The Transformation of Addis Ababa:

A Multiform African City

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Edited by

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CHAPTER ONE

NEW PERSPECTIVES ON URBAN
TRANSFORMATION IN ADDIS ABABA[1]

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During the last decade and a half, massive construction projects in housing, commercial buildings and infrastructure have transformed the landscape of Addis Ababa, making this urban renewal one of the largest scale social experiments in Sub-Saharan Africa. New government housing, targeted at low- and middle-income inhabitants of the city, has rapidly filled with new residents. More than 160,000 housing units have been transferred to beneficiaries since 2004, the year the programme started.[2] More than 100,000 housing units are under construction. This process of radical transformation has not yet been comprehensively documented. The urban policy decisions taken by the government of Ethiopia and Addis Ababa represent pro-poor interventions that, while they may not always result in the intended positive consequences, are an important model for other African countries at the policy level. It is therefore important that urban researchers and policy makers closely examine at their impact.

[2] Many sub-Saharan African countries practice urban renewal strategies that involve the resettlement of poor urban slum dwellers to city peripheries (Abebe and Hesselberg 2013). There are a number of examples of such inner-city renewal projects in Africa. Examples include the Urban Development Program (UDP) of South Africa (DPLG 2006), the renewal of Sambizanga and Operário in Luanda, Angola; the Maputo Municipal Development Program (PDMM) in Mozambique; and urban renewal in Zimbabwe.

Although the stated intention of the government was to relocate the poor to new government-built condominium housing, receiving a condominium is not a realistic option for the majority of the low-income inhabitants in the inner city. The chapters in this book explore the reasons behind the apparent mismatch between the government's plans and actual outcomes. We examine the mechanisms that have largely excluded the poor from the opportunity to live in condominiums. We also examine the extent to which this outcome arises from decisions made by the poor themselves who have found that the new condominium housing cannot meet their needs for livelihoods, social networks, and access to services.

Most cities in developing countries have large areas that were never planned by urban planners, but were built informally by the residents themselves. Addis Ababa has long exemplified this tendency: close to 80% of Addis Ababa can be structurally classified as a slum (UN-HABITAT 2010, 5; Atlaw 2014, ORAAMP 2002). The urban fabric of this city of roughly five million residents[3] is composed of a variety of different layers from high-rise buildings to *chika* (mud and straw) houses. Of the total number of dwelling units in the city, more than 30% are single room units, nearly 15% have no private or shared toilets, and roughly 20% have no access to a kitchen (CSA 2007). The majority of areas with such conditions are concentrated in the inner city. To improve the situation and accommodate the needs of its inhabitants, in the past decade the city has undergone successive socio-spatial transformations including extensive expansion, urban renewal and densification that have changed its morphology while also affecting communities in the inner-city areas.

For many low-income countries including Ethiopia, rapid urbanization is not accompanied by the development of urban infrastructure to service this growth. The provision of basic services such as clean water, food, housing and livelihood opportunities falls short of meeting residents' needs. This has made poverty an increasingly urban problem, and slums are one visible indication of poverty in urban areas (UN-HABITAT 2003; Gebre-Egziabher 2011; Kassahun 2008), if poverty is defined as lack of access to tenure, safe water, sanitation, durability of housing, and sufficient living area (UN-HABITAT 2003). According to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA 2015), roughly one billion people reside in informal settlements that met these UN criteria. Sub-

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[3] According Central Statistics Agency, FDRE (2013) the projected population estimation of Addis Ababa for 2015 is 3,273,000. The informal estimate is much higher than the official estimate.

Saharan Africa has the highest prevalence of slums: 55.6% of the urban population is living in slums (UN-HABITAT 2016).

Unlike cities in many other African countries, Addis Ababa has only the thinnest traces of a colonial legacy. Ethiopia's experience of colonial rule was extremely brief – only five years under Italian occupation (1936–1941), so that Addis Ababa has been under the constant influence of an unbroken line of cultural and indigenous development forms. The city, which was established at the end of the 19th century, has eluded many planners. True to its early beginnings, the city has continued to develop in an organic manner, albeit with colonial influences from the Italian occupation, fuelled by local bottom-up rather than top-down organizing processes. Since its humble beginning as a garrison town under Emperor Menelik II (1844–1913) and his wife Taitu Betul, Addis Ababa has witnessed the preparation of nine master plans, but none have been implemented to a significant extent.

Cities are the result of multiple dynamic systems on the ground, each with its own logic and occurring simultaneously. Such systems are difficult for the urban researcher to tease apart and identify when confronted with a large number of processes, many of them not immediately visible, in busy cities that are home to millions of people. In his chapter "Addis Ababa: A Collage of Cities", this volume, Elias Yitbarek Alemayehu refers to clusters of semi-organized urban processes having similar origins as overlapping 'cities' which, taken together, give rise to the urban conglomeration known as Addis Ababa. As a result of the complex juxtaposition between planned and unplanned elements of the city, the urban fabric of Addis Ababa has emerged as a "collage of cities" encompassing the original old city, the industrial city, the informal city, the market city, the condominium city, and so forth. Currently, the pace of change is so rapid that master plans tend document what is already there rather than serve as tools for planning the future.

