Stockholm Studies in Sociology

The Social Roles of Buildings
New Series 65
The Social Roles of Buildings

An Account of Materiality and Meaning in Urban Outcomes

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For Santiago, New York, and Stockholm—the cities that have welcomed me home.
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“Architecture is all too often imagined as if buildings do not—and should not—change. But change they do, and have always done.”

I. Introduction

Intents

Buildings are integral to urban life. Cities are landscapes of built forms, encompassing neighborhoods of architectural ensembles and urban spaces delimited by walls. The material compositions of buildings affect our actions and understandings. We construct, use, define, and interpret them. But these are interactive processes. The material construction of new buildings can play a role in changes to the social landscape of a city. Buildings become markers of distinction, create new means of categorization, and fix geographical distributions. The use of a building both bounds and creates opportunities for practices. It materially divides and can also cohere. Reused buildings harbor prior functions in their facades and can provide visual evidence of the past to urban areas in flux. Through these interactions, buildings gain new meanings and are redefined. In this dissertation, I find that buildings, as both a methodological tool and a research site, are valuable for understanding society. As a method, buildings allow access to various urban contexts. As a research site, the material and the social are integrated. Herein I will discuss the making of a building type—a continual process over time—wrapped up in the making of a city.¹

The book Buildings and Society (King 1980b) opens with two questions: “What can we understand about a society by examining its buildings and physical environment? What can we understand about buildings and environments by examining the society in which they exist?” (p. 1). The chapters in King’s edited volume are written from the level of building types. That is, they do not explain how individual buildings come into existence in a society, but how new types arise. From this vantage point, we see that societies and buildings change together. I draw from King’s initial

¹ My focus is on the urban for this case study. It is not that buildings don’t exist outside cities; it is that the city does not exist without buildings.
questions, but make a contemporary divergence. King and the other authors rest on the conclusion that society produces buildings, which in turn help to maintain existing structures—that is, buildings are produced to meet a social function and in carrying out that function they prop up modes of social organization, practices, or divisions of power. Buildings, in their view, maintain society. While I think that this can be the case, I also think that buildings play a role in helping to produce society, often in unintended or unexpected ways. In the 1980s this may have seemed a radical view but social science has continually moved in the last decades to pursue theoretical and empirical understandings of how objects (Appadurai 1986b; Dant 2005; Miller 1987; Mukerji 1994), non-humans (Callon 1993; Jerolmack 2013; Jerolmack and Tavory 2014; Latour 1991, 1992, 1993, 2005), or physicality and materiality in general (Gieryn 2002b; Low 2003, 2011; Molotch 2005; Pinch 2008, 2010; Pinch and Swedberg 2008) are constitutive of the social. Buildings and building types are particularly good for assessing how “things” affect social outcomes, changes, or processes because buildings are multivalent. Buildings have stated functions, are used by multiple actors and groups, take on cultural meanings, change definitions, and, as they lie in the realms of both utility and art, are interpreted through both practical and visual experience. Some of these claims could be made about designed goods in general. But, the main factor that makes them good for urban studies is that cities are comprised of buildings. If we are interested in how processes, changes, and outcomes unfold in urban life, I argue that we must look to buildings for some answers.

The centerpiece of this dissertation is a case study of a building type that showcases roles buildings play in urban life, by following the same building type across history and levels of analysis in one city. The overarching case shows how a new building type is born in a society and what buildings do, as both materiality and meaning, to help bring about outcomes. Overall, it is a case of change. Through all parts of the process buildings and society are in continual construction. At the analytical levels of city, interactional space, and neighborhood, buildings and people interact through construction, use, and reuse, respectively. My intent herein is to analytically integrate the material and the social. In my empirical chapters, I look at urbanization, divisions and uses of space, and neighborhood change. These are things that
sociologists have long studied. The question I pose is: what are the buildings doing? If we can answer this, will we find that we have been missing something in our current analyses? The study of buildings offers a distinct perspective into urban environments, both methodologically and theoretically. To this end, the thesis concludes with thoughts on a tentative blueprint of concepts and methods for the sociological study of buildings.

The three empirical chapters of the thesis present individual cases within the case. The first traces a process of late 19th century urbanization to show the entrance of new residential building types into a city and how the physical and social landscape is reshaped in the process, emphasizing how one urban form emerges and is defined. Intercontinental connections bring new architecture and new language, stabilizing the link between form and name in the city. The resulting spectrum of buildings within the type shows how the diversity of residents shapes material outcomes. As the new buildings become fixed in the urban landscape, so too do social categories. How buildings change definitions both between and within societies, as well as start to take on meanings, is explored.

Once definitions and form are established, the following chapters explore the roles of the buildings in contemporary urban life. Photo analysis is employed to examine uses of shared space (a “patio”) in a residential building where buildings are theorized as material structures that contribute to patterned activities. It addresses how the building creates opportunities for observed everyday uses of private collective space. Using published comparison cases demonstrates that practices appear to differ between buildings of the same type when income of residents differs. It is hypothesized that opportunity is created not by the existence of the space per se, but by its gated enclosure, which separates the public street from the private space. The building is understood as a bound that simultaneously fosters interaction and exclusion. Activities in these spaces, over time, contribute to new cultural understandings of the building type, showing how use can generate meaning.

The last empirical chapter examines the reuse of residential buildings for commercial purposes in one neighborhood. The goal is to illuminate roles buildings play in contemporary neighborhood transformations. Rather than
understanding transformation through reuse itself, modes of material conversions are examined. The differences between older conversions and newer ones in the area highlight the role of visible characteristics in the newly reused buildings. The material maintenance of residential facades on new conversions locks in the visual of a residential neighborhood, where intended function is built into form, even under commercial reuse. This is valuable in line with a constructed narrative about the place that focuses on the neighborhood of the past. The building type under investigation is further redefined as reused buildings take on visual and spatial similarities to housing models from a past era that were not involved in changes in the neighborhood, but appear as if they were. This chapter relies on participant observation and analysis of marketing materials, as well as other documentary sources.

Essentially this is a study of how social life is affected by things that have traditionally not been considered social. But it is difficult to gain entry into a narrative, as well as a study, in a meaningful manner. We can tell stories in novel fashion or give meaning to new content. The author F. Scott Fitzgerald summed it up like this (I paraphrase): the material you write is as ephemeral as the events you write about if you cannot make it stick in people’s minds (Fitzgerald [1926] 2011). We need a tool, a device, to help us maneuver the story along an axis. Just as we need to expose the world we see: to refract light in ways that reveal its elements. The study of objects—or a single object—can be a prism to momentarily refract society in a way we have not previously seen. In this analysis, buildings are my prisms. But like all objects, they are also in and of society. By analyzing the social world through buildings, we ultimately also hear their side of the story.

**Puzzles**

The case study is of a building type called *cités* in Santiago de Chile. Before we go further, I will answer the questions that have just popped into your head. Why Santiago? Why *cités*? My reasons may not be the most scientific, but they have practicality on their side: I had access and I had a puzzle. I was living in Santiago briefly in the latter months of 2012 and stumbled upon the neighborhood known as Barrio Italia (empirically examined in chapter 4).
was a neighborhood full of houses that had been converted to commercial use. The thing that struck me as odd about the place was that most of the houses had not been remodeled. The facades looked like any old house on the block but signs on the exterior indicated that as many as eight stores and a café might be hiding inside. At the time, going there during a weekday resulted in me being the only customer on the sidewalk. The place looked dead, and further, uninviting. How do they sell anything?, I wondered. You can’t see what’s on offer, you have to go inside each building to know what’s there, and, worse, you’ll be the only person there and have to make small talk with each attendant. It seemed like a terrible way to market products. Why wouldn’t they open up the facades to make display windows? Or put some indication of what they sell on the outside? I didn’t want to bother with going inside each one. I asked around to some architects I knew constructing a building in the neighborhood about these houses turned stores. I was told they were “cités”—an old type of worker housing with patios on the inside. Like any good researcher I Googled “cités in Barrio Italia.” This turned up an article from the New York Times written that same year about “cités” turned boutiques in the neighborhood (and why you should travel to Barrio Italia to shop). Googling “cité” only showed some black and white photos of people gathered in interior patios of residential buildings. That was the extent of it. I thought it interesting: a residential building type turned commercial—where the whole type seemed to be converting in this one neighborhood. But I had trouble locating any specific or reliable information about them. It set off a barrage of questions. What were these mysterious buildings with their weird name? Who lived in them? Why were they converting to commercial use? Why weren’t they being remodeled in the process? Did their form work particularly well for commercial use? (Obviously in my opinion the answer was no.) It would be a couple of years before I started to investigate and a couple more years before I began to answer. What started as a question about odd buildings in a neighborhood became a search for the history of a building type that was convoluted and buried in myth. What I had originally assumed was one building type—that could be operationalized—turned out to have varied forms and definitions—with a new definition taking shape in Barrio Italia right before my eyes. The building type was entangled in many aspects of city life from the debate about heritage preservation to neighborhood change.
to social class segregation. It allowed me into so many urban dynamics that I had to pick and choose for this study what to develop.

