in his mid-thirties, he is already deep into an impressive career that speaks to the widening professional possibilities for technical practitioners. The end of his bachelor's degree at AAU was marked by a student riot in 2002, so that graduation procedures were delayed. But owing to great demand at the time, Adimasu attributes decentralization in government structure and a growing demand for his skill set helped him to make progress:

In our case, our names were simply posted in the City Hall. So we were only supposed to find out to which office we were assigned. All of us were automatically hired by the city. And it was also a time when the city took this decentralization governance system, where the city was divided into ten sub-cities and it was no more centralized. So every sub-city was empowered to run its own sub-city in many aspects. So I think that gave a chance for many job opportunities and there was a huge demand for architects. So I was assigned in one of the sub-cities, where I started to work as an assistant in the Building Permission and Control Office.

He worked closely on regulation of administrative code at the Sub-City level for two years, then moved to the municipality's IHDP for four years. During that time, he was deeply involved with the early years of condo production strategy. He then took a MA degree at the EiABC, and then headed to ETH Zürich, "for one year of stay as an assistant to one of the Swiss professors." That experience further distinguished his professional profile.

I have learned a lot in Zürich. I have learned a lot from their people, from their cities, from their infrastructure. I mean you don't even need to go to the university. I was saying this to my friends: if you want to learn, go somewhere in the developed nations, where things are working in a better way and live there for some time and

come back. Just by being part of the life, you can learn a lot. And luckily I was also in the university, in the academics, in the research areas where I was able to learn a lot from those practical works and researches. But I have to say I had shock twice: once when I arrived, and then when I came back here.

For Adimasu, the orderliness of Zürich and the rigor of the faculty he encountered there both became powerful inspirations for his own work.

Though Adimasu experienced culture-shock on his return to Addis Ababa, he was eager to further his own professional path within academia. In less than two years, Adimasu had moved up the ladder at EiABC to become Chair of a program. His ongoing affiliation with EiABC has led to other opportunities, too, including publishing opportunities and a stint at a Singapore institute affiliated with ETH. During the time of my fieldwork, Adimasu enjoyed a temporary managerial position in administration and was beginning to embark on a PhD split between EiABC and ETH-Zürich. When I accompanied Adimasu around the EiABC campus to see student work in progress, or when I would wait for him in his busy office, I observed that students and colleagues often approached him with logistical questions, or asked for signatures on forms. Calls and text messages to his cellphone ring out every few minutes.

Collegial pressures and everyday challenges in learning administration as he goes can leave Adimasu with the sense that he faces some unfillable demands. Adimasu describes his ambivalence about his new status:

I feel like a student, not really part of the management because I learn a lot everyday and I learn it in a hard way, unfortunately, because the system is not that easy. We have a shortage of infrastructure in some ways, shortage of human resource, shortage of systems in general. And all of this somehow leads into some

problems, you know? ... [As] you can see me, I'm not also the oldest in the campus and it was also a bit of a cultural shock that suddenly I have to be in the position to be part of the management or the leadership. Or maybe, let's say, taking care of how my senior professors are delivering the courses or running the school. So it was challenging from both angles, the fact that I have to maybe at times be harsh on my senior professors but at the same time also the communication had its own difficulties.

This notion of a "shortage of infrastructure... a shortage of systems in general" sums up a difficult environment for Adimasu's everyday work. Yet these challenges, which double the myriad struggles of planning in Ethiopia, are nevertheless also the grounds for Adimasu's professional advancement.

Though Adimasu was once an Ethiopian scholar pursuing an insider role in education in Switzerland, he is now an insider promoting Swiss educational model to his Ethiopian colleagues. He laments a culture of resistance to change as he strives to implement "reform" through regularized standards in education across the EiABC campus. These are largely echoes from the time when EiABC was founded and the old system of departments in the AAU Building College was dissolved. While trying to regularize the structure of EiABC, Adimasu inevitably wrestles with Ethiopian social mores. Respect for older people, such as Ethiopian elders and senior level colleagues in the work place, is expected. However, Adimasu's professionalization at this time is premised partly on his ability to integrate foreign and local professional cultures, and to bring together the contributions of junior and senior specialists. At times, he has to upend these expectations in order to improve organization.

Though Tigist's own educational path is not so different from Adimasu's, her path illuminates other crucial cultural dynamics at play in the workplace. As a student at AAU, Tigist

studied architecture and planning, which were joined at that time in the same BA program.

Tigist credits her main focus in urban design to a long-standing urbanist impulse:

I always liked socializing, going into different neighborhoods, seeing people. I liked visualizing the life of those people and understanding those ways of life than I would actually like visualizing the life of a single family house, or something like that. So I like the urban scale, so that's when my interest actually developed.

Upon graduation, Tigist became a graduate assistant within the same AAU program. She later undertook a Master's degree in urban design in Zürich. That credential opened up additional opportunities for her as a local consultant on two major international research projects on urban development in Ethiopia, one of which extended for years. Both of these were funded by foreign institutes beyond ETH's network. Also, as mentioned in Chapter Four, Tigist has also had a lead role as a key EiABC player in studies of the CBD commissioned by the municipality.

While I was in the field, Tigist was well positioned at a high rank within the EiABC as an academic program coordinator. Her position also includes teaching and academic advising of students, and she speaks highly of work with EiABC students within design studios. It was in this context that gendered work roles came up during our interview. While Tigist is one of just a few women working at EiABC in a programmatic or educational capacity, her own education and teaching both suggest the emergence of more women in planning.

The reality is, yes, it's a male-dominated field, planning. Not just only planning, in general engineering fields are male-dominated. Female students, it's just now that they are actually coming up. So when I was actually going through school, you know,

our batch, we were forty students doing our architecture and out of the 40 students we were five females. By the end of the five years, 33 of us had graduated. It was 3 females and 30 males that actually graduated as architects and urban planners. So you can imagine how the proportion is still working ... Now I'm actually one of the few senior female architects working. For example, my colleagues, all the three of us are still teaching in the university. The three females that graduated [together], they are all here.

Tigist is proud that she and other women in the field are more established. My own experience in meeting planners throughout a few agencies supported Tigist's contention that women were more likely to be found in junior ranks of planning agencies than in the senior ranks, though I could not acquire any numerical confirmations of the imbalance. Before I could prompt Tigist to discuss the ways in which she specifically supports women students or colleagues, she broached the issue on her own:

I have more male students than I have female students. It has made me less sensitive to the gender issue. I feel like I am competent enough to compete with them and I don't really need the gender support. Partly, I know I am wrong, but partly I feel like everyone should be given the same opportunity. But there are moments that I understand and realize that females should be given more support. But so far in my position, I have not worked so much towards that... I should treat them [students] equally, I shouldn't treat them because they are females and I am a female. So in that direction, I'm a little bit insensitive when it comes to gender. But I also honestly know that there are female students that really need support and that we should really promote the females, because you know some of them are coming to school, you know, leaving their kid at home.

It was never an issue for me anyhow, but I have reaped the privileges of being [one of] the only females actually teaching and mentoring. So my seniors have actually really taken care of me as the youngster in the system.

Tigist reports excellent relationships with male mentors, including Binyam, who she feels supported her well in the development of her professional ambitions. She has misgivings about reproducing this support for other women students in her charge, however, if she did not ultimately need that kind of care to succeed. Like Adimasu, Tigist imagines undertaking doctoral studies at ETH-Zürich.

These shifting routes of professionalization exemplify new networks basic to planning in Ethiopia today. As senior specialists, Binyam and Aklilu can refer back to long experiences of work during both Derg and EPRDF rule. Indeed, both governments were always in need of their expertise. Binyam and Aklilu both benefitted from educational opportunities abroad and carved out early careers as public servants, learning about government from the inside out. In time, each sought more autonomy. Both of them turned to teaching and research and carved out roles in relation to the EiABC, and opened their own firms. Junior specialists such as Adimasu and Tigist have drawn on local and foreign education opportunities, also, but each has been professionalized along a more integrated pathway than was available in the past. More than an incubator of talent, this network connecting EiABC with its foreign partners in Zürich can also be pipeline for professionalization. On the basis of previous roles within EiABC, Adimasu and Tigist now take seriously the notion of doctoral study at ETH-Zürich. This is particularly remarkable because in the Derg era, doctoral work was simply not a part of the professional mix for planning or other technical fields. The EiABC represents the most direct pathway towards credibility for young planners, and the most secure means for the reproduction of knowledge and practice of planning.

Consolidating expertise: Beyond “white magic,” a practice of “indigenous professionals”

A common feature in my discussions and observations with planners was the sense that technical expertise from abroad has real limits as compared to the practical expertise at home. If urban plans are too derivative of foreign contexts in which planning institutions are strong, they are not likely to respond local needs. More specifically, while local institutional dependence on foreign institutions is broadly seen as helpful in improving practice, a foreign presence risks forestalling more innovative or relevant local strategies. The gains of particular individuals and institutions made through planning rounds in the past have not always reproduced institutional knowledge and practical experience.

