

Graduation Plan

Master of Science Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences

M
as
te



Graduation Plan: All tracks

Submit your Graduation Plan to the Board of Examiners (Examencommissie-BK@tudelft.nl), Mentors and Delegate of the Board of Examiners one week before P2 at the latest.

The graduation plan consists of at least the following data/segments:

Personal information		
Name	Feven Gebeyehu Zeru	
Student number	5628466	

Studio		
Name / Theme	Explore Lab Studio	
Main mentor	Nelson Mota	Global Housing Studio
Second mentor	Leeke Reinders	Urban Architecture Studio
Argumentation of choice of the studio	The Explore Lab Studio gives me the opportunity to address the complex housing situation in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. As I am already dealing with this issue in the Honours programme, the studio gives me the opportunity to further explore this topic from the perspective of a researcher as well as a designer.	

Graduation project	
Title of the graduation project	A spatial dialogue in the emerging city of Addis Ababa - <i>bridging the gaps between informality and formality</i>
Goal	
Location:	Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

The posed problem,

Within the context of Addis Ababa's *peripheral urbanization*, housing should be regarded as a process, rather than a product. Dwellers should be auto-constructors who have agency over their living space, by being able to express their needs and culture depending on their resources and demands. However programs like the Grand Housing Project that gave birth to the Condominium blocks generate the opposite by "transform[ing] the house into another type of commodity: no longer a space to be auto-constructed and improved over time, but rather one, often limited and low quality, to be consumed as a finished product."

This development showcases clearly that even though the Condominium blocks address the tangible need of housing, they fail to address the intangible aspects of the living culture of the dwellers, by not being able to reproduce the "vital multifunctional utility of the domestic and public places in the inner-city kebele housing area".

Architecture within this environment needs to not only take into account socio-economic factors but also cultural factors. Since this development has a strong impact precisely on the most vulnerable group, women and the youth, it is of high importance to make their culture of everyday life tangible, in order to design future architecture that addresses their realities to a higher extent.

<p>research questions and</p>	<p>What spatial needs do Ethiopian dwellers have that housing must fulfill in order to ensure the expression of their culture of everyday life?</p> <p>How do Ethiopian dwellers relate to space ? How are their practices influenced by space ? How is it possible to map/trace/document culture ? Where is architecture a barrier and where is it a carrier for culture ?</p>
<p>design assignment in which these result.</p>	<p>During my research stay in Ethiopia I had the opportunity to visit different <i>traditional</i> settlements as well as <i>modern</i> condominium sites. Architecturally, the condominium blocks, which represent formal housing, are supposed to replace the traditional settlements. However, this new housing typology does not originate from the traditional settlements, but is a product of westernized housing concepts. Both types of housing are strong contrasts, which make it difficult for the inhabitants to live out their own culture. My aim is to reduce the contrasts between the two types of housing through several small architectural interventions in order to ensure that the culture of life of Ethiopian residents is preserved and expressed.</p>
<p>To place my interventions I chose the Condominium site, Yeka in the north-east of Addis. The first intervention addresses the street space, which is one of the most important elements in the Ethiopian urban space. The street is considered the place for the highest form of income generation and is therefore very important for the every day culture of the Ethiopians. However, it is visible that in Yeka, the road is planned from the perspective of the vehicles rather than inhabitants. I want to change this by transforming the street into a place of encounter and exchange, giving space to markets and other sources of income. The second intervention concerns the courtyards of the Condominium blocks, these are so large that it is difficult for the residents to identify with them. For this reason, I want to increase the density through small scale housing typologies that allow for incremental growth in order to create more intimate courtyards and a sense of informality that allows for cultural expression. The third intervention refers the condominium block itself, which I would like to upgrade with a so-called second shell and give the residents the opportunity to expand spatially according to their own needs.</p>	

Process

Method description

Home making is multi - dimensional and a combination between spatial and social facets. Instead of continuing the bias and unreflective polarized concepts of formal/informal we should listen to these multifaceted realities observed on the ground and go beyond those categories. Even though architecture sets the spatial boundaries, it can not control how the space is actually used. Therefore the lived space entails valuable information about the living culture that needs to be analyzed.