Santiago, Chile is a city of almost 7 million people couched between the Andes Mountains to the east and the Pacific Ocean to the west. The City has spread “like a stain”, as they say, on all sides of the original colonial city plan that was laid in the mid-1500s. In comparison with US cities it resembles the West Coast model of city expansion, known as the “Los Angeles School” (Davis 1990; Dear 2000; Soja 1989), where car culture dominates the urban sprawl. There are polycentric zones that allow the city’s residents to remain highly segregated in daily interactions and business districts have duplicated, remaining in the original center and migrating with the residential wealth toward the mountains. Although, historically, Chile adapted foreign models of architecture, it is now being recognized on its own. Since Alejandro Aravena won the highly regarded Pritzker Architecture Prize in 2016, Chilean architecture is currently in the international spotlight. Aravena is known for his designs of contemporary social housing in Chile, which are said to innovatively solve problems of supply-side budgets and give autonomy to residents by building “half a house” that the residents then finish with their own resources. The idea is that the half that gets built—the infrastructure—will be well built. The case I have elected here predates this fame. It takes us back to the first era of state-subsidized housing in Chile, and the architects responsible for the building types that emerged then.

Cités were developed in the late 19th century as a type of collective housing for workers during industrialization and early urbanization. The cité is defined by a particular urban form. It is interpolated into existing urban planning infrastructure, forming a pedestrian path that comes to a dead-end at the interior of a city block. There are rows of dwellings that open into this

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2 Santiago does not match everything the LA school claimed but gives a visual of the city geography and uneven expansion (see Greene and Rojas (2010) for more). See Janoschka (2002) for an overview of how Latin American cities, including Santiago, resemble the LA model in terms of fragmentation and privatization.
path, which serves as an access to the homes from the public street. However, there is large variation in the range of cités. While some have ornate, neo-classical details and emit a kind of grandeur in downtown districts, others are flat-walled and hidden from view by gates on the front, with a whole spectrum in between. These two ends of a continuum, visually, would seem to be distinct building types but they all go by the same name. Because of this, the word “cité” in Santiago can connote both “beauty” and “blight”. How did this variation arise, in terms of both materiality and meaning? How do differences in the buildings play out in everyday activities of contemporary residents? How do urban forms and meanings affect interest in neighborhoods? I will try to answer these questions herein.

As we answer these questions we will also see how the building type is affected. We start out following the building type “cité”—a particular form and name. But as the empirical chapters unfold, so do the changes in what is called a “cité”. This is important because in following the type, we see that the definition shifts, although there are no new buildings built and very few changes to the old buildings. However, the word “cité” acquires new definitions, pointing at distinct material forms. As a researcher I chose to follow the name and the changes to material objects that it encompassed, as opposed to operationalizing the form and sticking to a strict definition of what would be included in the study. The outcome was more fruitful because it allows us to see how society keeps remaking buildings even as they remain fixed. Importantly, it is in these remakings that the roles of the buildings in social processes are most visible. A final answer to the question “why cités” is that cités are the everyday and they reveal relationships that I think the reader will recognize and find applicable, even out of a familiar context. There should be no special knowledge of Santiago required to understand this dissertation. I am not a specialist in Latin American studies. I am interested in the topic of buildings and urban environments globally. I think that only by studying similar processes between geographically and culturally dissimilar locations and contexts can we uncover central mechanisms. The present case is of a Latin American city, but much of the cited literature draws from the US and Europe. I believe it speaks to the quality of a theory that it holds for similar dynamics in multiple locations.
Building Concepts

This is a book about buildings, not architecture. Architecture, aside from built structures, refers to a discipline or profession. The “sociology of architecture” is largely concerned with architects, their work, and their theory, not with buildings per se. The goal is to build relationships between sociologists and architects, to better connect people and built environments, and understand how social interaction occurs within built spaces, drawing on community studies and organizational sociology (Beaman 2002). While this is not my goal, I do rely on some architectural concepts. Buildings, apart from architecture, are physical, social, and cultural constructs. Physically, buildings are the composition of material and space. Most built forms fall under this definition. In this thesis, buildings can include things we generally assume under the English use of the word, such as apartment houses, skyscrapers, factories, prisons, palaces, but also detached houses, mansions, row houses, and informally built structures. I have adopted the most basic physical definition so that we can use the same term over time and context. Socially, buildings are often defined by the intended function, or stated uses, for which they are built. They are designed to meet a specific societal purpose, such as housing, worship, work, etc. The concept “social function” here relies on this architectural idea of function. By calling it a “social” function, it is intended to drive the point that the building is a part of “the social”. Culturally, buildings have meanings that can be carried through both form and name (to be discussed below).

3 In the US this is usually called “single-family house”, here I use the British concept “detached house” because it refers to architectural form, not social organization.

4 This diverges from “social function” in sociology, which generally refers to the function of “social” phenomena (where material objects are historically not seen as social). Durkheim traced social phenomena to understand how they operated in society, but he called this their “function”. He writes, “We use the word ‘function’, in preference to ‘end’ or ‘purpose’, precisely because social phenomena do not generally exist for the useful results they produce” (Giddens 1972:82). However, the function of a building or its spaces is stated before it is built. In line with architecture,
The concept “social roles” is used here to describe how buildings operate in a process to bring about outcomes. Sociologists have used “social role” to discuss a person’s expected behavior given some position or category in society. If we applied this definition in our case, it would be understood as “how we expect buildings to behave”—what we expect them to do. But this is our definition of “function” (to take an example, we expect a prison to fulfill a social function of housing persons convicted of crimes). This is how the term “role” is used in other studies of non-humans in the social world, where it is synonymous with intended function (e.g., Callon 1993; Latour 1992). However, a distinction is needed between function and role because, just like humans, buildings can operate in multiple ways simultaneously (Durkheim, in Giddens 1972:81). The definition of role has to relax to be able to account for unexpected outcomes. As such, my definition of role is akin to how William F. Whyte used the term in his article “The Social Role of the Settlement House” (1941). His argument was about the institution of the settlement house (not a material house itself), but he differentiated between the purpose of the institution and the role it actually played in the community. He understands “social role”, as I do, as a part played by an entity, in a process involving people. I maintain that buildings are a part of society and that “the material” can’t be decoupled from “the social.” “Social role” signals that buildings are playing roles not relegated to a material opposition. “Social” of course is about interaction, and that is precisely what I want to evoke: people and buildings in the same strings of unfolding processes.

rather than Durkheim, I use the words “function” and “purpose” synonymously, although buildings may not achieve their stated ends either. Here I often refer to it as “intended social function” to emphasize the stated purpose of the building, not actual use or outcomes.

5 This is in line with the generic use of the word “role”, also occupied in sociology. For example, Ariztia (2011) says objects have been invisible in sociology but that does not mean that they do not play a “central role” in the production of the social world (p. 56).
In this study, buildings are understood as “objects” in the sense that they are designed, used, and made of material. In sociology, “material” is a term that historically referred to economics (starting with Marx’s “materialist method” (Calhoun et al. 2012:142) and following through to the new economic sociologists). “Materiality” does not refer to economics, in this case, but to the physicality of “things”. “Materiality”, as developed in sociological studies of science and technology, as well as architecture, design, anthropology, and archeology, refers to things that are physical, tangible, visible through some sense or instrument, or, as in our case, built. Buildings are a “material composition” of physical space and material construction. As buildings encompass both, I use “materiality” to refer to the whole composition. Materiality in this sense is juxtaposed to meaning, which is not physical but is attached to the material composition. Meaning as it relates to objects and buildings will be developed further in the next section but is defined as cultural understandings and associations.⁶

There are two ways that buildings are usually typologized: by function and by form. What I call “types” in this study refers to “formal types” within

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⁶ Pinch and Swedberg have called attention to the two understandings of material in their book *Living in Material World* (2008), which tries to bridge economic sociology with technology studies. In terms of Marx, his work (especially *Capital*) can be said to focus on materiality as it relates to human bodies. The human body is both material product and producer (of itself), through means of subsistence (Calhoun et al. 2012:143). Material conditions (how factories are set up and how daily work practices are carried out) are contextual to the production process, and humans are at the center of it. The outcomes of the process are not “usable objects”, but congealed human labor, referring back to human bodies. The concept “material” came to mean commodity due to this transformation of bodies into value in the production process (their value decreases with increased production of “things” of value for the capitalist classes (Calhoun et al. 2012:147)). This is “material” in economics. When “goods” are produced, it is a reference to value (symbol) not materiality itself. (For a full analysis of Marx and materiality see, Bridge and Watson (2011); Dant (2005:16-18), Miller (1987:34-49), and Swedberg (2008).)
“functional types”. That is, the first typology relies on the intended social function of the buildings (e.g., housing) and the second typology is the differences in form within the housing type (e.g. apartment towers versus detached houses). “Type” is used here for objects that are identified by the same name. As will become apparent, we cannot rely on form alone to define a “formal type” because when we cross cultures or time the same name may start to encompass variations on form. I have also employed the term “urban forms” throughout, which, as I hope will be apparent by context, refers to how a building relates to the space around it in an urban environment. The urban forms in this case have a particular relationship with the existing grid structure. Buildings have to be addressed at the level of the type, and given the ability to cross levels of analysis, to be understood. Discussing one building or how it was constructed may tell us something about the process of construction but not about “buildings” as a concept. It is analogous to individuals and society where processes are illuminated by understanding the links between them.