When I was introduced to Belay, the twenty-something architect at the Riverside office, my first impression was that he was a bit soft-spoken and shy. But he surprised me when he said, almost teasingly, “We need your white magic!” When I asked him what he meant by this, he said that Western experts at times enjoyed more access to the Ethiopian government than Ethiopian experts themselves. I was taken by this idea of “white magic” for its satirical rejoinder to the notion of “black magic.” While the white gaze of the planner is a well known trope, the more particular notion of “white magic” stems instead from their connivance with local elites.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ The notion of “white magic” reminded me of those moments when my status as a white *researcher of planning* seemed to signal to my informants that I was already a planner myself, and one who was poised to improve local practice through negotiation with local elites. In truth, I am an urban geographer still emerging in my own field and with an unclear professional path. My long-term commitments to local practice, or any other site of planning practice have been a bit murky, as a result. When informants and even local academics asked if I could enroll the work of others at my home university, for example, when I knew that precious little research of any

Belay's metaphor of white magic is part of a broader discourse of independence and Ethiopian exceptionalism in the development process. There are important slippages from the talk of technical expertise to claims of local culture and the ethos of self-sufficiency. Ethiopia's planners are conscious of the ways in which the office place, like the city itself, must become increasingly self-sufficient through employment of capable Ethiopians. That posture mirrors in some respects "democratic developmentalism" of the EPRDF. Binyam draws a sharp distinction between advisory roles of foreigners in the present day and leadership roles ceded to foreigners during the first planning round he participated in:

You see, the 1986 Master plan was prepared by an Italian consultant [and his team]. The only problem with that Master plan was, I mean, the office was established in Addis, had a very strong Ethiopian counterpart. But the only problem with that was everything, every plan, was being made in Italy and the final plans were coming to Addis for discussion. That's the part I don't like. If there is any plan to be produced here with local consultants – only the foreigners as being *advisors!*

Kibram also celebrates a turn towards self-sufficiency, when he thinks of the Master Plan of 2002, the first plan for Addis Ababa that he worked on.

The last plan was, I think, a model which initiates the planning exercise by indigenous professionals of Ethiopia by themselves. It was led and exercised by Ethiopian professionals... Previous plans were exercised by expatriates. If you had seen the plan which had been prepared in 1986, something like that, it was prepared by Italians and Ethiopians jointly. [Another] one was prepared by Sir Abercrombie. Most of them were prepared, the last nine [*sic*] master plans were by foreigners. But

sort on Ethiopia was being done in my home university beyond the domain of health and medical research. Of course, the considerable privileges with which I entered Ethiopia and went about my work did constitute a kind of administrative power and protection that for most intents and purposes is abnormal, if not magical.

the ninth one was prepared by Ethiopians and also the second is we were transformed from the Master Plan to the Structural Plan. And also initiated the change in planning: new thinking was coming at that era. That was the enlightenment of planning in Ethiopia, I can say that.

Dawit draws a contrast between what he sees as the overreliance in Kenya on foreign planning assistance, and the more collaborative approach in Ethiopia that he favors:

In Kenya, they have a good transport model. But when we have seen that model, it is generated by three different countries, you know? Just, you know, the Kenyans, they ... just participated as data collector. These type of issues are not, especially in my opinion, its not good, you know? Just if you are working as a data collector, you know, *you can't get any knowledge [whisper]* if you are not participate [*sic*]. But in our case, the different experts are involved from abroad, but they are working with us... But you know, in our case, we resist these types of things... [In] most cases, especially most researchers and donors, they request us to give data for them, just to produce something for us. That's not a good approach. Generally we resist these types of things.

For Dawit, each chance to plan is a chance to learn. Without a “good approach” there is the possibility that planning efforts can become a lost opportunity.

This type of project is important for the university, too because you know, when you are working here you get the knowledge as well as you get the data. That data is important for the research, too and also its very important for the students. In that case, working this type of project is very important for the university, too. Working in the university as well as here, because the university, you know, also benefits from this type of project.

Planning's iterative nature furnishes practices that become resources of their own, both for the individual and the institution.

At the planning office, I observed an interesting moment that speaks to the stickiness in the transnational exchange of knowledge. Seated in the office of Habtamu and his GIS colleagues, I saw the arrival of a team of four French land surveyors: three white men and one black man, likely in their late 20s or early 30s. Their sunglasses, beards, and work boots were perfect for dusty work days in the street, but they were clearly out of place in a semi-formal office setting of dress shoes, dresses, and sport jackets. They also looked tired, and from their demeanor, their trip to Ethiopia did not seem to be going well. They complained that they had been kept waiting at the hotel for over an hour before a driver assigned by the municipality finally arrived to pick them up. Habtamu had not heard about their delay at the hotel and apologized for it, while he did not seem to me to feel particularly responsible for it, or concerned about it. The conversation between the French surveyors and their Ethiopian hosts then turned to another point of contention. Their previous day's attempts at data verification near La Gare, the defunct Addis Ababa station for the national Ethio-Djibouti network, had hit some snags. After some discussion, Dawit and others determined that the surveyors would abandon that project and be allocated to start a different project. The French team agreed and left to start verifying the location of hundreds of Ground Control Points throughout the city.

The nonchalance of the Ethiopians in the room, and the lack of a clear protocol for coordinating action between the foreign team and their local hosts was puzzling to me.⁴⁶ I assumed this group of surveyors had been sent by Lyon, a sister city of Addis Ababa and ongoing technical adviser on planning projects. I also assumed that since the national railway was one of the only real legacies of French colonial planning in Ethiopia, La Gare might have had some cultural or historical interest to them, or to their superiors. A few minutes later, I asked Dawit about these things. He himself had taken a Master's degree in France. Since he knew something of the history of Lyon and Addis Ababa in collaboration, he corrected me. He explained that they were not from Lyon and that this was a knowledge exchange of French specialists with local university students than anything else. In a sense, he pointed to a confidence trick in their work:

People are feeling – especially in Ethiopia – the foreigners, or advanced countries like first world and second world countries, peoples are thinking, you know, they used [a] different type of instrument than what we are using. But in reality they are using almost the same methodology and the same instruments. You know, this information sharing or experience sharing is very important because you know, peoples here, they feel confident, you know? They feel just some confidence.

Dawit recognizes that the French surveyors do might bring “confidence” to Ethiopian students.

But he also recognizes that the French struggle to negotiate Addis Ababa's built environment:

⁴⁶ Unfortunately, I never saw these surveyors again, so I was unable to ask them about their experiences. I became quite interested in reaching out to other French players in local development. Repeated attempts to contact Lyon municipality officials in France went unanswered.

Our culture is very different than them. Peoples are sharing their houses. In one building, so many peoples are living there, so many households there, so its very hard for them, you know, to just divide that type of because of that just the shift from that type of exercise to a benchmark, uh now they are going to exercise the benchmark visibilities. If they are not visible, they are going to select a new station. That means just selection for the benchmarks.

Here, Dawit recognizes that socio-spatial practices like the sharing of houses can scramble “benchmark visibilities.” Cultural knowledge in such moments enhances data quality. In this sense, the practical and cultural knowledges of city life come to the fore, and mark the outcome of what is typically described as technical work. If the tools of European surveyors are not better than tools of Ethiopian surveyors, then “confidence” is really the substantial gap between the practice of foreigners and locals.

The grey areas between technical knowledge and cultural knowledge underscore many of the work relations at the EiABC. Tigist refers to the massive wood model of Addis Ababa that EiABC colleagues made (See Figure 15 in Chapter Four) as a particular illustration of how different notions about method are grounded in cultural difference.

You see, this was the first time ever a 3D projection of the city [of Addis Ababa] was requested so that we see how the city was growing and the idea was like in Zürich. I don't know if you've been there, in Zürich. They have the model of the city in a room and I wish I had seen it. For some reason, I never went to see it, but whenever a building was done, you had to make a model of 1:1000 [scale] and then actually go and change it [on] that big model.

Really?

They request that you do that in Zürich, yes. So its always updated and you see the

overall. And if you wanted to do a study in the city, you would go there directly so that you see everything right there.

That's amazing! [laughs]

I know. Zürich is crazy, in a way. [laughs] The people in Zürich are [laughs] not from this world... So the idea was, you see the whole city in model and understand the fabric and you get to see it from up there and see elements.

Instead of continual revisions to reflect changes to the real city, as in the case of these seemingly otherworldly Swiss planners, the model of Addis Ababa was already out of date by time of its completion and would never be updated on a continual basis. If not quite the result of “white magic” in Belay’s account, the huge model speaks to both Ethiopian expertise and the seemingly continual enhancements of Swiss technical precision.

Adimasu is very appreciative of the efforts of foreign specialists who come to EiABC. His foreign colleagues tend to arrive on renewable contracts of one, two or three years, so that their daily contacts with Ethiopians are regular in nature. In particular, Adimasu has great respect for a German colleague who he believes has not only done good work for the institute, but even married an Ethiopian woman, has had children with her, and appears to take part in Ethiopian traditions in many ways. Yet Adimasu regrets this is not always so easy. Without referring to other foreigners by name, he says that even “an amazing guy with a lot of expertise,” might struggle to pair their expertise with nuanced communication skills.

At times there were professors who came here and then were really very direct, one-to-one, putting people to work and only to work without really knowing how to deal with them. This had a bad effect and they were even in a position to cancel the contract and go back in less than a year, or in few months, or even there was an instance where some of them came and stayed for a week and then, you know, they

thought, “Maybe I would not fit, sorry.” And then they had to leave us.