It is intended to analyze these elements of every day that people use according to observations and interviews. This analysis is combined and layered upon the architectural plan analysis in different projections in order to understand the objects and rituals of everyday life in relation to the built structure. This combination is supposed to highlight where architecture allows or prevents cultural activity and expression. In order to actually learn and understand the environment not only through the viewers perspective, but through the perspective of the dwellers, the work is supplemented by comments and ideas of the dwellers in order to give space to the community and literally enter into a dialogue. Furthermore, the perspective of designers and professionals who are intensively involved with the processes in Addis Ababa is included. By layering these different perspectives onto each other, the intangible as well as tangible elements of the everyday are analyzed and expressed, giving a picture full of connections and contradictions. These layers are actually going to be layered onto each other by collaging, sketching and drawing, that way the process becomes part of the research and invites viewers to become part of the conversion. The aim is to create a catalogue the object of everyday in order to preserve the culture and serve as a reference for future architectural projects.

Literature and general practical preference

Anteneh Tesfaye, "Places of Transit- The entries to Addis Ababa." in Building Ethiopia, ed. Cherenet and Sewnet (EiABC, 2012), 139.

C., Turner John F, and Robert Fichter. *Freedom to Build; Dweller Control of the Housing Process*. New York: Macmillan, 1972.

Dirk Hebel and Elias Yitbarek, "Addis Ababa - Extracting Character From Voids." in Building Ethiopia, ed. Cherenet and Sewnet. Addis Ababa: EiABC, 2012.

Ejigu, Alazar G. "7. Socio-Spatial Tensions and Interactions: An Ethnography of the Condo minium Housing of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia." *Sustainable Cities*, 2012, 97–112. <https://doi.org/10.3362/9781780440002.007>.

Elias Yitbarek Alemayeh and Laura Stark. *The Transformation of Addis Ababa*. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2018.

Hebel and Yitbarek, "Addis Ababa - Extracting Character From Voids." in Building Ethiopia, ed. Cherenet and Sewnet. Addis Ababa: EiABC, 2012.

Inglis, David. *Culture and Everyday Life*. London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2005.

"Overview." World Bank. Accessed May 14, 2022. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/coun try/ethiopia/overview#1>.

Teresa PR Caldeira, "Peripheral Urbanization: Autoconstruction, Transversal Logics, and Politics in Cities of the Global South." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 35, no. 1(2016): pp. 3-20, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0263775816658479>.

UN-Habitat, "Condominium Housing in Ethiopia: The Integrated Development Programme." United Nations Human Settlements Programme: Nairobi, 2010.

Hebel, Dirk E., Bisrat Kifle, Fasil Giorghis, and Zegeye Cherenet Mamo. *Addis Ababa: A Manifesto on African Progress*. Berlin: Ruby Press, 2018.

Bhan, Gautam. "Notes on a Southern Urban Practice." *Environment and Urbanization* 31, no. 2 (2019): 639–54. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956247818815792>.

Rapoport, Amos. *The Meaning of the Built Environment: A Nonverbal Communication Approach*. Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 1990.

Reflection

1. What is the relation between your graduation (project) topic, the studio topic (if applicable), your master track (A,U,BT,LA,MBE), and your master programme (MSc AUBS)?
2. What is the relevance of your graduation work in the larger social, professional and scientific framework.

1. I studied architecture in my Bachelor's degree and learned a lot about space, proportions and aesthetics. With my Master's studies I wanted to build upon this knowledge, which is why I applied for the architecture track. However, it was clear to me from the beginning that I wanted to study architecture from an interdisciplinary perspective. At TU Delft, I was able to do that by dealing with socio-economic topics and getting to know anthropological research methods. I wanted to combine all these fields in my thesis and for this reason I chose the Explore Lab as my graduation studio, as it is known for being open to new approaches and explorations. Through my graduation topic, which deals with the cultural expression within the different housing typologies in Addis Ababa, I am able to highlight the importance of integrating traditions, culture and living conditions into the design process.

2. It is visible that in the Global South a large amount of mass produced housing solutions are influenced by a Western way of living. This type of architecture restricts people from living out their culture, implying that the Western way of life is a goal to strive for which eventually can lead to a loss of important culture. In order to counteract this development, it is of high importance to study and record the realities and practices of the residents' everyday life in order to develop architecture that directly responds to these needs. Even if housing solution like the condominium increases the standard of living and is accepted and appreciated by a certain portion of the population, large scale projects like this result in the loss of valuable urban history. Moreover, it seems that the target group is very undefined and the needs of the society are simplified. Because like a majority of other modernist housing, "condominiums [...] are designed for a broad and loosely defined category of low-to middle-income users, without sufficient attention paid to the differences that exist within that group."