Social functions, as mentioned above, are tricky because they stand in for many things. While buildings have stated social functions, they also have unstated functions. For example, a housing building may both provide shelter and feed the economy. Economic functions can be assumed as unstated intentions of buildings in most cases. Herein, I have rarely given this attention but instead chosen to focus on “roles”, which changes the research questions from why something exists to how it operates in society. Even so, the focus on a building’s stated purpose remains important because it also has an effect on the meanings of the buildings. As Miller (1987) has pointed out, culture determines why we develop objects although functionality is often used as an excuse (p. 116). With this in mind, stated social functions of buildings serve as underlying meanings that can often be attached to forms and names. For example, the building type in this case is residential and aimed at a specific user group (as is most often the case with residential buildings (see King 1980b; Pattillo 2013)). The material objects can then be culturally associated to specific social groups, and further

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7 Function is also used as an excuse for why we value things, although they too rely on “social and cultural patterning” (Beckert 2007:16; see also, Zelizer [1978] 2011).
meanings can arise based on group status. A more prominent example lies with institutional buildings. Many building types have emerged for particular institutions (e.g., prisons (Bentham 1791; Foucault 1977) or hospitals (Tomlinson 1980; Yanni 2007)). The purposes of these buildings are associated to particular values, currents, or ideologies that become part of the understanding of the forms.8

Another reason why functions are tricky is because objects have many forms to serve the same function (e.g. shapes of bottles that all serve to contain liquids (Miller 1987:116)). The “need” for a building type can result in multiple forms. However, forms and functions have become linked over time, particularly within cultures. Space syntax studies, in archaeological fashion, can estimate building types (function) based on the spatial logic of the form alone (see Hillier et al. 1987). In this sense, as indicated above, “function” becomes a meaning of the object, embedded in form. And forms can evoke their functions. However, meanings can be added and uses can change. Goffman wrote, “I do not mean to imply that no stable meaning is built socially into artifacts, merely that circumstances can enforce an additional meaning…All things used for hammering in nails are not hammers” (1974:39). With buildings, this is particularly salient with reuse, where the form of the building may still identify the original function under a new use. The principle that “architecture decides form, and hopes for function” (Hillier et al. 1984:61) is only pertinent when discussing actual use. Because of the link between form and function within cultures, intended function always has the capacity to matter for understanding buildings even under other uses.

Interior spaces of buildings often have intended uses, just as a building has an intended function. Even as buildings maintain their functions, spaces can be used differently than intended.9 This is true even in buildings with strong

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8 This is also sometimes true of individual buildings, where formal organizations as places of work can build cultural norms of the organization into the form of the building (Peponis 1985).
9 Gans (1968:4-11) used the terms “effective” and “potential” environments to refer to the difference between architectural intent and real use. But intent
programs, where institutional or organizational characteristics enforce how space is used. The relationship between intended social function, form, use, and culture can be summed up in one example. In architect Rem Koolhaas’ book *S, M, L, XL* (1998) he describes a project where his team was asked to devise a renovation for a Dutch prison that would be in line with contemporary ideologies regarding treatment of prisoners, given that the prison was built under the Panopticon Principle. After the political ideology of the panopticon had gone out of favor, the building—still functioning as a prison—had changed its use: “Guards have abandoned the center and now circulate randomly on the ground and the rings, among prisoners who are often released from their cells. In this transparent space, no action or inaction remains unnoticed. The central post—the former ‘eye’ of the panopticon—has become a canteen for the guards; they now sip coffee there, observed by the prisoners on the rings. Originally envisioned as empty, the entire interior is now often as busy as the Milan Galleria” (Koolhaas and Mau 1998:237). The example shows how spaces designed to be used in a specific way—far from determining actions or practices within a building—can change use. The solution that the architectural team devises (which never came to fruition) keeps the original form of the prison, while modifying its program of interior spaces. Politically, this is problematic because “the panopticon” is still associated to a past where prisoners were “mistreated” (the opinion of the Dutch government in this case). That is to say, even when the building is not being used as a panopticon, it cannot be decoupled from the cultural understanding of the building type due to the visible, material components of the building. The meaning of the building is linked to its materiality.

is no longer viewed as belonging to architects. It is rather the intent of groups of individual and institutional actors who make decisions (see, e.g., Gieryn 2002b on the Cornell Biotechnology Building; also, Gutman and Westergaard (2010) describe the case of the Richards Building at University of Pennsylvania (p. 128 & 136) to show how clients alter the design during the construction process, usually to cut costs).
Foundations

Why should you care about buildings? There are two reasons. The first is specific to buildings in relation to society, and particularly urbanity. The second is about the concept of materiality in sociology. In this section, I will outline how buildings have been treated in sociology, with focus on the urban. Buildings are the main component of the urban physical landscape and yet have rarely been treated in their own right. Instead, they are often encompassed in the background of other studies. Studies of spaces have done the most to advance the study of buildings, but they only treat one aspect of the two that comprise buildings, as buildings are material and spatial compositions. The untreated aspect of buildings (material) makes them important as both usable and visual objects. Materiality studies have gained momentum in sociology in the last decades with the position that material objects play roles in bringing about society. Earlier studies of objects and artifacts focused on culture, in particular, how culture leads to the production and meaning of things. The object itself plays little role in how society is brought about or the meanings the object takes on. Later studies focus on how materiality plays roles in the construction of society, and how meaning cannot be fully separated from material. My position sides with the latter and is explored through buildings in an urban environment. In my case, aspects of society lead to the introduction of a new building type and buildings play roles in bringing about aspects of that society. Further, over time buildings accumulate meanings and expand definitions. I argue that this is due, at least in part, to the material aspects of buildings. That is, their meanings and materiality are linked and it is both their material and cultural components that play roles in urban outcomes.

Gutman (2010) writes that the relationship between architecture and sociology (the professions) is that "a building cannot be conceived apart from the human activities it serves to facilitate and encourage" (p. 155). However, they historically deal with different things, sociology with social groups and architecture with buildings—the first with invisible “social facts” (inferred through behavior patterns) and the second with visible “physical objects” (sensed directly through sight and touch) (Gutman 2010:181).
Sociologists often are suspicious of equating “the visible” with “the influential” (Gutman 2010:181-182). Pinch (2008) elaborates, “[t]he traditional sociological approach carves up the world [in a way] such that sociologists deal only with social things. The world of objects, machines, and materials are left unanalyzed or considered the territory of others…”: social theorists of materiality should show that the material world is both enabling and constraining, and that the physical and signification can work together (pp. 461-462). Markus (1993) extends the problem in the other direction as well: “[d]espite the evident social role of buildings the boundaries of architectural discourse are drawn so as to exclude it. Buildings are treated as art, technical or investment objects. Rarely as social objects” (p. 26). These social theorists lay out a clear problem. The social and the material have been segregated. Historically, buildings and people were not allowed to cross disciplinary lines. This is not just an analytical heuristic; it is a way of seeing reality (Latour 1993). The solution, as Pinch points out, is to study both people and things to see how interactions occur and what are the outcomes.

There are two things to decouple in terms of prior studies of buildings. The first is material versus space and the second is materiality and meaning. The role of buildings in social outcomes has been studied as it relates to physical space. Buildings bound space on their interiors at the level of individual interaction and at the neighborhood and city levels through the exterior relationships between buildings. In these studies, buildings are not treated as objects but as bounds where buildings operate via a material pathway to enable or constrain. There is a secondary pathway that is often not considered, which is cultural. Studies that consider meanings of buildings, usually do not relate it to its materiality. Meanings are either superimposed or a visual interaction with material form is addressed but buildings are not given any credit for how outcomes are able to arise due to their presence. In this account, buildings reflect culture, they don’t change it and, as such, they are seen as playing no role. This is true for studies that see buildings as reflections of structure also. Here, buildings don’t communicate meaning they manifest (and often reproduce) social organization or make social changes materially visible. In this case, buildings are not helping to constitute society but displaying what already exists. I think we can say that
objects have roles when they help bring about an outcome. Objects that reflect or maintain structure may be seen as having no role if they do not help to bring about the changes they exhibit. However, when an object is observed and its material presence matters for some social outcome, I would say the building is operating via a cultural pathway where meaning is attached to material form.

Studies of space

The arrangement of physical space in buildings is the main factor studied as it relates to outcomes. For example, Festinger, Back, and Schachter (1950) found the spatial setup of hallways and stairwells in a residential building was related to informal group formation. This led to follow-up studies that tried to ascertain the mechanisms behind the relationship (e.g. Newcomb 1961). These types of relationships also led to the quantitative study of building spaces known as Space Syntax studies (Hillier and Hanson 1984). Here, buildings are mapped as pathways and possible interactions, delimited by walls and made possible by doors. This has also taken into account the role of formal organizations or rules in how these interactions play out. For example, a study of factory spaces in England and Greece showed how architects and designers follow the culture and principles already existing in an organization for the spatial design of a building. How factories are designed then feed back into workplace culture and interactions of employees (Peponis 1985). The meeting of physical space and formal organizations has crept into in various studies. Small (2009) found that, in day care centers, information can be brokered between mothers through its physical display in a reception area (pp. 138-140). Fine (2008) dedicates a chapter to the movements of workers as choreographed through both rules and space in restaurant kitchens (ch. 3). Other studies show the role of spaces in buildings in day-to-day interactions at home or at work, such as apartment building lobbies (Bearman 2005:22-28), single room occupancies (Klinenberg 2002:70-73), or trading room offices (Stark 2009:130-134). In some cases, uses of space give rise to larger patterns in society. For example, having separate public restrooms for men and women not only reinforces existing gender differences, it plays a role in the creation of unequal
outcomes (e.g. women must wait in long lines while men do not) (Molotch and Norén 2010:5).