In a more reflexive mode, Adimasu also questions the notion of the exceptionalist nature of claims about Ethiopian culture.

I’m sure every country and every nation, every context has its own distinct values, right? So even though we Ethiopians, apparently, seem to say we have a very distinct, very exceptional culture that needs a very sensitive way of handling... I see some of these experts, or foreigners, coming here and trying to adopt and then in some ways succeeding, but in some ways also failing. Because the culture has a big role, really. And you can see it, you can read it. So I don’t want to reach into conclusion, but when people keep quiet its not really a sign of agreement, usually. It is also a sign of being not very happy about it. Or a sign of sidelining.

Ethiopian cultural practices, according to Adimasu, seem to require “a very sensitive way of handling.” Rather than simply one more place in which universal principles of planning can be imposed, the particulars of the Ethiopian cultural context matter in the office, as on the street. Adimasu and many of his colleagues have a strong sense of pride in both.

Contingencies and consultancies

As Ethiopian planners keep vigilant about the possibilities for developing expertise on their own terms, their need to develop practical experience also requires them to attend to certain contingencies of employment. Planners anticipate better opportunities in the future, as the city’s built environment changes. As a professional cadre whose labor is required by government for more and more purposes, planners are certainly shielded from the starkest material questions of survival that many other residents of Addis Ababa face on a daily basis. After all, like most others in Ethiopia’s emerging middle class, planners are highly educated,

multilingual, and likely to have had considerable time abroad. Yet even these considerable advantages in social capital do not entirely offset the uncertainties that are basic to a career in planning. Three are three particular drivers of this uncertainty: low salary, the temporality of planning rounds, and weak institutional structures.

First, as with most public servants in Ethiopia, planners tend to draw a relatively low salary. According to some of my informants, this is especially trying as cost of living adjustments do not keep pace with the steady inflation in a rapidly growing city. On the other hand, reflecting on a career of 28 years, Kibram represents another point of view. He reveres for the role of the public servant, even up to the expectation of low pay. More concerning for Kibram than salary is the repetitive nature of planning within the sub-city offices, where

You're stuck in one planning type. If you go to the sub-city, you work the same planning every year and stuck there. Some of the planners, they quit this planning. Most of them, they go to the construction. You don't earn money in the planning because *if you are a planner, in my opinion, you should be a civil servant*. You work for a government because planning, the exercise, is a government office, not like architecture... Planning is a huge task. Planning should be controlled by the government ... Most of them, they quit planning to go to the construction due to they want to get more money! The rest they will [be] bore[d] by the planning practice.

For Kibram, planners must have a strong commitment to public service and social improvement. He sees planning as steady work for steady people. The variety and challenge of the work itself which helps to make it worthwhile, not the pay.

Many seem to agree that variety and challenge in the work can, however, be coupled with good pay if one is hired on for structural planning. As head of the GIS unit at the Planning Office, Dawit was able to enjoy a longer affiliation in order to prepare some groundwork for his colleagues. He retains a part-time role at EiABC while working part-time at the planning office. He believes he and his team have outperformed expectations from early on in the project.

Normally the Municipality is very happy, especially with our work. You know, normally this is not our responsibility to provide the data for them. In reality, there are responsible institutions for that [elsewhere in the municipality]. But as you know, in most cases, most offices they don't have skilled or experienced professionals... this project [was] supposed to work, just like two years. But now we are in a third year because the contribution of this project is not only generating the plan or a proposal but we provide different information. For the Municipality, we are almost now the sole institute to provide different informations [sic] because we have a skilled staff here... *The project pays well when you compare to the other offices. The salary is more than double. When you are comparing to the Addis Ababa University, the salary is four times [what that] one is because the project pays well.* Then because of that, you know, the project can get ... experienced staffs. [italics added]

Good pay distinguishes the municipality's structural planning office and it also distinguishes Dawit and his colleagues from others less "skilled and experienced." What is particularly significant here is Dawit's contrast of planning offices to the salary of the EiABC, which pays local faculty on par with other AAU colleges.

However, as compelling as the salary of structural planning rounds is, a second driver of uncertainty here is their complex temporality. Structural planning in Addis Ababa is the premier national event in planning, as it concentrates many of the most skilled planners in the country together and gives them a rare platform to develop their skillsets together and

exchange knowledge. In principle, the structural plan for Addis Ababa commences every ten years, starting from a series of research studies from a smaller team of senior experts. In practice, though, my informants emphasized that planning rounds do not usually start or end on time. More importantly, the many years between structural plan revisions mean that participants are of course usually engaged in other regular work to sustain them throughout their careers. Depending on the position, one's role in a planning round might last for a few months or up to two or three years. To take part in the structural plan, a planner might quit their regular job, go on hiatus, or reduce work hours drastically in order.

Assembling a structural plan team of dozens of specialists and administrative support staff is thus something of a remade wheel each time. Though the same experts who performed well in the past round reliably draw offers again, the logic of networking binds structural planning teams together as in other projects, as Tigist notes.

You always ask, "Who am I going to do the project with?" And its like you know, you can, let's say, be 90% sure or 80% sure that you'd be doing it either with this person or this person or this person. The professional circle is quite small still. So but if you already have done a project with those people, you already know your pros and cons – you know, how you work them – so it always makes the next project easier and more interesting to do it with. I think in that sense, that's why its quite interesting for me, I would say.

As the flow of strong graduates continues from the EiABC and the Civil Service University, it could be that merely relying on the network of this "professional circle" may not hold up in future planning rounds. Competition at some point could likely erode the seemingly tacit understandings of planners that each of them belong, especially as to concurrent planning

rounds. In the span of a career at least thirty years in length, it is not unthinkable that one might be associated with two or three master plans.

The third source of uncertainty to consider here is the growing prominence of consultancies. Planning, as Kibram said, remains a public sector vocation. But institutions of planning less and less resemble the permanent bureaucracies of previous governments. Under the EPRDF, planning institutions are a bit more flexible. Government wants them held open to project-specific overlaps and mashups. Certainly the rise of project-specific and advisory collaborations with foreign institutes has driven part of this. On the academic side, too, with faculty wages stagnant and pay sometimes arriving weeks or months late, many faculty seek side-projects as consultants on planning-related research projects for NGOs or INGOs. These dynamics make the field of planning even more porous. As described at the beginning of this chapter, it is increasingly common for the same individuals to have a primary job, and multiple supplementary income routes.

Memoranda of Understanding between institutions have begun to steer labor supply and also can speed up delivery of projects. The current master planning round is the first one in which the EiABC has been able to be a ready supplier of local talent to the municipality's planning office. The irony of EiABC's privileged role in the refinement of planning practice, as Tigist notes, is the risk that is that as it proves successful, its success may narrow the pathways for professionalization of people outside EiABC's orbit.

We were saying that EiABC ... shouldn't be doing these consultancy jobs because it might be competing and killing the consultancy offices that actually are outside

because the urban realm is a new field. People are not yet used to it. This tendering and giving these new jobs is really, really a new thing. We don't have so much urban offices. We have architectural consulting offices. We don't have so many urban planning, urban design consulting offices. So the argument was that if EiABC was taking all the jobs, it would be killing the ones that were actually on the market, which is not the intention because we are teaching and trying to grow the field and you know, we're graduating students. So these graduates should be able to go outside and find jobs and work in the market. Not all of them will be here at the EiABC. So that was a discussion that was started so as a result, what I know and what we do is, we do not take every small consultancy job that comes through.

The issue is all the more pressing given that a key concern of the developmental state is the promotion of employment and the emergence of a local private sector through protection. EiABC embodies a local/global collaboration that is grounded in the culture of research and training. Here, the logics of party politics and ideology, as in the strategy that protects local players from competition, comes into contradiction with the party's pragmatic goal of building consent through delivering development.

In sum, a professional cadre of planners in Ethiopia has emerged alongside the infrastructural turn in Ethiopia's development. Ethiopians fill out all the managerial, specialist and administrative roles at the master planning office. As director, Derege reports to an entirely Ethiopian staff at the Addis Ababa municipality. Of course, foreign consultants are acknowledged for their supporting and advisory roles in the field, and for their contributions to a new pipeline of professionalization which connects EiABC with its partners at ETH-Zürich. Regular engagements with foreigners will continue, but Addis Ababa has become a site of professionalized urban practice on increasingly local terms. Yet while Ethiopian planners anticipate a better and more secure professional field in relation to a changing city, they

struggle to cope with many of the uncertainties basic to a rapidly transforming society. Planners counter ongoing blocks in the labor market by taking on a variety of consultancies beyond the public sector, thereby establishing themselves to the extent necessary in research, private sector, and I/NGO capacities. Their aspirational drive is never apart from the local state, but depends on the state's coordinating role as it joins together legal grounds for planning and the legitimating capabilities of urban governance.

Negotiating the agonistic party politics of development

As a projection of state power, programs of urban development derive from important premises about politics that extend deep into economy and culture. Enrolling the expertise of urban planners is a sort of incremental step by the local developmental state in matching the local situation with prospects for global enmeshment. Yet planners often have primary commitments to the landscapes, lifeways and everyday logics of the city. Many of Ethiopia's planners were attracted to such work because they were participants in, and celebrants of, Ethiopian city life as it had been. So while an ethos of improvement undoubtedly joins the work lives of planners to the party politics of their employers in the broader city bureaucracy, how might the work of renewal be different from a pure form of bureaucratic action?