The aims of our book are two: (1) to document the challenges faced by the lowest-income residents in Addis Ababa's current urban renewal; and (2) to record for posterity the current spatial relationships and organically created spaces in the old inner city slated for demolition (see Chapter 7 for policy recommendations at the end of this volume). The urban poor in Sub-Saharan Africa are a slippery object of research due to their mobility and relative invisibility, defying attempts to measure and study them through large-scale surveys or through methods that take the city as the primary unit of analysis. To better capture the spatial realities of the poor,

in our chapters we use a mixed methodology of photography, mapping, surveys, observation of communities, historical analysis of documents, and semi-structured and life-story interviews. These methods have allowed our authors to trace out the multiple processes at work in Addis Ababa's urban transformation. Links are drawn between master plans, policies, implementation, and residents' on-the-ground experiences. Visual aids for the reader (figures, maps, and photos) are used to provide background information regarding the main features of urban transformation in Addis Ababa.

This book is the result of long-term collaboration among Ethiopian and Finnish scholars from four different fields: urban planning, architecture, geography, and ethnology. It draws extensively on Ethiopian scholars' expertise and experience. Our collaboration emerged from the research project *Urban Renewal and Income-Generating Spaces for Youth and Women in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia* funded by the Academy of Finland from 2013 to 2017. This book is unique in that it documents the massive urban renewal in Addis Ababa from both the inside and the outside, that is, from the perspective of leading Ethiopian architects and urban planners in Addis Ababa who have worked closely with the current government administration in urban renewal planning and from the perspectives of Finnish researchers with a background in ethnographic and participatory methodologies.

Addis Ababa's origins and historical formation

The emergence of Addis Ababa, which means 'new flower' in Amharic, can be traced back to 1886 and its initial founding as a military camp in the strategic area of Entoto hills. In 1888, it was moved to the plains surrounding the hot springs (*filwoha*) located near the present-day city centre. These origins followed much the same path as other garrison towns established by Ethiopian kings in the modern era. Emperors moved about different parts of the country with their garrisons and temporarily settled in a given area to assert control over their subjects. The early primary historical elements of the formation of the city were the palace, the churches, the marketplace known as "the Arada", and the houses of the nobility. The settlement pattern of Addis Ababa during the reign of Menelik II was based on his wife's idea of land use, which is commonly known as Taitu's 'master plan' (Tufa 2010; Mahiteme, 2007; Ahderom 1986). The land tenure and mode of property development in Taitu's plan can be said to be the main root cause for the development of the inner-city informal settlements which were originally owned by the followers of

Emperor Menelik II and his wife Taitu, or later by Emperor Haile Selassie's entourage.

The establishment of Addis Ababa as a permanent capital city meant the end of wandering political centres for Ethiopia's emperors. Although the country's urban history goes back to the Axum Kingdom of approximately 100–940 AD, the majority of its urban centres, including Addis Ababa, were established less than 200 years ago. A major obstacle for the development of large and permanent urban areas in Ethiopia was conflict among warlords (Wolde-Mariam 1976), since most of the large-scale settlements of that time were military garrisons. These garrisons later developed into administrative towns for the surrounding regions (Marcus 1994). However, when the army moved out, the town's development tended to come to an end. This settlement trend resulted in the impermanence of Ethiopian towns in terms of morphology and construction. In addition to political functions, trade and religion were also reasons for the founding of early Ethiopian urban settlements. In the case of Addis Ababa, its establishment in 1886 as a military garrison was also connected to the construction of a palace for Emperor Menelik II.

Much of Addis Ababa's early growth occurred in the absence of formal planning. The main focus of Menelik II was occupying mountainous landscape to secure strategic advantage from which to expand territory. The early palaces of Menelik II and the residences of the nobility were located on hilly and prominent sites. The basic characteristics of its initial settlement layout can be described as a multi-centric core with a radial development pattern (Johnson 1974). The city gradually became a conglomeration of camps or quarters *(sefers)* that surrounded churches and the houses of noblemen and other important personalities, which had been located on hill tops. These multi-centred settlements brought together people of different classes (Ghiorgis & Gerard 2007), and their organically mixed character can still be seen in the present-day settlement patterns of the inner city. Neighbourhoods of that time were usually located on higher ground with large open spaces separating them from adjacent settlements. This situation arose because after founding the city, Menelik II began to allocate land to his noblemen, the chiefs and the church (Zewde 1987, Pankhurst 1962). Defence, loyalty, and hierarchy were the main criteria in allocating land for chiefs in keeping with traditional feudal land use structures that conformed to Taitu's master plan (Mahiteme 2007, Pankhurst, 1962). During Emperor Haile Selassie's regime that followed Emperor Menelik's period, a similar land tenure system continued, favouring a few members of the royal family, important personalities and