Buildings have also been studied through exterior spaces, rather than interior. The same idea of spatial relationships as applied in buildings was also applied to neighborhoods in both urban and suburban communities, especially in the 50s and 60s. These were often termed studies of “propinquity” where physical distances were factored in to how people formed attachments to neighbors. This relates to buildings because they fix distance and stabilize regularity. In the “semi-public spaces” of residential areas, neighbor interactions were studied in terms of activities that led to encounters (e.g., Gehl 1980; Whyte 1956). Simmel too recognized the possibility for physical space to foster relationships; “perhaps the totality of social interactions could be arranged on a scale from this viewpoint, according to what degree of spatial proximity or distance a sociation either demands or tolerates from given forms and contents” (1997b:147 & 152). Gans, who contributed some of the most well known community studies, was less inclined to believe in space as a root factor in social contacts (1968, especially pp. 12-24). He has advocated that social factors go beneath these apparent physical features, such as neighbors with shared interests or values (1968; also, Gans 2002). However, he does acknowledge that arrangements of houses affect “visual contact” (1968:19 & 163). This is similar to Simmel’s (1921) idea of “visual impression” that in the modern city “characterizes the preponderant part of all sense relationships between man and man” (p. 360). The importance for Simmel is that people in cities had become strangers and impressions were based on seeing rather than knowledge of, say, personality. This played out in studies like Gans’ by alerting people to possible similarities (or differences) between them that could incline or forestall further interaction. It is distances in space, and also material arrangements of buildings, that allow visual interactions to occur. In all these cases, it is clear that buildings may be playing roles in social processes through material constraints or opportunities. In none of these

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10 However, Simmel also believed that increased physical closeness (as in cities) led to abstraction and social distance, where neighbors are less likely to know one another (1950, 1997b:153).
cases though are people interacting with buildings in the sense of “visual” interpretation of aesthetics or cultural meaning.

Buildings have also factored into theories of neighborhood-level planning and its effects in cities. Jacobs (1961) theorized that the planning of city streets affected how people used them. Among other things, buildings on blocks should be mixed use in her opinion to maintain foot traffic of both residents and shoppers. This promoted “interaction” as both encounters and surveillance. Jacobs, though, did make recommendations for physical structures and not just spatial setups. She thought buildings should be a mix of old and new to keep new developments from overrunning neighborhoods, and maintain the aesthetic composition. It is hard to overestimate the effects this theory has had on contemporary city planning (see, e.g., Montgomery (1998) for its influence; Zukin (1995:28) on New York). Associated to this perspective and related to individual buildings is Newman’s theory of Defensible Space (1972). Design variables in buildings were correlated with crime in his study and he proposed architectural principles to increase observation/surveillance and lower “escape routes”, among other things. Although neither Jacobs nor Newman were social scientists, their theories affected social science research. Given the level of implementation in cities, the social outcomes have been studied endlessly, from how building forms contribute to increased street life and “livability” of a neighborhood (Coleman 1984; Macdonald 2005), to studies of uses of public spaces, particularly in residential areas (Baum et al. 1978; Gehl 1980, 2010; Gehl and Svarre 2013), to perceptions of territoriality and defensibility (Benediktsson 2014; Perkins et al. 1993). What these studies have in common is they examine the effects of spatial arrangements, bounded by materiality, on social outcomes.

Buildings and meaning

Objects communicate visually. What they communicate and how they get their meanings depends. Simmel writes in “The Ruin” (1965), “Although architecture, too, uses and distributes the weight and carrying power of matter according to a plan conceivable only in the human soul, within this plan the matter works by means of its own nature, carrying out the plan, as it
were, with its own forces” (p. 259). For Simmel, the ruin expresses the return of materials to nature after society has violated nature by constructing a building. The ruin of a building represents the balance between life and death. Ruins are to be viewed for their beauty and felt as evocations, but are not inhabited or used. In his writings on Italian cities, too, the built landscapes are viewed and experienced as aesthetic (Simmel 2007a, 2007b, 2007c). In this view, the buildings evoke an emotional response through observation. The conditions of the buildings matter for the impression he gets; it is not superimposed with symbolism. The purpose of the buildings is not the important point, only how they look.\footnote{In his essay “The Handle” (1958), Simmel makes a distinction between aesthetics and tangibility, where objects are usable and their forms, having aesthetic value, are also represented in art. Here, photos and art represent objects (much like words), but objects are not only symbolic of things, they \textit{are} things.}

Recognizable buildings and monuments have been studied as purposefully produced symbols to represent a nation, an event, or specific collective identities. Architecture becomes political and meanings are imposed on buildings for a collective understanding of what it is “supposed” to represent. Jones (2006), for example, found that “starchitects” are able to use their positions to negotiate various group identities to sell the idea of a building under a single “national identity”. Other studies have looked at signature architectures as branding (e.g., Ren 2008), where the buildings represent commercial interests. In examples like this, the form of the building matters little for its symbolism. Indeed, this is the idea of a symbol: the material object represents something intangible but does not play a role in “how it means” (Whyte 2006).\footnote{Architectural historian William Whyte (2006) explains that historically buildings have only been understood in two ways: to convey a single pre-given meaning or to be interpreted through pre-given constraints (similar to reading a language). He argues that we should instead try to understand “how they mean”, not “what they mean”. Sociologically, his idea is similar to “situated” analysis to determine how buildings gain the meanings they have (see, Lofland 1971). Symbolism in sociology has traditionally relied on}
communication. In his account, public places can be built like “fortresses” and read as unwelcoming to certain groups, while not others. For him, this is purposeful in the design and is “…the architectural policing of social boundaries…” (p. 223). Note here that he does not say that the architecture materially creates a bound. He is reliant on buildings as tools of surveillance, purposefully installed and guarded by people, for them to perform their social function. This does not incorporate the material role of the building, as such, in the process.

Signaling is another way the built environment communicates and has been researched in neighborhood studies, specifically as it relates to crime and disorder. A principle example that has been implemented in policy is the “broken windows” hypothesis (Kelling and Wilson 1982). It says that if there are “signs of disorder” in a neighborhood, which can manifest physically as broken windows, graffiti on walls, or dilapidated buildings, it will lead to crime. The suggestion, as it has been carried out in some cities, is to quell low level “incivilities” (Hunter 1978) before problems get too big. Advocates and dissenters have fought over this since the 1980s and culminated research that looks at neighborhoods as ecologies, where buildings are part of a collectivity that shapes outcomes (Kelling and Coles 1996; Sampson and Raudenbush 1999, 2004; Sampson et al. 2002; Skogan 1990, 2008). Signs can be temporary and read in variable ways—often susceptible to individual perception (e.g. Perkins et al. 1992; Taylor and Shumaker 1990)—unlike symbols, which tend to represent something specific or have shared cultural understandings. The argument here is that the built environment is manifesting underlying social problems (if it is read as problematic). Like Simmel’s account of ruins, in these cases, it is the conditions of the buildings that signal, rather than their functions or cultural

Durkheim’s account of Totemism (1915) where the “visual object” is “simply the material form in which the imagination represents [an] immaterial substance” (Giddens 1972:226). Objects represent the invisible forces of the world, but only so far as we give them meaning: material forms depend “upon the thought of the worshippers who adore them” and do not have given character except what is “superimposed upon them by belief” (Giddens 1972:234-235).
attributes as building types or as symbols. The social outcomes in these neighborhoods are understood to be products of the total conditions of the place.

Particularly in urban sociology, buildings have been viewed as commodities, largely following Marxist thought. They communicate value, often attributed to outside factors. However, the aesthetics of buildings can function as a kind of symbolic capital and, like other objects, can communicate status (Bourdieu 1984; Veblen 2008), marking social distinctions and positions in a social hierarchy. Hierarchies can be among individual buildings or cityscapes. Zukin (1995) discusses how the physical landscapes of cities become iconic and cultural images show how much capital a city has (culture stands in for economic capital). City identities are then based on these images and become signs of power (see also Kenzari 2011 on buildings as symbolic violence). A case that takes materiality into account is Zukin’s (1989) *Loft Living*, where material and symbolic components of the buildings play a role in the shift from “an industrial to a deindustrialized urban economy” (p. 112).