There is little here that reflects Weberian notions of disinterested professional action coordinated in bureaucracy. Instead, there are some significant double-binds to consider here, both at the level of planning practice and at the level of urban theory. "Studying up" at

the work lives of planners in Addis Ababa helps to reveal the particular constellation of social forces at play in a particular time and place of rapid urban change. Again, as described in Chapter Three, critiques of the “anti-politics machine” (Ferguson 1994) and the narrow practices of “techno-politics” (Mitchell 2002), presented development as a depoliticizing domain whose ultimate function is to prevent the emergence of social and political alternatives to state power. On such views, urban development is a means for restructuring the city around the state and its drive for capitalist accumulation. Jacobs (1961) was just one of many critical urbanists interrogating the developmentalist reason of the planner and ultimately unmasking them as agents of capital.

Clearly, Ethiopia’s state-led ventures in mass housing and city-wide reprogramming of land use are ways of rethinking cities in a grand, sweeping style. Addis Ababa is being remade as a kind of megaproject in itself and it may become as significant to national development ambitions as dam construction or other such mega-projects. As technical agents, planners are a bit like the traveling agricultural extension agents who intervene in rural areas and promote government fertilizer. They present new possibilities through development while discarding recourse to old livelihoods and strategies. At multiple sites and scales across Ethiopia, development is frequently accompanied by forced displacement, and to the present has shared little of the gradualist mode of creative destruction or erasure that are familiar in studies of gentrification. Nevertheless, the decision to impose certain development programs on an overwhelmingly poor population happens with a measure of consent, as many expect personal benefits to accrue from it (Pankhurst and Tiemelissan 2014).

Development is a process that frequently surprises, disappoints, and fails. The developmental state generates legitimation by presenting itself as having the unique capability to address the material needs of overlooked citizens. Of course these are precisely the same grounds occupied by technical specialists such as planners. But instead of being willing agents, planners both challenge and accommodate the institutional constraints around them.

Zelalem, the engineer-turned-developer, recognizes instead that the state is maximally involved in urban society, even as modes of accumulation remain limited.

At one time, about 150 years ago, the capitalists made society so productive and wealth accumulated in the few and that wealth needed to be redistributed to avoid the onset of catastrophic revolutions like what happened in Russia. So social democrats responded to that disparity by redistribution. And most of the issues that stand now – the debates between welfare and minority interest, things like that – were really for problems created 150 years ago. All because wealth has accumulated within the few. The vested interest would continue to dictate how much of that wealth needs to be redistributed. Come to Ethiopia, to places like ours, there's no wealth to begin with. So whatever wealth is extracted from the people is actually extracted not by any capitalist, but by the state. *The state at best, it is a benevolent dictator that extracts from society and redistributes again. At worst, it extracts your blood!*

[Both laugh.]

But in anyway, there is no agreement. I am a rich person, considering what [position] Ethiopia is in. *[pause of 2 beats]* There is nothing—I don't have so much wealth to redistribute, really. What I should do is to halt the process of extraction that I can, or I'm afraid to carry out through rent-seeking practices.

For Zelalem, the need to redistribute wealth is almost impossible while the developmental state emerges, as “there is no wealth to begin with.” Though we both laughed at his ironic gesture in the interview, his position was grounded in the tragic recognition of his brother's death during

the Derg years. Like many, Zelalem has long been accustomed to maneuvering with a view to these kinds of circumstances and does not want to put a target on his own back.⁴⁷

In disentangling planners from the state that employs them, the relations of state and society need to be refined here in relation to party politics. There are some modes of organization that contain traces of the Derg years and often it seems that the party is running the country, not really a state. Planners are generally hired on the basis of merit, as in the networks described in the previous section. They are promoted as they gain more experience and establish credentials. However, beyond these meritocratic pathways, I also gleaned that appointment on the basis to adherence with party ideology can at times play a role.⁴⁸ As with the notions of the EPRDF's development army, and the *gim gema* tradition from earlier days of the TPLF's time in the bush, the possibility of having government informants or party sympathizers working in one's midst can pose challenges and lead to a chilling effect on one's work and professional prospects.

For example, the beginning of the 2014 academic year started haltingly in Addis Ababa. At the Addis Ababa University, the umbrella of the EiABC, students and faculty were

⁴⁷ Some other interviews that fall just outside the scope of the dissertation also attest to the lived experiences of loss, imprisonment, and other traumas from the Derg years. For those coming of age during the Red Terror period of 1978, these were indelible moments that continue to exert a melancholy force on the present.

⁴⁸ From some of my informants, I gathered that upper managerial levels in the planning office were occupied by EPRDF party members, especially since they were often coordinating directly with the municipality. I am not sure if party membership was an official requirement for such positions, but I suppose it could have been accorded to people almost as a matter of course, with few expectations associated. Few informants ever brought up the issue of their own status as members of the EPRDF or of fledgling opposition parties. Some informants were very guarded, whereas others would sometimes very candid as to their own reflections, especially given the tacit understanding that I would not record or share their views. While I took care to assure informants (as well as my friends and colleagues in the field) that I had no interest in intervening in party politics, I admit there were times when I felt I could lose informants or even referrals to potential informants. As a result, I rarely asked about party membership status and could be certain about a person's party status on a few occasions.

required to attend a variety of “political trainings” with either their registration status and professional credibility hanging in the balance. While most agreed to participate, in a few cases, students made minimal signs of their participation and then walked out *en masse*. A few attendees of these trainings described them to me as being relatively calm and collected, even boring. In one account conveyed to me, three party members sat at a table in the front of the room. They were not recognizable as high-level officials. But they broached the subject of comparing the merits of “democratic developmentalism” and neoliberalism as competing means of governance. They asked faculty to assess the merits of each and claimed to be present essentially in a listening or canvassing capacity.

One of the constants across of the work lives of many planners was the likelihood of official intrusions and inquiries from officials that came at a cost to one’s daily work. Planners often recounted to me how they were Internal meetings for many planners, or last-minute requests for presentations or briefings were common, and those planners with some seniority were often being called in as experts to closed-door meetings at City Hall in Piassa. My meetings and interviews were delayed or canceled as a result of such exigencies. A kind of top-down leadership, a vanguard leadership of planning cadre, was easy to discern in these inter-office relations. For example, while recognizing the surety of municipal leaders, Kibram also chafes at the inflexibility in municipal approaches to managing planning activities, who seem to resist the progressive notions that he and other planners present:

What you observe is, a new approach is came [*sic*] before twenty years ... but you don’t see it in the due course of the planning process. You have to expect after ten years to change the planning process. That makes boring the planning process. But I’m optimistic it will be changed if you put creative leaders in the planning office.

According to Kimbram, if local leadership is inflexible and lacks creativity, such leaders still have top-down controls of process and for the present ensure that the pace of change is slow.

This perspective accords with Binyam's reflections on the nature of party rule today, conveying some echoes of the punitive years of the Derg. However, he finds the present period a time of even deeper and more pervasive incursions into the practice of planning than in the past.

In the Derg regime, you know, you know that Mengistu was there, he was a dictator. Ok. You know the political system, the party system. One of the most interesting things about Mengistu's era was he was a dictator. He was a dictator. He had his mechanisms *down* to the lowest level. But when it comes to professional issues, like for example the planning of a city – decide on what should be done here, and should be there – the politicians never come out to discuss. Their purpose was politics ... They don't go into these local issues, technical issues. Now, the political party is involved in everything. You want to change the land use of this place as a planner because you think that is the proper land use. They see it not from a technical perspective. They want to see it from a political perspective. They want to see how they can gain personally and how they can gain in a group. So there is a very strong involvement in every dimension of life, you know? And this is why life is very difficult now. Because the political system, the political hierarchy, it is not limited in some spaces like it used to be during the Derg regime. If you want to buy a piece of bread, I'm sure at some point in the future, you'll have to ask permission from the political party ...

For Binyam, "the political hierarchy" at the municipality extends further into the work lives of public servants like planners than in the socialist era. He sees politicization of what he believes should be a properly technical domain left to experts.

Yet some planners readily accept these challenges as a matter of course. In a particularly frank moment, Mesganaw suggested his total acceptance of a kind of patriotism.

Confiding that he sometimes wondered if his judgment might be impaired on the matter, he said to me, “I submit myself to the future of Ethiopia!” At that moment, I recalled a public discussion a few months before when I saw Mesganaw speaking on the arrival of light rail at Mesqel Square in central Addis Ababa. Other planners expressed their dismay at the disruption of an elevated light rail train crossing such an iconic public place. The famous dais that political leaders had traditionally stood upon while watching ceremonies and parades would now be virtually erased from view. But before his colleagues and members of the public, Mesganaw was alone in his belief that the train would merely help to define the existing form of the square—doubling the long flat side on one side of the square, while the other side has a long curve. Recalling this public moment and his discussion with me, I found it difficult to disentangle that the intermingling of personal opinion and political favor.