military chiefs. According to Pankhurst (1962), a city survey from 1961 revealed that in an area of 212 square kilometres, 58 per cent of the total land was owned by 1,768 persons, each owning more than 10,000 square metres. Twelve per cent of the land belonged to the church. Some areas are still named after the owners of that time such as Dejazmach Wube (*Dejach Wube Sefer*), Fitawrari Aba Koran (*Aba Koran sefer*), and the bridges named after Fitawrari Habtegiorghis (Hbtegiorghis Deldey) and Ras Mekonen (Ras Mekonen Deldey). Certain areas retain names based on occupational segregation such as The Palace Guards' Quarter (*Kibur Zebegna*), the Butchers' Quarter (*Siga Meda*), the Workers' Quarter (*Serategna sefer*), and the Riflemen's Quarter (*Tebmenja Yaj*). Other areas are based on the names of churches: for instance *Tekelehaimanot*, *Urael*, and *Giorghis*.

Before 1957, special permission from the king was needed in order to build a durable house made of stone, brick, or concrete (Beza et al. 1987). On the other hand, landowners were free to construct *chika* houses (foundationless houses built of traditional mud and straw) for rent and generating income, mostly without formal planning. Owing to Addis Ababa's lack of planning, the phrase "shanty town" was used to describe it as early as the 1930s:

> Addis Ababa in 1930 rather resembled a shanty town…over the rolling hills, right up to the edge of the palace, bumbled a mass of mud huts, half of them thatched, half of them covered in the garish, glinting new strips of corrugated iron which had begun to be so fashionable. There were still only one or two buildings of more than one story… (Mosley 1965, 155, cited in Johnson 1974:268).

For most of the city's history, foreign influences did not significantly impact the city's spontaneous formation. Some of the major transformations within Addis Ababa came with the five-year Italian occupation. The first public projects, the city's first master plan, and the Italians' dual-city approach (one for the European colonists, one for local Ethiopians) created spatial and morphological patterns that have persisted to this day, including the basic street layout, which follows European planning conventions. Following independence, modern and customary forms of administration existed in parallel, which affected the implementation of subsequent master plans. The city grew steadily starting in the 1950s. By the end of 1970s, its population had reached over one million (UN-DESA 2015). Although in the 1960s the city experienced a building boom and urban expansion along major transportation routes, much of the city continued to densify and expand in an unregulated manner. Construction

of low-quality rental housing without proper infrastructure provision was prevalent in most of the core areas of Addis Ababa.

After the Italian occupation, the role of trade routes became more prominent in the city's spatial growth. In the last quarter of the century, urban growth followed the trend of the city's major transport and trade outlets to the south along the route to Adama town and the Ethio-Djibouti trade corridor, to Moyale town and trade routes to Kenya, to the east along the route to northern Ethiopian cities, to the southwest along the route to western Ethiopian cities, and to the northwest leading to trade routes to Sudan. Urban growth spilled across city boundaries and now significantly influences the neighbouring Oromia region. The restructuring of the surrounding small towns in Oromia Regional State into one special zone is one response to the growth and influence of Addis Ababa in the surrounding region. Such growth has sparked rural-urban conflicts in recent years, both within and outside the administrative boundaries of the city. The 2003–2013 master plan sought to fill expansion areas between already settled areas along trade routes with housing and other mixed developments. In practice, these expansion areas are primarily being filled with government-sponsored condominium apartment housing neighbourhoods (Alemayehu and Soressa 2011). Expansion areas of Addis Ababa have also been settled informally by migrants who migrate from the inner city in search of affordable land for housing, and by others whose primary aim is land speculation. The city administration has followed a dual strategy of dealing with these informal settlements by giving some of them legal status while evicting others, creating potential for conflict.[4]

Kebele housing

In 1974, the Haile Selassie government was overthrown by a military junta commonly known as the Derg.[5] Roughly two-thirds of the housing stock in Addis Ababa in 1974 were informally constructed rental housing (Berhanu 2002). In 1975, the Derg nationalized all 'extra' rental structures built by families in addition to their own dwelling spaces and, if their rental value

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[4] The recent evictions of informal settlements in the Woregenu area in the western part of Addis Ababa and Hana Mariam areas to the south were reported in the state media to have resulted in conflicts.

[5] Derg, literally meaning "committee" or "council" is the short name given to the Provisional Military Administrative Council of Ethiopia, the regime that overthrew Emperor Haile Selassie in 1974.

was less than 100 Ethiopian Birr (ETB, = 48.31 USD),[6] put them under
what was called the *kebele*[7] administration.[8] Rental dwellings whose value
exceeded 100 ETB were put under the Agency for the Administration of
Rental Housing (AARH). Thus, kebele housing meant small housing units
of less value and often in poor condition; these were mostly chika houses
which had previously been owned by landowners or prominent merchants
during Haile Selassie's period. Kebele housing can thus be understood as
state-owned informal housing, and today comprises much of Addis
Ababa's inner city.