A critique by materiality scholars has been that buildings and cities are treated as “settings for interaction” (Latour 2005:86; Pinch 2008:463), where the physicality of the setting is not analyzed. Goffman has taken a particular hit in this regard with his address of buildings and other public spaces (1959, 1963, 1971). Pinch (2008:463) writes that Goffman’s terminology in regard to social interaction (e.g., “face work” or “front and back stage”) calls attention to the physicality of people in the same space and how this is made possible or constrained, although Goffman does not deal with these issues. More recently, Pinch (2010) has taken some of Goffman’s work and analyzed how materiality matters for his concepts (such as “role distance”). Culturally, social settings in Goffman’s work are understood as “frames” (Goffman 1974), where buildings recall preexisting cultural associations to help us interpret the situation and behave accordingly.
Buildings and structure

In many cases buildings have been understood to reflect existing social structures or changes, and in some cases they feed back in to reproduce those structures. This type of reflection is distinguished from representation as discussed above in that meaning is not being communicated; instead, the social is being manifested. For example, Slaton (2001) looks at the role of technology in the development of utilitarian concrete buildings in the US, and the "indigenous cultural origins of these buildings" outside of European modernist influence (p. 3). Here, concrete is a methodological tool to understand changes in the division of labor and building industries over time. For her, concrete is a reflection of social and cultural forces (p. 14). Snyder (1995) tells us that changes in use of farm buildings reflect social changes over time and that meanings are given to buildings as farmers see their own identities and history in them (a kind of subjective reflection). In another example, houses “reflect” changes in ethnic groups in a neighborhood through visible displays such as paint color (Benedict and Kent 2004). Less pronounced, in the early 1920s, the Chicago School noted that buildings got taller as land values increased and that the growth of an area is marked by variation in value of the buildings (McKenzie 1924:297 & 300). In this case, buildings reflect economic changes. These examples show how buildings make visible social differentiations and changes in society. However, buildings play no explicit role in how these changes come about.

Buildings are understood as “reciprocal” in the sense that they both manifest social structures and feed back in to reproduce them. “The spatial form of the built environment reflects, and in turn conditions, social relations over time and space” (Dear 1986:375). Bourdieu in his study of the Kabyle house shows how social structures are “materialized” through allocation of space (1970, 1990). Where gendered relations exist in society, a building’s interior is an extension of social organization. Gieryn (2002b:37-41) and Pinch (2008:463) have called Bourdieu into question for his treatment of materiality of space and buildings, claiming that in his account buildings as structures are too powerful and do not give autonomy to people in terms of how social practices are carried out or how meanings of the building arise.
Buildings are “structuring structures” (Bourdieu 1990) in a literal sense.13 Foucault’s understanding of buildings is one of the most developed in terms of how social, political, and economic structures contribute to a building type and how those buildings then directly shape actors (corporally and psychologically). “Panopticism” (Foucault 1977) deals with the prison as a building type that both structures and symbolizes control, whereby the mechanism operates through the materiality of the building in both form and meaning.

Buildings and materiality

Latour writes of earlier research on material objects in sociology: “What renders these disputes moot is that the choice between these positions is unrealistic. It would be incredible if the millions of participants in our courses of action would enter the social ties through three modes of existence and only three: as a ‘material infrastructure’ that would ‘determine’ social relations…as a ‘mirror’ simply ‘reflecting’ social distinctions…or as a backdrop for the stage on which human social actors play the main roles…” (2005:86). In recent decades these seemingly finite positions have changed with sociology, anthropology, history, and archeology starting to investigate the roles of objects in the constitution of social life. Materiality studies have appeared in sociology in the areas of economics (Swedberg 2008), institutions (Diamond 1992), markets (Ariztia 2014), and also urban studies (Bridge and Watson 2011; Farias and Bender 2010; Latour and Hermant 2006; Middleton 2010). Still, science studies (Callon 1993; Latour 1991, 1992, 1993, 1996, 2005), technology and sociotechnical systems (Bijker et

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13 Bourdieu’s concept of habitus is aimed to explain the role of individuals in the reproduction of structure and is not originally applied to materiality. “The conditionings associated with a particular class of conditions of existence produce habitus, systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them” (Bourdieu 1990:53).
al. 1993; Bijker 1997; Pinch 2008, 2010; Vaughan 1996), and culture (Dant 2005; Jerolmack and Tavory 2014; Miller 1987; Mukerji 1994; Uimonen 2016) are the prominent fields where materiality as a concept exists in social science.

Latour has been a leading voice in advocating changes to sociological theory and methods, writing that objects cannot be separated from society and therefore do not “reflect” it (1993; 2005). Instead, he believes that traditional sociological methods should be replaced with Actor Network Theory (ANT), which incorporates people, things, ideas (etc.) into networks of interaction (Latour 2005). For example, he sees buildings as a design process: not as built forms but as objects that start on paper and move through many material phases before even being constructed (Latour and Yaneva 2008). In this sense buildings are understood as a process always in construction. “…a building is not a static object but a moving project, and that even once it is has been [sic] built, it ages, it is transformed by its users, modified by all of what happens inside and outside, and that it will pass or be renovated, adulterated and transformed beyond recognition” (p. 80). In this view, buildings have no material essence, but are all the material things that go into making them (paper, foam, wood, models, drawing tools, bodies, etc.). While some cultural and urban sociologists have explored the ANT model (e.g., Cerulo 2011; Bouzarovski 2009; Farias and Bender 2010; Guggenheim 2009; Saito 2011), others have already suggested that we can integrate objects without ANT, even in urban contexts (Jerolmack 2013; Molotch 2011).

I will try to demonstrate that we can include buildings into urban studies without reliance on ANT or a pure associational method. The only change we have to make for this to work is to understand our definition of “social” to include any interactions that involve people, even when they are interacting with things that are not people. In this way, things can contribute to social life and organization. My attempt follows how a building type comes into existence and what roles the buildings play in urban life. Various studies follow the origins of things and how they come to be (e.g., Bijker 1997; Molotch 2005), even buildings (Gieryn 2002b). However, they are largely based on a technological paradigm that looks at designers in line
with other forces that culminate in products. On the cultural side, historical analysis has been used to understand how things come into being in terms of both material and culture. My model for buildings comes from King (1984), who follows the building type known as “bungalows” across time and continents to see how form and meaning of the type changes throughout history and place. He uses the building as a tool to understand globalization but also looks at the relationship between social forms and built forms—a strategy he uses elsewhere to investigate the emergence of the “vacation house” in British society and how we understand “leisure time” (King 1980a). Although King sees buildings as manifestations of social and cultural changes (not constitutive), I find his framework useful for the first part of my analysis to address how a building type moves from Europe to Chile, how the form becomes fixed in Santiago, and how names and forms are linked (as definitions of the type). The following parts of the analyses then move on to explore the material and cultural roles of buildings in society.

Historical studies of materiality have also changed the way we understand culture of objects. Through time, people and things change and the transformations of both inform the other. Meaning is understood as attached to materiality and material “objects” do not gain or transmit meaning imposed by human “subjects” but rather play a role in how they come to mean (Miller 1987; Pinch and Swedberg 2008:2), by addressing people/object interactions and object “biographies” (see Gosden and Marshall 1999). In Appadurai’s (1986a) chapter in The Social Life of Things, signification occurs in the process of interaction between the social and the material. “…we have to follow the things themselves, for their meanings are inscribed in their forms, their uses, their trajectories” (p. 5). Here, meanings can change as things become commodities in one phase of their lives but shift out of it later (Appadurai 1986a:17). In another case, buildings can become associated to social classes and take on different meanings as different groups inhabit the same buildings over time (King 1980a:201-203). On a more intimate scale, Bederson (2003) demonstrates how buildings

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14 Kopytoff (1986) first used this term to address how objects accumulate value in their histories of production, exchange, and consumption.
become attached to known individuals throughout history and take on (at least local level) meaning by being sites of historical importance. Associations can accumulate over time to add meaning (Miller 1987:124); it is the interaction between people and buildings where meaning arises.

Objects can also have shifting definitions that are derived through the objects themselves (see Latour 2005). The general view of object definitions in sociology is expressed in a quote by Howard Becker discussing the work of Latour:

Most objects of course do not change their character [that] radically. In fact, people usually quite successfully treat objects as though they have stable properties and are unchanging. It then becomes an interesting problem for the social scientist to account for how they do that. The general answer is that objects continue to have the same properties when people continue to think of them, and define them jointly, in the same way. Agreeing on what objects are, what they do, and how they can be used makes joint activity much easier. Anyone who wants to change the definition may have to pay a substantial price for the privilege, so most of us accept current definitions of objects most of the time. (Becker 1998:50).

Becker goes on to discuss trying to understand how objects come to be as they are. He sees objects as end products, representing choices and action. This is typical of technology studies that often follow an innovation through time to see how it gets to be as it is. They look at iterations of the object, to see how a definition stabilizes in society (Bijker et al. 1993; Bijker and Law 1997; Latour 1991; 1992). This line of research follows the design process. That is, it is often focused on moves between users (markets) and functionality of design in iterative processes of redesign. When it comes to buildings, what Becker describes above is only one half of the story. In the case of buildings described herein, the definition of the building type changes first while moving between cultural contexts, it stabilizes, then changes again within its new home society. The definition of the building type expands over time to include new material forms that historically were not included. How the building type changes, while the individual buildings
remain finite and geographically fixed, lies in interactions with people: namely use and reuse of a building type over time. What we see herein is that it does not require “a substantial price” to change the definition but instead happens organically as part of the relationship between buildings and people. Interestingly in this case, the expansions in definition are related to visual similarities between existing buildings and patterns of regular use. To make it clear, I make a distinction between definition and meaning. Definitions are what we agree an object “is”, while meanings are cultural understandings as described above (and these can be agreed upon as well). If it helps, think of the meaning of the word versus the meaning of the object. The meaning of the word = the object (this is the definition). The meaning of the object = cultural understandings attached to the material thing (and therefore the word encompasses these too). A change in a building type’s definition equals a change in the meaning of the word so that the word signifies new material forms.