This entanglement harkens back Chapter Three, as PM Meles Zenawi’s claimed that “the development project is a hegemonic project in the Gramscian sense—the key actors voluntarily adhere to its objectives and principles” (Meles 2012: 167). While planners easily figure into his view as “key actors” of development working in accordance with party objectives and principles, there is some doubt as to how much of the party’s agenda enjoys their consent. Of course, some like Mesganaw may profess their full consent. On Kate Crehan’s reading, however, “Gramsci’s admittedly difficult concept of hegemony” is best grasped “as a way of thinking about the complicated way consent and coercion are entangled with one another, rather than as the delineation of a specific kind of power” (Crehan 2002: 101). Crehan’s emphasis on how “consent and coercion are entangled” is perhaps a more accurate way of understanding a professional cadre with multiple, mixed intentions. After all, the

developmental state is, for Meles, a specific sort of highly centralized party project. Meles' call for "Revolution from above" (Meles 2012: 166) might have been unrecognizable to Gramsci, whose own political concern had more to do with conditions for the formations of party power prior to revolution. Indeed, Gramsci conceived of a "political party" as "the first cell in which there come together germs of a collective will tending to become universal and total" (Gramsci 1971: 129). Considering that EPRDF has many detractors, a key challenge for the developmental state would seem to be to produce a professional cadre in such a way so that it appears to have enjoyed consent from them. Perhaps the technical assistance that is asked at municipal-level meetings might function as an expression of consent through technical assistance, but it still conveys coercive power. If planners do not affirm a collective will, then ostensibly for Meles's conception, a collective will would come about through coercion, whether inside or outside of the state.

Contesting territory at the urban/regional interface

The stakes of these conceptions of the developmental state are no less clear in an adjacent question of territory: the urban/regional interface at the outskirts of Addis Ababa. As described in Chapter Four, the massive redevelopment of Addis Ababa is the local manifestation of state-led infrastructural development in Ethiopia today, and it depends in many ways on the program of urban renewal. The emerging notion of integrated planning, which is to stitch Addis Ababa into larger-scale regional planning after its new status as a Charter City, derives from expectations of growth and on the demarcation of a metropolitan region that is plastic enough to accommodate urban expansion. In 2012, the Addis Ababa

municipality approached Addis Ababa with the long view of the regional planner by inaugurating the *Addis Ababa and the Surrounding Oromia Special Zone Integrated Development Plan Project Office*. As preparatory studies for the planning round were concluded, a “special zone” was imagined that would extend from Addis Ababa roughly 30-40 kilometers into the outlying Oromia region. In principle, each of the five cities in Oromia and their surrounding areas would specialize in sectoral and functional tasks for the metropolitan unit. Of course, to a great extent, the argument in favor of urban renewal and densification of the city

Still, assumptions for continued growth and expansion would seem to recommend integrated planning approach to Addis Ababa and its surrounds. Previous master plans, in Kibram’s words, had treated Addis Ababa like an “island,” by focusing on Addis Ababa’s internal parts, instead of thinking of the city in relation to a metropolitan region. After all, regional planners often aim at the provision of streamlined infrastructures, efficient service delivery, and other such public goods. Catalyzed by a combination of cheap land, limited infrastructure and smaller human settlements lying outside the city, the short-run burdens of development within a city’s expansion area would be offset by the long-run benefits of a metropolitan region of harmonized urban functions. Regional planners and city managers on this view work together to erode the spatial, economic and political limits to what they see as a city’s inexorable growth.

Yet in the case of Addis Ababa’s expansion, the prospects of integrated planning run headlong into the territorial logic of ethnic federalism. While residents living within the “special

zone” might see various combinations of challenge and opportunity in Addis Ababa’s rapid growth, the consultations between Addis Ababa and its surrounding municipalities were not reciprocal or very participatory. In particular, the largest instance of expansion has been a corridor of roughly 20 kilometers from Addis Ababa’s outskirts southeast towards the city of Adama in Oromia. Rapid urban expansion under integrated planning has been a major concern in other parts of Ethiopia, too, from the emerging corridor connecting Hawassa in the SNNPR with Shashamane in Oromia, to the expansion of the city of Harar outside the bounds of that small region, again into Oromia. Through the production of new infrastructure and the agglomeration of new economic linkages, these cities and corridors can challenge the territoriality of the country, and demand cooperation across boundaries when only autonomous decision-making is possible.

Dissenting views on these changes came to a head while I was still in the field in 2014. The first of many public contestations of urban expansion occurred in Ambo, Oromia, in April of 2014. This a medium-sized university town lying 120 kilometers west of Addis Ababa. Ambo University students held an unsanctioned protest about conjoined claims of EPRDF cronyism, inequitable development and the denial of Oromo sovereignty. For them, the expansion of Addis Ababa under tightly controlled party coordination was just one more form of dispossession of the Oromo people during the very early days of modern Ethiopia’s founding, and a denial of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Oromia within Ethiopia’s federalist framework. Police broke up the protest and opened fire, killing several students (Human Rights Watch 2016). Dozens of others were detained and disappeared, as martial law and media

blackouts were imposed. Though it received little local media coverage at first, the incident prompted national and international news coverage and condemnation.

Such ruptures show how surely the pursuit of consent can shift to the use of coercion and police violence. Meles' call for "a powerful bureaucratic apparatus, including powerful police and army to free itself from pressures both from the elite and the population at large" (Meles 2012: 166), as explored in Chapter Three, is crucially relevant here. So too are the official statements of officials in Ethiopia who sought to minimize concern about police violence and the source of claims against the ruling party, and even seizing the occasion for a chance to criticize Eritrea for fomenting the unrest (Mwakideu 2016).

For many of the planners I have come to know, reactions to the urban uprisings have been a bit more nuanced. On the one hand, it was sometimes suggested to me that while the municipality had a bold, forward-looking approach worth pursuing, but that the communication of the purposes of expansion in integrated planning was lacking. On this view, the short-term burdens of development would ultimately be justified by the full scope of the outcome. Furthermore, I heard from planners that radicals and separatists had filled the void of this poor communication so as to reframe events and whip up passion for their own political gain; well-meaning people had simply been manipulated and led to fear the worst of unrealistic scenarios for development. On this reading, the urban uprisings were contrary to real leadership residing only in the party, and more popular pressure would likely only inflame party officials. In the long run, this could only detract from the positive contributions of technical experts like

planners. Without such a source of stability and direction, a fractious situation for intercommunal tension and violence could occur.⁴⁹

When Binyam regarded the ways in which planners might alleviate escalating risk in these urbanizing ethnic politics, he emphasizes constraints on the agency of planners. For him the issue is inseparable from the developmental state and its internal logic:

So what is the planner's role or what is the planner's responsibility regarding this ethnic question in the country today?

[pause 5 beats] You have no role at all. I mean, whether its as a town planner or I mean as a professional or a citizen, you have no role in this whole process of politicization because you see what happened was that when this socialist regime was overthrown, it was not overthrown by people. It was overthrown by people who came as freedom fighters, call them freedom fighters. So when they took power, they put their own ideology, they put their own idea of how the future of this country has to go. So for them, this ethnic-based federalization was the key to economic development, to ethnic equalization, et cetera, et cetera. So in this, you don't have any role. I mean, you just look at what is happening, you just listen to what they are planning to do, and when you are happy you just applause [claps] and when you are not, you just remain neutral.

That's ... that's ... what we are doing. We just see what's happening. You like it or not, that's up to you.

Binyam's wry account of the positionality of planners suggests that the planner has little recourse in the broader machine of administration. As a closed domain of policy-making, the

⁴⁹ Here is the sort of instance when Ethiopian exceptionalism has clear limits. If a neighboring country like Kenya (which for decades has been revered in Ethiopia for its comparative stability and good governance) could become the stage for multiple forms of ethnic animosity and violence done by actors in and outside the state, why could it not happen in Ethiopia? While "being visionary" and aiming at the promises of Ethiopian exceptionalism, planners may struggle against exclusionary aspects of territoriality under EPRDF.

party apparatus is composed of revolutionary “freedom fighters,” not the reformers who might dispassionately be open to expert analysis.

Urban protests followed across much of Oromia into 2015 and 2016. Even in the face of police reprisals, the protests had opened up a new domain of multiethnic solidarity against the framework of ethnic federalism. Criticisms of exclusionary development imagined by EPRDF were easily mapped onto inequalities in various rapidly changing cities in the Amhara and Harar regions, and even in Addis Ababa. More international attention emerged on the issue when Feyissa Lelisa, an Oromo runner for Ethiopia, crossed the finish line of an Olympic race with his hands crossed above his head in solidarity with this emerging struggle.⁵⁰

Prospects for reform across a host of urban policy issues related to development in Addis Ababa are not clear. In January 2016, after I had left the field, the Oromo Peoples’ Democratic Organization (OPDO), a part of the EPRDF coalition, announced the suspension of the integrated planning strategy for Addis Ababa. Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn would called for a six-month state of emergency in October 2016, which was then extended by Parliament. By early 2017, the EPRDF released 22,000 political prisoners in relation to the uprisings, partly in a bid to show that reforms were possible (Merga 2017). However, as I write in December 2017, cities like Bahir Dar, Shashamane, Ambo and Chelenko have very recently been marked by both protests and killings by government agents (Abdi Latif Dahir 2017).

⁵⁰ Soon, Feyisa Lelisa would seek asylum in the United States on the grounds that he would not be safe upon return. His subsequent interviews inflamed Ethiopian officials eager to dispel further reporting and criticism (Longman 2017).