Under the Derg, private ownership of land and the development of houses
for purposes of renting were made illegal. Proclaiming themselves in
favour of the poor, the Derg government reduced the rent of nationalized
dwelling structures up to 50%. The administration of kebele housing was
not uniformly strict, and unauthorized interior remodelling, subletting, and
the illegal selling of user rights, locally known as 'the sale of key', were
common. Although part of the 1986 master plan envisaged a complete
urban renewal for such areas, the proposal was never implemented. In
1991, the Marxist regime was ousted by the EPRDF government, which
followed an ideology more oriented toward the free market. However,
despite shifts in other areas of the economy, both state land ownership and
the kebele housing system remained unaffected.

It is estimated that more than 40% of the population of Addis Ababa lives
in older kebele housing on land covering approximately 11% of the total
area of the city encompassing 54,000 hectares (Alemayehu 2008). These
settlements are characterized by deteriorating physical structures, a
shortage of services and infrastructure, and problems of waste management.
In the past few decades, there have been initiatives to upgrade the kebele

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[6] In 1975, 1 US Dollar (USD) was equivalent to 2.07 Ethiopian Birr (ETB).
[7] The *kebele* was previously the smallest administrative unit or local government in
Addis Ababa. However, it no longer exists. The role of *kebele*, including the
management of '*kebele* houses' has been transferred to the *woreda*. The woreda is
currently the smallest administrative unit in Addis Ababa incorporating the
territories of a number of previous adjacent *kebeles*.
[8] The Derg's proclamation on "Government Ownership of Lands and Extra
Houses" defines "extra house" as an "urban house whether rented or used or
otherwise owned, other than: a) a single house required or occupied as a dwelling
place by a person or family; b) houses required or occupied by an organization as
dwelling places for its employees or persons under its responsibility; c) houses
required for running the business of a person, family or an organization." (Negarit
Gazeta 1975, No.41).

houses' basic infrastructure such as paved roads, communal toilets, sewage lines and drainage ditches, yet without improving the condition of the existing housing stock. In contrast to the situation in many other East African countries, the rents charged by kebele administrations are extremely low, due to government rental control that enables the poor, who cannot afford housing at market prices, to live in them. Of this rent, 48% is transferred to the former owners of the socialized dwellings. Given the low rents, local governments have been financially unable to maintain the ageing kebele housing and surrounding infrastructure (Soressa & Hassen, this volume, in "Inner-City Dwellers and Their Places in the Context of Addis Ababa's Urban Renewal").

Since 2008, several inner-city renewal projects have been underway and large parts of the inner city have been razed to the ground and cleared of their previous residents. These renewal projects are linked to the Integrated Housing Development Programme (IHDP) of the government, in which multi-storey blocks of condominium apartments have been built in significant portions of the renewed inner city. Hassen & Soressa in the chapter "Experiences of the Poor in the Contemporary Urban Resettlement of Addis Ababa" provide a unique retrospective on the history of resettlement projects in Addis Ababa, contrasting the current large-scale renewal with previous smaller-scale interventions.

Figure 1 Kebele housing in Addis Ababa (photo: Elias Yitbarek Alemayehu, 2015).

Relocation's impact on the poorest residents

The current, massive government-led urban housing development of Addis Ababa which began in 2004 can be expected to have a significant human impact. It is vitally important to study the impact on those residents who will be most affected by the transformation of the city: the low-income inner city dwellers and the most vulnerable groups among them, including women and the youth.

The majority of the kebele houses are located in the inner city – an ideal location for the poor struggling to find informal earning opportunities. Yet land at the centre of the city is valuable, and thus useful for urban development. This means that the older unplanned *kebele* houses face demolition, a process which has already begun. The chapters in this volume address the rapid changes in Addis Ababa on the ground, especially from the perspective of residents in kebele housing dominated areas of the inner-city.

Legal kebele renters who are awarded the right to obtain a condominium unit, allocated through a lottery, often have difficulties coming up with the initial down payments and subsequent monthly loan repayments. Some persons awarded condominiums are able to draw upon their networks of relatives, friends, and co-workers to help them scrape together the needed money. For those who can gather monetary donations from relatives, friends, and co-workers, owning a condominium can represent a long-term investment in the future. This is not only because insufficient housing stock and rising land prices make it very likely that condominium units will retain their value over the long term, but also because those who obtain such units can live elsewhere and charge relatively high rents for the condominium apartments that have the amenities of running water, sewage pipes, and electricity (see Lappi & Gezahegn, this volume, "On the Edge of a Better Future").

However, this ability to access and benefit from these networks should not be over-emphasized. Such help from relatives and friends often takes the form of a loan rather than a gift, with concomitant anxieties about repayment (see Alemayehu, "Addis Ababa: A Collage of Cities", this volume). Relocatees cannot always count on help from over-extended networks of support. In some cases, such networks do not even exist: one woman, described in Hassen and Soressa's chapter, "Experiences of the Poor in the Contemporary Urban Resettlement of Addis Ababa", had to beg on the street for the final 4,000 ETB [=160 euros] of her condominium

down payment when she and her daughter were evicted with nowhere else to go.