To sum, the study of material things as constitutive has not been picked up by social scientists in a major way. Perhaps it is because, as Miller (1987) notes, “an approach to modern society which focuses on the material object always invites the risk of appearing fetishistic, that is of ignoring or masking actual social relations through its concern with the object per se” but [we can] attempt “to develop a non-dualistic model of the relations between people and things… in which neither society nor cultural form is privileged as prior, but rather seen as mutually constitutive” (p. 18). If, as researchers, we are interested in how social processes unfold—their mechanistic parts—we must try to understand how things bring about outcomes, in terms of the objects themselves. This can only be accomplished by incorporating their perspective into the analysis. In a 1992 article on why social theory needs to expand its outlook, Latour wrote, “What our ancestors, the founders of sociology, did a century ago to house the human masses in the fabric of social theory, we should do now to find a place in a new social theory for the non-human masses that beg us for understanding” (Latour 1992:227). I agree with him. But, in my view, the reason it is important to “understand the non-human masses” is to better understand people and society. Latour is right that the one-sidedness of social theory does not give necessary attention to material things, or “non-humans”. I agree that they play
important, and inexcusably ignored, roles in social processes that help constitute our social worlds. But I would like to stand on the side of what Latour calls “traditional sociology” (2005) when I say, we need to understand non-humans not because they “beg” us for our understanding, but because we cannot understand ourselves without understanding them.

**Methodological Approach**

This study can be followed in two ways. The book as a whole looks at the constitutive processes of buildings and society, where one chapter succeeds the next in showing how the process unfolds. Chapter 2 is a society to buildings relationship that shows how aspects of society constitute a building type. Chapters 3 and 4 are buildings to society relationships, where buildings have been defined through both materiality and meaning. As such Chapter 3 focuses on the material aspect of buildings as it plays a role in constituting society, and chapter 4 focuses on the cultural aspect of buildings (meaning) as it plays a role in constituting society. The second way to follow the book is that each chapter tells its own story about changes that occur. After we look at the directional constitutive process, we then have to flip the process over and see what’s on the B side. In chapter 2, as the process leads to the outcome of a new building type, society also changes. In chapters 3 and 4, as buildings lead to social outcomes, the building type changes in the process. These will be explored at the ends of each chapter. There is a reciprocal nature about materiality and meaning as changes occur. In chapter 3, as I show how a material aspect of buildings helps bring about practices, new meaning is added to the building type. In chapter 4, as cultural aspects of buildings help bring about a new neighborhood identity, a change in the definition of the building type happens as it relates to material form. Chapter 2 also has this relationship; as I follow how cultural aspects of a society, in a city, lead to a new building type, material aspects of the city’s landscape change. If this seems a little obvious (i.e. constructing new buildings changes the material landscape of a city), this is because, at this level of analysis, it is more difficult to empirically separate buildings and society. As the whole thesis shows, they are not really separate. Buildings are an integral part of cities and their materiality and associated meanings are an integral part of what we have been separating as “the social.”
Relationship between Buildings and Society

The model shows the relationship between buildings and society as it relates to the building type “cités”. Together, the three parts represent the constitutive process as it relates to the overarching study, but each can also be read as an individual case. Arrows represent interaction (construction, use, or reuse). The specifics of this case are in parenthesis; the rest represents a possible generalizable model.

Throughout the journey in the book, cités, the building type I have chosen to study, are the methodological tool for showing these processes and changes. By following this one type I can enter a society and examine it. I have analyzed cités across settings within Santiago. How the type is defined became part of the analysis. It required the construction of a typology of all residential building types in the city at the time, in addition to tracking the use of the words to describe those buildings at the time of their emergence as well as today. The typology is based on function (residential) and then form. It was in this that I was able to uncover changes in definition between continents, as well as within Santiago. Traditionally, the idea has been to try
to understand how people give things meaning (e.g., Lofland 1971). I am interested in this question through the relationships of buildings and people. I assessed patterns that gave rise to definition changes, where similarities in urban form that recur across types allow the word to signify objects that were once categorized differently. Similarly, new meanings come about through use. In this way, objects are involved in how they are redefined, how they gain meanings, and how social processes play out. The point is to show the interplay between buildings and society, between the material and the social, where both participate toward social outcomes.\(^\text{15}\)

Small (2004) suggests a “conditionalist approach” to case selection in his study on neighborhood poverty that can apply to many studies. The case is selected without regard for representativeness. It is not a sample (generalizable) or a universe (particular), but it meets certain conditions that may also appear in other cases, even though the case is unique (pp. 185-186; see also Beach and Pedersen 2013). When describing the context of a case, the details are specific to the case. But the researcher emphasizes aspects that could (theoretically) also apply in other cases. This means, for example, in chapter 3, which is about residential use of interior collective spaces (called patios), the point is not to say that all residential patios are used a certain way. The point is to examine the conditions of enclosed space. This is true in Chapter 4 also where neighborhood transformation is of interest. Not all neighborhood change processes will operate this way, but the conditions of preexisting buildings in reuse appear in other cities.

The overarching case utilizes what Vaughan (1999, 2004, 2009, 2014) has called “analogical theorizing” in her method of theory building, based on the case comparison strategy of Simmel (Wolff 1950). Simmel compared phenomena and eliminated difference to find commonalities. Vaughan uses this to make analogies between events or activities across social settings and scales (i.e. seeks variation across units of analysis), increasing the generalizability of an explanation, and trying to “identify micro-meso-macro

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\(^{15}\) Lofland writes that to analyze meaning one should look for patterns in how participants define objects (p. 28). Here, I take the building type’s perspective to see how it helps pattern its definitions.
connections” (2009:697). The goal is to see similarities in areas that may seem unrelated. The method relies on data collection and analysis that aims to unveil underlying and generalizable processes. Simmel called these commonalities “social forms”; here, the commonalities are across “material forms”. How buildings are defined and redefined is based on this common form and its patterns of use across the three empirical chapters. Theory construction is then dependent on these similarities across buildings.

Two contemporary empirical works in particular have influenced my methodological approach: *Doormen* by Peter Bearman (2005) and *The Global Pigeon* by Colin Jerolmack (2013). Both works study some “thing” that occurs in multiple contexts and illuminate social processes through the lens of these “things”. In Bearman’s study, doormen are a “lever” to create a crack into a social world and “reveal the patterning of the fractures that make up the larger social structure(s) in which we are embedded” (p. 3). He writes, “In order to see new things, one has to shatter the old ways of seeing, and, for this, one needs a lever of some sort; doormen are my levers… The intent is that they will reveal processes, dynamics, and models useful for understanding other diverse contexts and problems” (Bearman 2005:3) and, elsewhere, levers “reveal the essential qualities of the worlds inhabited by [a study’s] readers” (Bearman 2011:189). That is, levers are methodological tools used to enter a specific case and reveal its underlying processes—processes that can be related back to the larger world in which we live.16

*The Global Pigeon* is strategically different but with a similar lynchpin. Jerolmack analyzes the relationships between people and pigeons in a variety of urban contexts. Pigeons allowed him “a unique window” into the changing character of urban life at multiple scales (Jerolmack 2013:5-6). That is, he uses pigeons as a “lever” (in Bearman’s language). But he also says that by examining the same animal in many settings, he is able to see how “…cross-species encounters can in fact be a constitutive feature of social life in the city” (p. 5). He not only follows pigeons into social worlds, but examines them in their own right in terms of how they help bring about

16 My earlier analogy of a prism is adapted from Bearman’s concept.
social life through their interactions with people.\footnote{Similarly, Callon (1993) has suggested that technology be used as a tool for investigating society, while simultaneously studying technology.} Investigating one animal also allows him to theorize about human-animal relationships in general. Although his fieldwork is not generalizable, the sites uncover social processes that help illuminate other settings (p. 19). This is the goal here as well.