These contestations of territory are arguably the single most serious external threat to the EPRDF coalition in its 25 years of rule. That these political conditions have emerged in the context of rapid urbanization and infrastructure-led development may not be surprising, but this moment does mark an urban turn in Ethiopia's complex regional politics. As these urban manifestations of national development policy continue to emerge, and as urbanization continues to unfold across Ethiopia, they throw the structuring role of federalism into new relief. That the planning round begun in 2012 was suspended is a rare setback for the developmental state's approach and is perhaps a bellwether of EPRDF's increasingly difficult challenge in balancing the centralization of policy-making with commitments to local autonomy. The situation also casts doubt on the government's capacity to produce space through means of consent, rather than outright coercion,

In place of the suspended planning round, a new integrated regional planning round for Addis Ababa and its surrounds has begun, apparently with a more modest spatial extent. Among the ongoing challenges for urban planners in the near future is certainly the need for densification and the notion "that growth should be vertical" (Interview with Derege). This is especially the case given that prospects for further expansion are being challenged by political unrest and resistance. As the municipality has not suggested a departure from either the legal arrangements around land or government-built condominiums, the urban renewal program is very likely to continue, even if adopting new strategies or forms.

Conclusion

This Chapter has elaborated on the conception of the developmental state in Chapter Three by presenting an institutional context of planners. I have shown that the status of planners as technical experts is never far removed from the political dicta of the ruling party. Meles' understanding of the developmental state as a kind of Gramscian revolutionary project is inaccurate, but it does open up some interesting opportunities for analysis. There are clear parallels here from Aklilu's recollection of required trainings on principles of Scientific Socialism at universities to TPLF *gim gema* traditions and contemporary accounts of required EPRDF political trainings at universities. Such occasions are meant to draw up consent for a superior social order defined by party elites. From the suffering that Zelalem and Gebril experienced at the hands of the Derg to recent police killings in response to urban uprisings, state power today uses coercive force as in the socialist era. In between these expressions of the developmental state, there are of course many gradations. Urban renewal, first conceived in any meaningful sense during the Derg years, has now come to the fore as an imminently public expression of power that blurs coercion and consent together.

While programs of modernization and development aim at futures of fresh possibility, they cannot but help to build upon development attempts of the past. Ethiopia's developmental state strives to distinguish itself by delivering development in many of the sites where past regimes failed. In Addis Ababa, the very proving grounds of state-led visions of infrastructural development are the slums that had grown through neglect during the Derg era. Though the EPRDF pursues capitalist investment for the structural transformation of the country, it is evidently engaged in a post-socialist political project of legitimation that was prefigured by the Derg. The planning context under the two regimes is, however, distinguished

in many ways. The technical expertise of planners and capacity for implementation are both vastly enhanced today, urban territories are deemed more consequential for national development, and the growing emphasis on infrastructure has synchronized with the interest of global investors in Ethiopia and elsewhere in East Africa. As public servants, planners are crucial agents of governance but they have yet to advocate for alternative planning visions with much success.

Chapter 6. Conclusion

Introduction

This dissertation has presented a particular case study of the politics of urban restructuring. While this is undoubtedly a classic theme for urban geography and urban studies, there remains a dearth of literature examining urban restructuring in Africa and other territories undergoing rapid urbanization. Aspects of local state power in such contexts are too often left unexamined. Like other master narratives of urban living, massive redevelopment may be presented as a totalizing vision for Addis Ababa, but like other projects of planning, it is provisional and subject to change and accommodation.

Urban renewal has a relatively short history in Addis Ababa, but as an instance of the production of space, it is related to many other locales across the country that are also caught up in infrastructure-led development. Planners in Ethiopia represent an under-considered vantage point by which to understand the powers of a strong state in a poor, rapidly transforming African city. In this dissertation, I have argued that while their expertise does not allow them to exceed ruling party dicta, it does position them to make some strategic and long-term contributions to the contours of urban change. As the developmental state continues to understand itself in relation to an urbanizing society, their prospects at bringing about change could be enhanced. This concluding chapter sets out the main contributions and limitations of the study, as both bear on the resituating of geographic research in relation to new conceptions of territory.

Limitations of the study

The study is limited in three main respects. First, any study of urban restructuring is limited by adopting perspectives of urban planners themselves. Scholars of urban politics and social movements might find a study of this sort insufficiently engaged with actors and situations beyond the state. Scholars adopting such a focus are often persuasively argued as occluding political alternatives, cultures of resistance, or even everyday means of accommodation. I recognize that the very pretense of a developmental state requires some analysis of just how development is producing consent within people outside the state, so I am sympathetic with such concerns. Yet my decision to work with planners was largely informed by the sense that while these agents were part of the state, their actual situation in relation to the state was more agonistic, and I found that they made good narrators of the key dramas of urban development. I was also partially persuaded by my reading of the literature on African cities that for many reasons scholars have a tendency to stand in the margins and reveal territories of state power from marginal vantage points. I judged that insider dynamics of urban development in Ethiopia are not understood so thoroughly, so I wanted to put my own efforts in the service of revealing such agendas. Practically speaking, too, my credibility as an interlocutor and colleague with other urbanists was relatively high. Most of my informants had themselves taken training in geography, had earned multiple degrees, spoke at least two languages, ate well, wore smart clothes, and were partially embedded in the academy as professors and young scholars in their own right. While clearly an outsider in almost every way in Addis Ababa, I judged that these similarities made me the sort of outsider-researcher well suited to this sort of research design. In office places, design studios, condominium blocks,

conferences, and cafes, I always was marked me as a white male outsider, and at the same time never as someone with much agency within Ethiopian politics. I believe this helped me to secure access to many of my informants. For example, research within the rubble of demolition sites or in the households managing changing livelihoods would have presented far more acute challenges to the study. As a white foreigner still gaining language and cultural skills, the novelty of my presence in some places would have undoubtedly drawn some unwanted attention to myself and to the more marginal and vulnerable people around me. I have intended this work as a supplement to the rich work on themes of urban marginality and displacement, already being done by accomplished scholars.

The second and third limitations on the project are related, and have mostly to do with the unfolding of events during the study period. The second limitation stems from a key constraint on data collection in that a new master plan resulting from the master planning round begun in 2012 never was completed, and thus never became available. This is largely because of the institutional response to significant pressure exerted by a diffuse social movement contesting the high modern development agenda of EPRDF, as described in Chapter Five. I had hoped that my time in the field would yield data from the most recent planning texts, maps, drawings and ephemera that would have emerged from the current planning round. Early in the course of my research, it seemed that the planning round started in 2012 would coincide with the unfolding of my own research and culminate in a newly revised master plan by 2014. A few informants even told me while I was in the field in 2014 that certain documents could be sent to me back in the United States, when the planning round had finally concluded. However, the expected dates for the plan's completion in 2014 and 2015 came and

went, and the plan was shelved for certain by January of 2016. As I write in late 2017, there still is no revised master plan for Addis Ababa, though a new planning round has begun that apparently incorporates a smaller “special zone” area beyond the city limits of Addis Ababa. I came to accept the impossibility of reviewing a finished plan. I counted it as just one more reflection of the open-ended nature of planning. Planning, after all, is a provisional activity that is marked by failure, and ultimately, by revision. Moreover, planning under conditions of rapid urbanization contends with particularly steep challenges and uncertain outcomes. On the other hand, as noted in Chapter 5, there seems reason to presume that so long as long as the territorial bounds of the city will continue to promote densification and expansion as a question of vertical growth, urban renewal will be preserved as an important attribute of the next plan. In that respect, this project has been a moment in time in a historical arc during which the urban renewal program was being refined, tried, and refined again.

A third sort of limitation for this study came from the emergence of a nascent social movements across several regional bounds. In this sense, the understanding of urban renewal that I have sought to advance can only speak indirectly to the question of urban expansion, which has of course become the major focal point of resistance to a certain model of managing urbanization’s challenges under EPRDF. The political dynamics of urban renewal that I endeavored to research are being overshadowed by the resurgence of another politics in a newly urbanized political geography of ethnic identity. As urbanization in Ethiopia synchronizes changes in urban space with changes across regions and leads to new expressions of uneven development, a particular strain is placed on the interface between Charter Cities and their regions. In all these cases, the foundational assumption of ethno-federalism, that regional

autonomy can be maintained and protected by the developmental state, is being thoroughly tested. Without fundamental and substantive reforms, planning would seem to remain a practice of governance more tightly linked to the demonstration of state capacity and the question for legitimation than to a lasting vision of spatial justice.