Those who cannot afford the down payment on a government-built condominium are relocated to other kebele houses. The government is thus faced with the logistical problems of the poor who cannot afford the down payment and must be crowded inside an ever-diminishing number of kebele houses, as demolition continues. Moreover, only legal renters of kebele housing or owners of private homes, not other renters or kebele sub-renters, are eligible to be awarded condominiums in the lottery and relocate to a new condominium apartment. As Myllylä discusses in the chapter "Dimensions of Youth Poverty in Addis Ababa", the remaining options for these sub-renters and others who cannot afford the down payment on even the smallest condominium unit are few in number. Insufficient recognition of the needs of the poorest relocatees is surely a factor contributing to the growth of squatter settlements on the outskirts of the city (see Alemayehu, "Addis Ababa: A Collage of Cities", this volume).

Livelihoods

Urban relocation of slum residents in Sub-Saharan Africa tends to relocate the poor to the outskirts of cities where informal opportunities for money-making are few, making it difficult for them to pursue any livelihoods and leading to loss of income (UN-Habitat 2003, 128, 174; Baumann 2003; du Plessis 2005; Huchzermeyer 2010). In Addis Ababa, some of the new government-built condominium housing is located near the city centre, but much of it has been built on the geographical margins of the city. Although the physical amenities of the new replacement condominium housing represent a marked improvement in the lives of the poor, condominium housing has so far been unable to duplicate the vital multifunctional utility of the domestic and public places in the inner-city kebele housing areas (see Soressa & Hassen in this volume, "Inner-City Dwellers and Their Places in the Context of Addis Ababa's Urban Renewal").

The livelihoods of many residents in inner-city areas of Addis Ababa are dependent on informal economic activities located near home, and casual labour or small-scale vending opportunities tend to be obtained through local contacts and ties. The youth in particular depend on neighbourhood-based networks of help and irregular employment (see Myllylä, "Dimensions of Youth Poverty in Addis Ababa"). For members of communities

dispersed by resettlement, the work previously found in the city is often no longer available. Many relocatees also discover that as their lifestyle is forced to change, their monthly expenses rise and they cannot afford the costs of transportation from the condominium to work in the city centre, for instance.

Within the condominiums themselves, home-based enterprises are difficult to establish and maintain. The reasons for this are: potential customers are not willing to walk up flights of stairs to buy the products; neighbours complain about cooking food for commercial purposes or small-scale manufacturing within apartments; and most condominium buildings already have shops selling food on their ground floor, which generate income for those with capital to invest in retail business, but not for the poorest lacking start-up capital.

Livelihood opportunities are also limited by restrictive habitation policies and rules governing use of space in the areas around the condominiums, rules which prohibit small-scale vending from stalls or kiosks in open areas (see Hassen & Soressa, "Experiences of the Poor in the Contemporary Urban Resettlement of Addis Ababa"). The standardized physical and spatial layouts of condominium apartments and open collective spaces also make it difficult to carry out home-based enterprises. Resettled residents are unable to adapt and fit their previous life activities into these new condominiums that do not favour informal income generation. Ongoing resettlement of inner-city kebele tenants to condominiums on the city periphery appears unsustainable when the livelihoods of many relocates have been disrupted to the extent that they can hardly pay back the loans on their condominium units. Though, reportedly, defaulting in paying back the loans has not been witnessed, they leave in a constant fear lest they fail in paying back their loans and get evicted.

Participation and rights to the city

When studying the perspective of low-income residents, one important issue is who has rights to use the city, and who benefits from access to urban spaces and infrastructure. [9] Particularly public spaces in cities have been recognized as a 'livelihood asset' that should be accessible to all (Brown 2006; Hackenbroch et al. 2009; Bhowmik 2010). As Alemayehu points out in "Addis Ababa: A Collage of Cities", this volume, access to

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[9] Simone 2003; Brown 2006; UN-Habitat 2010/2011.

central economic spaces in Addis Ababa such as vending space in the market square is severely competed over, with competition organized along ethnic lines.

Since city centres represent the hubs of economic and social networks, at issue should be the question of who can benefit from being able to operate out of central locations in cities. Those with the fewest rights to city space such as squatters often rely on informal relations with local officials in order to receive some kind of recognized status (see Alemayehu this volume, "Addis Ababa: A Collage of Cities"). Everyday bargaining with local officials and political leaders in the absence of useful public policies is one tactic by which the poor manage to survive under difficult conditions.

As Tiina-Riitta Lappi and Abnet Gezahegn Berhe show in "On the Edge of a Better Future: Urban Living in a Kebele Neighbourhood Slated for Demolition", the poorest relocatees are often not only unable to choose where they will go, but they have little or no access to the information that would help them make informed requests of the city government regarding their fate. The poor make strategic decisions based on the information available to them, yet this information is a resource that is often not provided to the poor by decision makers.