I picked this case for its ability to vary context and cross analytical levels, and have used the approaches described above to specify variation and connections. I assess the macro, meso, and micro through city, neighborhood, and interactional space. At the micro level, there is variation on inhabitants by income level between cases of contemporary residential cités. This fosters theorization on how spatialized practices may be attributable to material form when uses of space overlap. The meso level gives variation on commercial conversions within a changing neighborhood. Differences between buildings help to rule out reuse as an explanation for value. At the macro level, the historical perspective allows the incorporation of changes in definition of the type and accumulations of meanings over time. Since cités have a relatively short life span, their whole timeline is accessible, and the buildings remain finite: there are no new constructions. This allows us to see definitional changes on existing buildings over time. Rather than take one perspective over another by operationalizing cités, I have followed how the meaning of the word changes to refer to different material objects as time goes on. Changes in the word happened in the past, in some cases, so I had to take this into account in the analysis in order to avoid privileging one perspective. Along the line, building types are conflated and the word takes on new meaning. For this, the analysis had to remain at the level of the “type”, because it is the category that takes on meaning, pursuant to individual buildings. The contradictions in definitions of cités are what Bearman calls the “seams” through which a researcher is able to enter the world of “the other” (2005:6). It is by investigating tensions that we find answers.
Table of Analytical Levels

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This is a case study and as such I use various data and information sources, analyzed correspondingly. Each chapter is aimed at precise questions within the overarching case. I use different methods to answer these distinct questions. Chapter 2 uses process tracing methods to understand a historical outcome. Chapter 3 uses the visual method of photo analysis to describe everyday uses of residential space. Chapter 4 relies on participant observations and content analysis to understand changes in a neighborhood. Many kinds of information were used in this study including but not limited to primary and secondary historical sources, maps, newspapers, government reports, floor plans, construction permits, travel blogs, real estate websites, tourism and cultural guides, direct observation, photos, conversations, social media data, and prior local empirical studies on the building type, its residents, and neighborhoods. Each chapter will note the specific information analyzed for the questions pertinent to the chapter. Although, not all information analyzed appears in systematic form herein. Some information did not result in its own chapter but all information guided the questions and analyses that do appear. The appendix lists the sources and details the methodological choices. All translations to English from Spanish texts are my own and quotation marks should be understood to convey the direct sentiment of the original text, but remain translations. For clarity, to differentiate between analysis of material objects and their names, I use quotation marks when referring to the name or concept (e.g. cité = object, “cité” = name/word). I have tried to be thorough but, as with all research, my experiences cannot fully be separated from my understanding of the case or evaluation of the data and explanations remain partial. To paraphrase the visual sociologist Douglas Harper (2012) in his description of a photo analysis, the social worlds presented here are like a series of windows on a
building through which we see various aspects of unfolding culture: there are many spaces of wall between the windows that the viewer must fill in (p. 14). I ask the reader to be aware of these walls.

The Case

This study takes as a case one building type known locally as cités, in Santiago, Chile. Socially, it is understood as a type of collective housing constructed around the late 19th and early 20th century for people of lower means. Materially, it is defined by a specific urban form. I will start with the common definition of its material form to establish a baseline. There are variations in definitions and most of these will arise throughout the book as I examine how the building type is (re)shaped by society. Using all the source material consulted for this study, I have put together the following definition of cités:

Cités are ensembles of dwellings in rows, defined by a pedestrian passageway incorporated into an existing city block. The passageway runs perpendicular to the public street and the doors to the dwellings open into the passage, creating a shared access to the residences. Individual residences vary between cités but are homogenous within them. The passage stops short of cutting through the block, leaving a dead-end with one entrance/exit. If a passage divides the block, it is called a pasaje.

This is the definition that most experts agree on. Difference occurs over the point of “services”. Architects, governmental housing agencies, and urban conservationists differentiate cités and pasajes from visually similar collective housing types of the time by the incorporation of basic services in each dwelling, such as kitchens with drinking water and bathrooms. Urban housing historians have a somewhat more lax definition. While cités usually take the form described above, the dwellings may have shared services.\(^\text{18}\) Chapter 2 will detail these differences in line with other building types as I

\(^{18}\) Housing historians of other Chilean cities describe cités with a more varied definition of form (see, e.g., Urbina Carrasco 2002, on Valparaiso).
examine the process of how the definition of “cité” became fixed in urban form.

**Cité Floor Plan (model)**

Fourteen houses organized around common access space. Public street at left, with entrance/exit to cité. Two houses face the public street.

Image: Daniel Lazo 2016
Urban Block, Santiago (c. 1910)

Cité in upper right quadrant penetrates the block. Houses with interior patios organized around pedestrian access. Remainder of block shows traditional houses with extended patios, facades toward the streets.

Source: public exhibition Planos de Santiago 1850–1939: Permanencias, Cambios y Singularidades del Centro Histórico, May 31, 2016.\(^\text{19}\)

A large-scale collaborative study, funded by the governments of Santiago, Chile and Ile, France, carried out between 2008 and 2012 identified and collected data on 811 identifiable cités still standing in Santiago (Seisdedos Morales et al. 2012). Almost half of these are over 100 years old and currently house roughly 80,000 inhabitants (Seisdedos Morales et al. 2012:V.15, IV.2). The buildings were generally constructed of adobe or brick and are only one to two stories high. The dwellings are “continuous façade,” meaning that they share their sidewalls with the neighboring dwellings (i.e. row houses). Most cités form a simple cut into a city block, but some diverge with secondary passages further to the interior running parallel to the street. Although it is not mentioned in formal definitions, the majority of cités, and some pasajes, also have gates at their accesses that divide the public street from the private space on the interior. This was not always the case; many gates were added later, some as recently as the 1980s. The interior space functions as a shared access path to reach the doors to the individual homes. It is most often referred to as a “patio” and sometimes used for other purposes. Chapter 3 will explore contemporary residential uses of the patio.

While spatial composition defines cités, there is wide architectural variation. Currently, they run the spectrum from decrepit, overpopulated residences to heritage-protected facades. These are remnants of the original constructions that housed people at varying income levels. Cités, like all collective housing, were more economical to build than detached houses. They also fell under an era of government subsidization for private builders, allowing some to call them “the first expression of social housing” in Chile (Seisdedos quoted in La Tercera, 9 September 2013). Although, they were not the only residential building type to emerge during the period. The stated function of the new collective housing models that arose was to house the low-income urban populations. Cités only partially met this goal. While some did house poorer working families, many housed the burgeoning

20 This is based on fieldwork observations; I did not systematically study when gates were added.
21 “Social housing” in Chile are buildings subsidized by the State on the supply or demand side. They are usually privately built.
middle-income set. They varied in size of dwellings, patio spaces, separation of services, and stylistic details. As Santiago expanded throughout the last century, moving further from the original urban core, the cité became a vestige of historical construction. Aside from the edges of a few bordering communes, cités were not built outside present-day Central Santiago. Constructions ceased around 1940 due to lack of available land in the central city, changes in real estate markets, new social housing models, and standardization of earthquake-resistant buildings following a 1939 earthquake (Adrián Araneda 2015:9; Seisdedos Morales 2012:IV.17) that resulted in 28,000 fatalities (US Geological Survey accessed May 30, 2015). The stock of cités is therefore finite and there are current calls to restore those that remain, particularly through cultural heritage preservation status. Additional connections between heritage value and industrial era residences are addressed in Chapter 4 when we discuss a neighborhood in transformation where houses are reused as retail spaces in an effort to “save” the buildings.

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22 “Santiago Centro” is the municipality, currently at the heart of the city, that was once the entire city.
Examples of Cité Exteriors: Gates

Cité, Barrio República. Laundry hangs and kids play in the patio.
Photo: Author 2015
Cité, Barrio Italia. A board covers the gate to lower visibility of the patio from the street.

Photo: Author 2015
Examples of Cité Interiors: Patios

Patio, Barrio Brasil. An empty but well-tended patio shows signs of care but not everyday use.

Photo: Author 2016
Patio, Barrio Yungay. Heritage protected Cité Adriana Cousiño exemplifies the highest end of the building type.
Photo: Author 2016
II: Building Urban Types

Building Types: Names and Forms
This chapter offers an account of how a new building type, that comes to be known as “cités”, emerges in Santiago, Chile during the process of industrialization and urbanization at the end of the 19th century.23 Although new building types serve new social functions in the changing city, I emphasize the process of how cités emerge and are defined through changes in urban life. While other accounts focus on the political, economic, and social factors that lead to the “need” for new housing types in Santiago, I focus a historical analysis on the culture of urban elites that helped shape a particular urban form, and gave them their name. In addition, the resulting qualitative spectrum of buildings within the type shows how the diversity of residents shapes the material outcomes.

Specifically, this chapter investigates the enchantment of Santiago’s elites with Parisian urban culture at the end of the 19th century. Historians and architects have written about this relationship as it relates to residential buildings for elites at the time (Bergot 2009, 2014; Vicuña 1996, 2001, 2010), but not as it relates to collective housing types for lower income residents. I will relate the local climate of Santiago and focus on transfers of ideology and culture from Paris. The purpose of this chapter is threefold. First, in line with the introduction to the thesis, this chapter is part one of understanding the relationship between buildings and society. It shows how aspects of a society construct a new building type, in both form and name. Second, it shows the first iteration of how building types change definition, here between cultures and within a society, where forms and name become linked in different ways. This is an underlying theme throughout the book. Third, it gives the first glimpse of the constitutive process of buildings and society (which the following two chapters will pick up on). Here, we see how society also changes as a new building type is constructed.