Contributions to scholarly literature

In the Introduction to this dissertation, I described how an “untimely sensibility” was indispensable as I approached this project. This ideographic attention could be taken as either support for development as an ontologically real accomplishment of power, or as some essentialist defense of sovereignty. But I have not meant either of these associations by noting that planners in Addis Ababa aim at new possibilities for urban living. When they draw a line against failed developmentalist visions of the past, their work announces that Ethiopian promises of high modern development has finally arrived in an urban age. Of course, there is a possibility of their own project failing. I have endeavored to show that change of this sort requires understanding through local histories, even as it should enjoy broader comparative treatment in prevailing scholarly conceptualizations. James Ferguson’s (1994) classic characterization of development as an “anti-politics machine” attended to the stealthy half-truths and misrepresentations that were basic to the *telos* of “development.” There is much to appreciate in this and other critiques of development as a scientific, closed circuit of expertise (*see also* Mitchell 2002). In Ferguson’s later writing, he emphasizes how the global convergence of African and European development trajectories is no longer a practicable claim in policy:

In a world of non-serialized political economic statuses, the key questions are no longer temporal ones of societal becoming (development, modernization) but spatialized ones of guarding the edges of a status group – hence, the new prominence of walls, borders, and processes of social exclusion in an era that likes to imagine itself as characterized by an ever expanding connection and communication (Ferguson 2006: 192).

Indeed, zonal geographies and new residential segregation of classes in Addis Ababa today reflect Ferguson’s emphasis of “spatialized” processes in defense of a “status group.” Urban renewal as I have described in the dissertation enhances a certain federalist territoriality while likely forestalling popular and democratic modes of integration. Still, Ferguson is perhaps too quick to judge that all this societal becoming is in the past. For Ethiopia and other East African territories of rapid transformation, development as a category of state action never really ended, even if the *telos* of development and the scientific claims of development reports did. Rather than a *lazarus taxon* – a classification assumed dead for years until it reemerges out of nowhere in the historical record – I argue that the developmental state has been assembled from among long-circulating concepts and ambitions.

The more significant ontological trouble emerges in associations between post-development and the ascription of neoliberal subjectivities, particularly in the global south. A decade ago, Fassin (2008) sought to describe Ethiopian development as “situated neoliberalism.” I support a “sophisticated understanding of neoliberalism that insists on hybridity and variegation” (Springer 2014: 158), but I am not convinced that adapting a concept like neoliberalism reveals more than it conceals in all cases of urban change. When is “situating” a prevailing concept like neoliberalism vital to research, and when does it detract

from the pursuit of new ontologies? Amid historical transformations as consequential as rapid urbanization in the Horn of Africa, should not the intensity of local history matter as much to scholarly work as the extensity of global patterns of change?

Here I distinguish neoliberal governance in particular from capitalist relations more broadly. Capital is necessary for these sorts of transformations. Synchronicity with new investment flows along the Indian Ocean rim is no doubt a contributing cause. Yet this capital is not sufficient to explain the inner workings of planning offices. My data show instead that urban renewal is crucial to the massive redevelopment of Addis Ababa. Yet even it would resemble the familiar gestures of urban boosterism, renewal should not be understood merely as a strategy of “world class” city visioning that scholars so often associate with neoliberal reason. Rather, I have shown that urban renewals in Addis Ababa are the local manifestation of an infrastructure-led development agenda at Ethiopia’s national scale, a project which extends deeply into both rural and urban territories. In time, it may become more clear that the Ethiopian situation was a harbinger of broader regional trends in East Africa and that a new territoriality in and through cities was taking shape, fed by a kind of kinetic burst following renewal and state-led development programs of the sort. Ultimately, even if this particular developmental state enrolls both the knowledge of experts and the capital of investors, the legitimation of the party’s capacity is the central aim.

Comparative opportunities can emerge across studies when we examine some of our approaches anew. There is much here in the search for new characteristics and means of urban comparison described by Robinson (2006) and Myers (2011). Here, there may also be

some shared agenda joining political economy and studies of urban governance. Apart from the “roll-back” patterns of neoliberalism famously described by Peck and Tickell (2002), Storper (2016) has questioned the role of neoliberalism in urban governance outright, noting that strong and lasting public investment in some cities of the global north has never abated. Kean Fan Lim (2013: 238) argues that instead of the assumption of neoliberalism in China, “interprovincial and inter-city competition have not devalued perceptions of the central government’s importance,” but instead have given cities reason to enroll federal assistance in securing a strategic local position in the global economy. My aim in noting these recent pieces of scholarship is not to downplay the crucial roles played by neoliberal urban governance in many places throughout the world. Instead, the dissertation shows that so far as individual actors emerge in the private sector or this municipal bureaucracy in Ethiopia, they are not neoliberal subject so much as agents for the consolidate and improvement of state capacities for the production of space. I pursued this case study in part because I hoped that as it traveled into the wider arena of urban studies it might refine prevailing concepts in this sort of way. In the rest of this section, I describe four contributions of the study to scholarly literatures: (1) geographies of expert knowledge and practice in governance; (2) theories of the developmental state; (3) locating African cities in debates about urban restructuring; (4) reconsidering slum futures.

Geographies of expert knowledge and practice in governance

To tell African stories of governance from the standpoint of development practitioners would seem a classic, even obvious, starting point for theorizing change in African cities today. Yet even as there is growing attention to urban planning, design and architecture

in much of Africa, the voices of African planners and other public servants, municipal officials, and bureaucrats are often curiously left out. This is true for recent anthologies on the role of design in the production of space in African cities that are primarily interested in aesthetics and construction (*c.f.* Pinther et al. 2012, Bruyns and Graafland 2012, Lepik 2013), as well as recent influential and ethnographically informed works on everyday life in African cities (Quayson 2014, De Boeck and Plissart 2014, Nuttall and Mbembe 2008, Simone 2004). This gap may be due to the assumption that the role of planners in urban politics is already well understood, or the reality that the reach of many public servants in those cities marked by prolonged crises may be far less consequential than other means of ordering the city. Even those studies of African cities that follow through specific legacies of planning and modernization, and envisage the transformation of urban territories may take the texts, drafts and material artifacts of planning seriously (Silva 2015, Myers 2011, Pieterse 2010; 2008), but rarely engage directly with planners themselves. In recent studies of urban development in Ethiopia, as described in Chapter One, the gap continues; there is often an emphasis on displaced people and not the displacers. Rarely is there a critical read on planning that engages directly with planners, but a couple recently published dissertations on transport infrastructure in Addis Ababa (Alexandra Belinesh Thorer 2015), and waste management in Addis Ababa (Camilla Louise Bjerkli 2013) could signal a change in this direction. As critical studies of African urbanization continue to thicken, more explicit attempts to analyze expert practices of governance will surely emerge.

As I returned my gaze repeatedly to the concerns that my informants identified, I balanced them against frameworks and my own personal inclinations. Studying planners does not in itself advance a radical politics of the commons, but it can help to formulate a more

publicly engaged scholarship and open points of further scholarly and intervention outside of academia as well. The contribution here, following Wilson (2006), is to account for the complexity and crosstalk of diverse interests and experiences at play even among public servants in the local state. I sought to tease out the apparent contradictions of progressive visions of planning – improvement of everyday lives, the production of new housing and other services at a mass scale – and their imbrication within an institutional complex premised on delivering high modern development for the purpose of state legitimation. Even within high modern planning contexts of a one party state, the inscription of order faces significant internal and external challenges.

Theorizing the developmental state

I have sought to explore certain logics of governance within a particular city in order to understand more about the developmental state in Ethiopia. This study's contributions share in the urban studies tradition to refine theories of what counts in the transformation of urban space, and to distill what is particular about one mode for urban restructuring among many other cases. Yet perhaps to some readers, the focus on the developmental state has meant that the dissertation is curiously silent on the relevance of neoliberalism and Chinese neo-imperialism to urban development in Ethiopia. After all, both of these nomenclatures are used to fit African political economies into the geopolitical order today. Indeed, careful renderings of neoliberalism and Chinese neo-imperialism have many things to teach about Africa, just as African sites and situations of governance may illuminate and refine them! Chinese investment

in particular talks loudly and persuasively across much of the African continent and this leads to new platforms for resource extraction and territorial integration. Ethiopia's political elites confer with the World Bank's experts and they seek Chinese investment partners in many sectors, but such relationships do not wholly determine the field of Ethiopian development.

Yet in acknowledging these important themes, I suspended my own curiosities about the relevance of neoliberalism and Chinese neo-imperialism for both methodological reasons and because my data did not support analysis in that direction. As a work of inductive research, my project followed the focus of informants whose work lives are bound up in various aspects of the developmental state, and its opportunistic, still emerging qualities. There were rough fits between this and many of my own assumptions, inspired in part by the literatures profiled in Chapter One. Published scholarship (such as the Marxist and booster approaches that both focus on the reach of capitalist processes) has ordering effects on the scholarly imagination that the literatures and vocabularies still to come cannot have.

On the other hand, while taking my informants seriously, I found myself skeptical when I heard claims of the *categorically distinct nature* of Ethiopian politics or history from broader urban, continental, or global patterns. Across interview transcripts and everyday encounters, many of my informants represented local situations as exceptional and hard to generalize in relation to other places. As described in Chapter Two, there were frequent references to Addis Ababa as an "indigenous city," or the symbolic import of Addis Ababa as Africa's diplomatic capital, or of Ethiopia as Africa's sole anti-colonial project. In interesting ways, this mirrors a tendency across African Studies tradition to make the Horn of Africa's

histories and cultures a bit exceptional from those of the rest of the continent. A thoughtful and practical human geographic standpoint must recognize in these claims a mixture of truth and of aspiration.