The housing costs of the poor have been subsidized by Ethiopian governments since 1974. Following the current economic logic of space, flows, and physical infrastructure, if the poor are dislodged from the city centre by either rising rents (created by increasing land values) or by government desires to engage with private developers in cultivating an internationally acclaimed image of the city, the housing sanctuary for the poor in the kebele houses will be lost. Soressa and Hassen in "Inner-City Dwellers and Their Places in the Context of Addis Ababa's Urban Renewal" point out that it is precisely inner-city low-income areas fulfilling the criteria of 'slum' that offer an "affordable shelter provision opportunity" for the city's poorest. Elias Yitbarek Alemayehu in this volume proposes the solution of a 'shelter city' to exist within and alongside the market city, the posh city, the industrial city, and the condominium city in order to meet the needs of huge numbers of low-income residents. The 'shelter city' is not envisioned as a ghetto for the poor but as a socially mixed urban space in which wealthier residents live alongside the poorer neighbours and offer them informal work. The shelter city would consist of buildings with only two storeys – not more – with ground access for all apartments in order to facilitate home-based

enterprises. Innovative, less expensive building materials would be used, and outdoor activities such as cooking and vending would be allowed in the outdoor spaces.

Alemayehu observes that Addis Ababa is increasingly characterized by spatial divisions between different income groups as opposed to the distinctive social mix characterizing the city up to now (Duroyaume 2009). These divisions have been further reinforced by the physical transportation infrastructure, namely the configuration of the Ring Road and Light Rail system, which isolate different sections of the city. Transportation channels are vitally important for the well-being and survival of the poor in cities, and the United Nations has identified streets and roads as 'tools' for urban renewal in slum areas (UN-HABITAT 2012). Understanding how cities are divided by different structures and practices is important because a growing body of research shows that spatial divisions and social inequality – the relative distance between the richest and poorest members of society – are a major factor in the incidence of urban violence, sometimes a more important factor than the poverty level *per se* of an individual. Divided cities are therefore more likely to have violent crime than 'mixed' cities in which different income groups live side by side in the same neighbourhoods (UN-HABITAT 2007; IDRC 2012).

Social networks of support

It has been recognized for several decades that social networks and ties of cooperation are vital to the well-being and survival of the urban poor (e.g. UN-HABITAT 2003, 150, 174–5). From the point of view of the poor, low-quality housing or difficult and crowded living conditions are often not the most pressing problems. The chapters in our book show that access to central city services and spaces of commerce and supportive social networks that function as informal welfare systems are often more important to residents' subjective experience of well-being. Studies show the poor often suffer as much from isolation and loneliness as from economic deprivation (Narayan et al. 2000; Narayan et al. 2002; Mills et al. 2014), which is why the poor often invest much time and effort in cultivating ties to neighbours and other social groups. In Ethiopia, these social groups include *iddir,*[10] *mahber*[11] and *iqub.*[12] The inner-city kebele

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[10] An *iddir* is a voluntary traditional association established among neighbours with monthly contributions to be used during emergencies, such as a death within the group or their families.

neighbourhoods[13] in Addis Ababa are characterized by a high degree of socio-economic interdependence among their inhabitants, facilitated by affordable shared spaces at the levels of household, compound and settlement. Youth without family support in the city are particularly vulnerable, often lacking official residence status and compelled to move from place to place, rendering them invisible to government officials (Myllylä, this volume, "Dimensions of youth poverty in Addis Ababa"). The needs of such youth can thus go unrecognized by local city governments, and their nearest neighbours and landlords may form their only reliable sources of support. Social assistance among neighbours in the same compounds is deep and meaningful, with neighbours taking on different roles in the compound's division of labour, including the care of each other's household members (see Hassen and Soressa this volume, "Experiences of the Poor in the Contemporary Urban Resettlement of Addis Ababa"; Lappi and Gezahegn this volume, "On the Edge of a Better Future: Urban Living in a Kebele Neighbourhood Slated for Demolition"). In functional terms, therefore, neighbours could in some cases be more appropriately classified as 'family'.

In Addis Ababa, as in many other urban renewal programmes throughout the world, residents of compounds and neighbourhoods are dispersed to different resettlement sites against their wishes. When relocatees are forcibly scattered to different condominiums sites, their local social support networks are dissolved. Given the vastness of the condominium sites and the fragmented, self-contained organization of housing units within them, it is also difficult to create new social ties, since there are no longer the same type of communal spaces in which a mother can watch the children of other families while she is carrying out her household tasks, for instance. As Soressa and Hassen ("Inner-City Dwellers and Their Places in the Context of Addis Ababa's Urban Renewal") point out, there is a need for urban development to shift its focus and priorities from individual households to compounds and neighbourhoods if the goal is to aid the poorest urban residents. Lappi and Gezahegn argue that all residents in the city should have the right to organize themselves spatially for a normal

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[11] A *mahber* is a voluntary traditional association usually established by a small group of people based on their common religious, ethnic or other social interests.