Against particularist or exceptionalist notions, the dissertation joins to a broader research agenda for comparative accounts of the developmental state, whether bound up in East African experiences of transformation or far beyond. Ethiopia's developmental state is not meant to stand in for the many other African or Asian or Latin American contexts where practices and political discourses of development hold sway, even as Chapter Three noted that this model has elicited some interest in continental policy-making platforms. Part of what is interesting here in the Ethiopian case is the state's newfound and deepening interest in urbanization. While following the potential emergence of the developmental state is beyond the scope of this study, the dissertation offers some particulars to a shared comparative attention to new permutations of the developmental state on and off the continent (Prado et al. 2016, Mueller 2015, Mkandawire 2001, Sara 2015).

Locating African cities in debates about urban restructuring

In many places, processes of urban restructuring have arguably given rise to a more ambiguous and exclusionary politics today that is clearly authoritarian. I wrote this dissertation as worldly events laid bare the limits of neoliberal governance to shape social order across the globe. Inter-urban competition and marketization have had a strong hold on the critical geographic imagination, but city residents in many places increasingly find state institutions to

be blockages to their improvement, rather than enablers of it. Sunny prescriptions of urban boosterism have not protected people from the immiseration and violence of entrenched inequalities. At the same time, a global capitalist order premised on the free movement of goods and capital (instead of people) across borders increasingly faces new headwinds from resurgent nationalist movements in Europe. Xenophobic anxieties and new geopolitical alignments of authoritarian regimes arrived across Western mass media.

There seems little purpose in searching for ideal types of either neoliberalism or authoritarianism, as both are shaped by emerging circumstances, divergent histories, and particular interests. However, there are important overlaps between these dispositions, and it seems time to reexamine the contexts under which each of them is being tried today. Variants of neoliberal capitalism can be found across relatively distinct countries with authoritarian governments, such as Egypt, Turkey, Honduras, Saudi Arabia, the Philippines, and even Brazil. Yet along with these territories, and the many countries currently in wartime violence, scholars must also find space for the new isolationist and decidedly illiberal movements reshaping social and economic policies in the UK, US, France, Belgium and the Netherlands. If so-called liberal democratic societies abandon the pretenses of pluralism and global integration, but retain certain market rationalities, will they still be described as neoliberal? I grant that uneven development persists and deep urban inequalities continue on apace, but something of this problematic seems new.

Were we to carefully map such convergences, new commitments might emerge for scholars concerned with spatial justice and urban marginality. As the Comaroffs (2012) have

argued, precarity and social exclusion in the north may find their forerunners in the authoritarianisms typically associated with the global south. This is all the more likely in a multi-polar geopolitical era. Akin to Valverde's (2012) suggestion, I grant that that this would seem an incongruous time in which to imagine high modern development in much of the world. But understanding changing modes of governance seems a leading concern for urban scholars of Ethiopia and much of the rest of East Africa. Regional and global itineraries of authoritarian governance could now make more of a claim on geographic thought and join common political causes and scholarly concerns together.

Reconsidering slum futures

As I have described in Chapter Three, part of what is historic in the rapid urbanization of Ethiopia is that high modern approaches to development now target urban territories. As urban restructuring unfolds, there are new expressions for the ruling party's visions of social order. Federalist pretenses for an inclusive multiethnic democracy may be less sure. The question of social order across Ethiopian territories suggests an abiding influence of socialist features of rule, which historically have shaped classes according to territories. Yet it was through the failures of the previous socialist regime that allow the EPRDF to distinguish itself as being uniquely able to deliver development. The most evident expression of the emergence of this new order is the demolition of slums through urban renewal.

As slums are erased in the service of massive redevelopment, perhaps there are two urban futures on offer in Addis Ababa. One plausible scenario through this massive

redevelopment process is that class differentiation is greatly enhanced, and the conditions of immiseration of the city's poor majority may be at least partly reinscribed within the zonal geographies described in Chapter Four. As the neighborhoods go, so will the reciprocities and the social mixity that long defined the city also go. How the ongoing patterns of urbanization will unfold is less clear. New risks and blockages to the opportunities of urban migrants, as well as intensified challenges for the interests of existing residents, are almost assured. In turn, new slum settlements could easily grow up either in the shadow of official constructions, or in wholly new quarters of the city. A second outcome of massive redevelopment is the new politics of revolt. The regional question of autonomy has already taken on an urban dimension and horizontal social movements have already emerged largely apart from conventional party politics and in spite of state violence. Planning institutions could be spurred to function differently through a kind of exogenous shock like this one. Perhaps a consultative paradigm of planning pursued with care and attention to upgrading and other imperatives is possible. But this would assume that party commitments to "democratic developmentalism" can give way to a more malleable and inclusive model of rule. Urban renewal programs of the present may join the legacies of partially implemented plans as but one more partially realized element in the city's structure. After all, when and where does a process like massive redevelopment truly end, and when does it become the assumed form for still other processes of change?

Following urban restructuring through such fraught conditions recommends the strength of place-based urban accounts in tandem with comparative, global approaches to research. A Marxist analytical framework is not categorically ill-equipped to speak to these slum conditions. The developmental state needs no essentialist recognition on its own terms, but in

relation to practices of governance in all their materiality. In Addis Ababa, as much as other cities that may be older, larger, and better known in the urban studies canon, the open-ended and provisional nature of planning has pried the city open to multiple interpretations, and to new kinds of contestation. Urban, rural, and regional futures are undetermined. Each is a worthy starting point for new questions of power and new forms of social practice.

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Appendix 1. Ethiopia's Ethnic Groups at Three Scales, 2007

Source: Central Statistical Authority of the FDRE, 2011: 75-76, 86, 104-105.

Largest 10 Groups	National pop.		Urban pop.		Addis Ababa pop.*		
	(% All Groups)		(% Group's National Total)†		(% Group's Urban Total)†		
					(% Total AA pop.)		
Oromo	25,363,756	34.39%	3,008,496	11.86%	534,547	17.77%	19.51%
Amhara	19,878,199	26.95%	4,374,568	22.00%	1,288,895	29.46%	47.05%
Somalie	4,586,876	06.22%	676,627	14.75%	5,695	<1%	<1%
Tigrie	4,486,513	06.08%	1,060,528	23.64%	169,182	15.95%	06.18%
Sidama	2,951,889	04.87%	143,821	04.87%	2,180	01.52%	<1%
Guragie	1,859,831	02.52%	784,927	42.20%	447,777	57.05%	16.35%
Welaita	1,676,128	02.27%	281,462	16.79%	18,824	06.69%	<1%
Affar	1,276,867	01.73%	105,551	08.27%	3,723	03.53%	<1%
Hadiya	1,269,382	01.72%	150,087	11.82%	16,863	11.24%	<1%
Gamo	1,104,360	01.50%	139,308	12.61%	45,985	33.00%	01.68%
All Groups	73,750,932	--	11,862,821	16.08%	2,739,551	23.09%	--

* The population of Addis Ababa includes some groups larger than the smallest group (Sidama) listed here, though these groups are also less than 1% of the city population and are not included in the Largest 10 Groups at the National scale. These groups are:

- (1) From Different Parents: 20,724;
- (2) Somali nationality: 9,604;
- (3) Other Ethiopian National: 8,180;
- (4) Other Foreigners: 5,107.

† Greyed amounts indicate relative overrepresentation: within the *Urban* population, Amhara, Tigrie, Guragie, and Welaita groups are all overrepresented *compared to All Groups*. For the Addis Ababa population, Amhara, Tigrie, Guragie, Welaita, Affar, Hadiya, and Gamo groups are overrepresented *compared to their own National population*.

In the National Census of 2007, from a total of 94 groups (enumerated by ethnicity or nationality, or by the categories of “Other” or “From different Parents”) the distribution of the 10 largest groups in Ethiopia were captured at various scales. I have presented these raw numbers in the above table, and I have also calculated their share within broader group totals at different scales. Accuracy of these figures a decade after the collection is certainly open to question, given the rapid growth of the city. As of 2017, Ethiopia's fourth national Housing and Population Survey is in a preliminary phase.

Appendix 2. Units of Administration in Ethiopia, 2005–Present

Level	Meaning
Common administrative units, largest to smallest area	
<i>Kilil</i>	<i>Region</i> Currently 9 in the country: Afar, Amhara, Benishangul-Gumuz, Gambella, Harari, Oromia, Somali, and the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region (SNNPR).
<i>Zone</i>	<i>Zone</i> Up to 12 in each <i>Kilil</i>
<i>Woreda</i>	<i>Ward</i> (in many urban areas) or <i>County</i> (in rural areas) Several in each <i>Zone</i>
<i>Kebele</i>	<i>Precinct</i> Several in each <i>Woreda</i> , typically the smallest administrative unit Apportioned according to census, contains at least 500 families
Special administrative units	
<i>Charter City</i>	<i>A self-governing city</i> Currently just two in the country: <u>Addis Ababa</u> and <u>Dire Dawa</u> . Addis Ababa is thus an autonomous national territory, comprised of 10 sub-cities (in turn <i>Woreda</i> levels).
<i>Special Zone</i>	<i>Metropolitan expansion area</i> Found, for example, at edges of <u>Addis Ababa</u> and <u>Bahir Dar</u> . A spatial unit lying at the urban fringe that serves metro area planning processes by encompassing outlying, urbanizing units
<i>Gott / Garee</i>	<i>Sub-Precinct</i> Rare, created only in certain rural areas for specific programs of rule