[12] An *iqub* is a voluntary traditional revolving saving scheme established by a small group of people that contribute money periodically in order to support themselves financially.

[13] Inner-city neighbourhoods in Addis Ababa dominated by kebele houses.

and productive life. The key to 'normality' for low-income residents is social support structures.

Conclusions

The interaction between Addis Ababa's master plans and unforeseen impacts on the ground reveals the dynamic tension between formality and informality in the urban context. While there is always the possibility to extract positive aspects from informal practices and integrate them into formal planning, experience has shown that the development of Addis Ababa's master plans has tended to neglect informality and negate its positive qualities. The mushrooming of gated communities and the current construction of transport infrastructure are leading towards a divided city. It is high time that the city makes a greater effort to preserve its historical legacy and give consideration to inclusiveness and socially mixed neighbourhoods.

Despite the push to formalize the city through master plans, Addis Ababa's informality and the lifestyle of the majority of its poor inhabitants will persist for the near future. The case studies in this book show that even pro-poor governments face an overwhelming task when striving to accommodate the needs of the poor in the context of urban renewal. Under the current economic conditions prevailing in much of Sub-Saharan Africa there is clearly a vast gulf between what governments can realistically do and what is actually needed to help the poor out of poverty. Governments throughout the globe are under enormous pressures to attract global capital by creating 'world class cities' (Fourchard 2012, 236) catering to the expectations of economic and political elites. Even governments in cities such as Addis Ababa who have set themselves the task of assisting lower-income residents through pro-poor intervention programmes and have the political will to implement these programmes face overwhelming challenges. Nevertheless, supplying basic needs such as housing and infrastructure by reorganizing the city through urban plans must take into account socio-economic and cultural factors, lest it end up relocating poverty to another part of the city, as the case studies in this volume show. In this regard we recommend that urban renewal projects go beyond the provision of standard housing to provide onsite group relocation of entire inner city neighbourhoods into new government housing (see Chapter 7, "Implications and Recommendations", this volume). This would serve a three-fold purpose: to provide humanitarian shelter for the lowest-income residents, to reduce the large-scale destruction of functioning communities,

and to reduce the risk of an urban divide by maintaining a socially and economically sustainable mixture of residents from different income levels. However, this can only be done through the meaningful participation of the poor themselves.

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CHAPTER TWO

ADDIS ABABA:
A COLLAGE OF CITIES

ELIAS YITBAREK ALEMAYEHU

Abstract

More than a century and a quarter have elapsed since the foundation of Addis Ababa, a city with a population of roughly five million[1]. Unlike many African cities, Addis Ababa emerged without formal planning. Since its humble beginnings as a garrison town, the city has witnessed the preparation of nine master plans, albeit with little implementation. This chapter analyzes and describes what has arisen as a result of the juxtaposition between the traces of the master plans and the unforeseen happenings on the ground. It documents the city using maps, photos, life stories and secondary data with the intention of informing future plans and urban redevelopment interventions. Nine major urban typologies, cities unto themselves, are identified: the informal city, the old city, the market city, the posh city, the industrial city, the collective/ cooperative city, the condominium city, the renewed city and the divided city. Beyond capturing the existing situation, this chapter indicates that the city is becoming increasingly characterized by the divided city. The chapter thus recommends working toward an all-inclusive, open and more liveable city to the extent of accommodating a tenth city, *the shelter city*, for the destitute and homeless.

Key words: Addis Ababa, master plan, urban typology, open and inclusive city

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[1] According Central Statistics Agency, FDRE (2013) the projected population estimation of Addis Ababa for 2015 is 3,273,000. The informal estimate is much higher than the official estimate.

Introduction

Cities are functional as well as cultural centers for people. It is assumed by planners and administrators that they should be rationally organized, yet the logic and the forces behind the organization of cities is not always evident. There have been several attempts to understand cities by analyzing the morphology, typology, the socio-economic condition of the inhabitants and the class actors involved in the formation and use of the different parts of a city. For example, in its now classic report on urban poverty, UN-Habitat (2003, 22-23) distinguishes six 'cities': "the luxury city", "the controlling city", "the gentrified city", "the suburban city", "the tenement city", and "the abandoned city". In developing countries it adds a sixth city, "the informal city".[2]

A city is ideally viewed as one coherent entity having various functional elements networked through an infrastructure. In reality, however, cities are often fragmented and to varying degrees even chaotic. In the case of Addis Ababa, planners and experts have labored to come up with a rationale that would make the components of the city function in a mutual relationship. For example, the Italian planners Ignazio Guidi and Cesare Vale (1936) viewed Addis Ababa as a city with a single center and functional zoning; British urban planner Sir Patrick Abercrombie (1956) envisioned a city of distinct neighborhood units; French architect Lui De Marine (1965) tried to organize the city based on a major central axis; and the 1986 Ethio-Italian master plan and the Revised Master Plan of 2002 both aspired for a polycentric city having multiple core districts.

Despite the beneficial intentions behind these master plans, none of them were ever fully implemented. The expert-driven designs of the planners were always challenged by bottom-up forces coming from constantly shifting unforeseen social, economic and political realities on the ground. The original political assumptions underlying city planning transform over time; unforeseen major investments occur; and more importantly, in the absence of a strong legal and institutional framework and enforcement capacity, people act on their own initiative. Thus, the collisions or juxtapositions between expert-driven master plans and unforeseen happenings on the ground, situated in their own historical contexts, have given Addis

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[2] Other attempts to make sense of cities such as Angelil and Hehl (2012) and Bosselmann (2008) attribute the formation of various types of cities to political-economic and social and natural forces respectively.

Ababa an urban fabric characterized here as a collage of overlapping 'cities'.

In documenting the city, the research method used was an analysis of master plans and data about the actual built and lived-in city. All the master plans prepared for Addis Ababa to date, as well as the underlying policies and principles that have shaped them, are included. The article has also been informed by a review of relevant literature written by experts and scholars engaged in the preparation of master plans and by historians who have chronicled the development of the city.

To ascertain the extent to which master plans have left traces on the ground, fifteen in-depth interviews were conducted with key informants using semi-structured questions. Based on these interviews, four life stories were chosen to depict the lifestyles in the specific cities connected to the 'informal city' that represents most of Addis Ababa. Respondents for in-depth interviews were selected according to their length of residence and knowledge about the given settlement. Interviews were also conducted with an ex-mayor, planning officials and the staff of the current Addis Ababa office for the revision of the Master Plan. Field visits were carried out to make on- site observations, take photographs and determine the extent of the influence exerted by the master plans and their interaction with unforeseen planning, construction and use of space by urban residents. Accordingly, graphic documentation of maps has been made showing the spatial characteristics of aims inherent in the master plans, their interaction with unforeseen activities and the resultant traces on the ground. The maps are also used in locating the various 'cities' identified in this chapter.

The informal city

Addis Ababa's informal settlements can be broadly classified into four types. The first type is inner-city informal settlements. These are non-planned, old inner-city settlements commonly known as *kebele*[3] housing. Kebele housing is government-owned rental housing generally occupied by low-income residents. Kebele settlements are described as informal settlements not because they exist outside a legal framework, but because they are non-planned. The second type of settlement is extra-legal and non-planned peripheral informal settlement built on vacant land or farm

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[3] The *kebele* used to be the lowest tier in the structure of government administration, currently replaced by the *woreda*.

land. These are commonly known as *chereka bet* – literally, "moon house", so named because the houses are built overnight by the light of the moon, thus escaping government control. The capacity of local law enforcement personnel in terms of numbers and logistics is very low, so that when dwellings are constructed quickly and out of sight, the chances are that they will survive. Reportedly, corruption is also another reason for the survival of the *chereka bet*. Chereka bet settlements are generally occupied by newcomers from rural areas. The third type of settlement comprises informally built houses on formally acquired land, which can be characterized as mixed formal-informal housing. These houses are usually built for rental purposes as extensions to formally built main houses or small outbuildings. The fourth type is extra-legal and non-planned inner-city squatter areas commonly known as *lastic bet*, literally plastic house. These are small in size and occupy parts of public parks or vacant open spaces, or they are attached to fences along streets. They are often inhabited by street children, the destitute elderly, beggars, and sometimes households whose previous homes have been demolished.

Among the four types of Addis Ababa's informal settlements mentioned above, the first three predominate. Below I discuss the development of the first type: old inner-city informal settlements (Figure 1). The peripheral informal settlements and the mixed formal-informal housing are then discussed separately.

Despite the general trend of unplanned organic development in the city, there were some attempts at commissioning master plans both before and after Emperor Haile Selassie's regime. In the period between 1886 when Addis Ababa was founded and the Marxist revolution of 1974, five master plans were developed: the 1936 plan of Le Corbusier (Charles-Édouard Jeanneret), the Guidi-Valle plan of 1938, Sir Patrick Abercrombie's plan of 1956, the 1959 master plan of the Bolton and Hennessy consulting firm, and the 1965 plan by Lui De Marien. Of these, the ones that have left imprints on the cityscape are the Guidi-Vale plan implemented during the Italian occupation of 1936-1941, and Lui De Marien's plan of 1965. Traces of the Guidi-Vale plan can still be observed in the inner city of Addis Ababa in places such as Piazza, Cazancis,[4] Popolare and Merkato (see Life Story 1). Like its predecessors, De Marien's plan lacked a systematic evaluation of the socio-economic condition of the city and

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[4] Spelled also Kazanchis, originally casa-INCIS. INCIS is the Italian abbreviation for what was during the Italian occupation the National Institute for Houses and State Employees.