The common historical narrative of how formal collective housing arose in Santiago has a few major contributing factors: the Catholic Church—as

23 The primary focus of change occurs between 1890 and 1925.
benefactors for poor working families, land owners—as speculators that opportunistically built housing to increase rents, and the State—that instituted national housing regulation to increase “hygienic” building. In terms of material forms, cités are largely understood to be products of the orthogonal urban grid—that structured the available space in which to build new housing. All of this is situated within the context of late 19th century industrialization and urbanization that brought workers to Santiago from outer parts of Chile and contributed to urban expansion. As the population increased, along with overcrowding and communicable diseases, a need for “cheap and hygienic” housing arose. Some make the argument that formal collective housing for workers developed to solve the housing crisis while others say it developed to benefit from it. In either case, the cité is understood as one new type among others that filled this function.24

In the process of research, questions arose about this history that needed further explanation. The factors listed above helped to explain why collective housing arrived, but there was little about how cités emerged as a specific urban form or came to have a non-Spanish name. Much information about cités is taken to be self-evident. For example, it was often mentioned off-handedly that the name “cité” was French, with a blurb that said it means “small city”, or that the buildings were “influenced by European architects” without much investment in how the buildings landed in Latin America. Further, architects’ assertion that the cité is a product of the grid does not take into account differences in naming across types or similarities in forms across geographies that help to explain how a specific form, name, and geographical location are linked. In trying to answer these questions, I found a relevant factor that had been left out of the common narrative: urban cultural elites. Investigating the role of Chilean elites in the development of cités solved some of the puzzles by revealing their infatuation with Parisian culture at the end of the 19th century. This chapter will focus on bringing to light some of the answers to the historical puzzles that show how cités, in material form and name, arrived to Santiago.

24 The intended function of cités was to house specific groups, whether or not they solved the housing problem is another matter.
During 19th century Western industrialization and urbanization processes, new social differentiations marked society. Functional differentiations in building types were part of the same process. The new functional types that arose with industrial cities were understood to meet new needs. However, this does not explain how different forms came about for the same function. That is understood to be a matter of culture (see, Miller 1987:116-17). Between cultures, different forms arose for the same function, prior to industrialization (King 1984). With industrialization there was a “typological explosion” with new words to describe new types (Markus 1993:XIX & 31). Innovations in collective housing forms had economic and political roots (“cheap”, “hygienic”, and quell certain behaviors), but forms started to standardize for given functions (Guggenheim 2011:258). Technologies allowed replicability of “best practices” (Slaton 2001:2) and the same building forms could exist across many places. However, variance of forms for the same functions still arose within a single society or, as in our case, within a city.

How new building types arise in historical context, or are transferred between societies, was a question examined by sociologist Anthony D. King over the course of his career (see especially, King 1980b, 1984). He helped to establish a methodology for investigating these processes that entailed tracing buildings to their origins in both form and name across cultures and societies. Investigating both form and name are important because meanings become attached to the word for a building type (King 1984). By following the name that signifies a material form, we can see how it starts to point to different material forms over time or across cultures. If we only follow an operationalized definition of a material form, we may lose some of the new meanings attached to the word. Building types often expand to encompass new material forms. Methodologically, I approximate the approach of King in his work The Bungalow (1984), where he traces the word “bungalow” across continents for its three hundred year history to investigate the multiplicity of material forms it has signified. Here, in much shorter space, I investigate the origins of the cité in Santiago, bracketing it within the
cultural context of the relationship between two cities. While this chapter focuses on origins, subsequent chapters continue to demonstrate how names point to new material forms and how a building type accretes meaning.

To my knowledge, no systematic study of this building type has been carried out before. Its distinct denomination is often a taken-for-granted part of studies by historians, geographers, and housing researchers (e.g., Folchi Donoso 2007; González Arriagada 2000; Hidalgo Dattwyler 1999, 2000; Hidalgo Dattwyler et al. 2005; De Ramón 1985)—although these researchers are not consistent between them in how they define “cité”. While some researchers do attempt typologies of urban collective housing, they do not explain how the classifications came about (Urmeneta de la Barrera 1984). Architects tell a story of how cités got their form and name (see especially, Ortega 1985), but do not explain the cultural process leading to these outcomes. Given this situation, I had to rely on architectural articles for details about the buildings, but claims had to be investigated and matched with academic accounts of the time period, housing studies in the buildings, and maps of the city planning over time, among other primary and secondary sources. Factors pursued in the analysis rely on repetition in available historical accounts. In architectural history, it is held as true that "powerful people build big buildings" and, because of this, historical lenses are focused on the socially powerful (Yanni 2007:14). Here, the focus on the perspective of elites started as a product of available information, but ended up being beneficial. It revealed how fashionable upper class culture in Santiago left its mark on a building type that was not monumental. This led me to seek out accounts of 19th century urban culture to frame the top-down perspective of the historical data. By spanning disciplines and also time, I try to account for the cultural diffusion that occurred between Santiago and Paris at the time, while also holding in mind competing definitions of “cité”.

25 Note that I am taking King’s broad framework here but not following his theoretical lines of argumentation, which are aimed at understanding globalization.

26 Slaton (2001) notes that building forms rely on aesthetics, economics, and technology (p. 2). I have not covered building technologies herein because there was no mention of it in the source material.
Urban Grid, City of Santiago (1894)

“Cité” is a French word with no other use in Chile or, to my knowledge, Latin America. There are two competing hypotheses about its origin. The first commonly repeated narrative in Santiago is that the cité gets its name from the way it relates the public space to the private space, making it reminiscent of a “medieval walled citadel” (first source: Ortega 1985:18). This definition relies on the architectural form of the cité with limited access points, connecting the public street to the private interior. This is somewhat problematic because it relies on the current definition of “cité” in Santiago to understand how it was derived. Cités can look like gated cities (see Chapter 3), but there are other collective housing forms in Santiago that have a similar spatial relationship that did not take this name. Further, as we will see, this is not the meaning of the word in French. I suggest instead that the name arrived to Santiago through the direct relationship between Paris and Santiago at the turn of the last century, when the word was adopted in Chile.

My hypothesis falls in line closer to the second established hypothesis of the name origin, coming from a housing historian, that states, “cités take their name (only the name) from the Parisian social housing projects: las cités ouvrières [workers’ housing]” (Folchi Donoso 2007:373). I almost agree with this. However, it is also problematic because it implies two things (1) that the name came from Paris, but not the form and (2) that the form in Paris is different than the form in Santiago. I agree that the name transported from Paris to Santiago and that the definition of cité in Santiago is different than the definition in France as a whole. In France, “las cités ouvrières” was a general concept that meant “workers’ housing” and applied to various material manifestations (unlike Santiago which has a specific urban form). However, the cités ouvrières in Paris, specifically, do take very much the same spatial form as those in Santiago. In my account, this is not due to cultural appropriation but has to do with processes of urbanization. If this is correct, the question then becomes one of differentiation. If cités in Santiago took their name from worker housing in Paris—based on a general concept—why doesn't all worker housing that arose in Santiago during the same period also take the name “cité”? How did the name come to signify a specific building type?
Residential Typology

Cités are urban buildings. Or, they became urban buildings in Santiago. They are defined by their relationship to existing city planning where cités are inserted into urbanized street blocks with little disruption to infrastructure. Santiago was founded in 1541 with an orthogonal grid at the city center. In the three centuries prior to industrialization, everyone—from “the poor to the conquerors” (Bergot 2009:32)—lived in some form of detached house (Sahady Villanueva 1992:15). Colonial houses generally had one or more interior “patios.” A patio is defined as a space enclosed by walls, open at the top, located inside a building. The “traditional” house in Chile had three patios, in a row, running through its elongated form. The narrow fronts faced the street and the length of the houses extended toward the interior of the block. Over time, lots in the grid became slimmer as more houses were filled in and Santiago started to urbanize. When collective housing emerged in the late 1800s, it also took this same basic elongated form.

Single-family houses were sometimes turned into informal housing, called conventillos, for people of low means during the industrial urbanization period, where multiple families rented rooms in a house and shared access to the patios. When these houses were later demolished for reasons of “hygiene”, they left long plots of land empty in the grid. Property owners sometimes merged nearby lots to build one of the new formal models of collective housing in the spaces. Where before, the facades of houses faced the street and stretched out through the block, now the facades of rows of small houses faced an interior pedestrian path that led to the public street on the outside. These became cités and pasajes, depending on the number of accesses. As mentioned in the introduction, cités and pasajes are almost the same and distinguished only by the former coming to a dead-end at the interior of the block while the latter allows passage through the block.

27 Colonial houses with patios also existed in non-urbanized areas (DeShazo 1983:59).
Also arising from the conventillo was a more formalized type called the “hygienic conventillo.” Instead of converting houses, these were built from the ground up with the purpose of renting rooms to working families. Initially, the difference between this type and a cité was that cités were small houses while hygienic conventillos were rooms and had shared basic services for the tenants. Cité and pasaje had individual basic services for each house. But all three types maintained the shared central space, like a patio, that functioned to let in light and air while also providing accesses to each residence. Many hygienic conventillos were built into the grid but it was not a feature of their definition. Some of these dormitory-style buildings were also built on the urbanizing edge of the city.

Another housing type, outside the periphery of the urban limits, was called “poblaciones obreras”. The term “población” [population] refers to a settlement of people in a concentrated geographical space outside urban areas. However, it also came to be a generic word for “groups of dwellings and streets” in previously undeveloped areas on urban borders (De Ramón 1985:210). Because “población” refers to a tract of land, there are various housing types that constitute poblaciones. The new standardized, economical housing forms developed in the late 1800s for “workers” (i.e., “poblaciones obreras”) were comprised of rows of small houses (De Ramón 1985:217). These were low-investment buildings and infrastructures built from the ground up. Between 1872 and 1915, the urban limit of the city of Santiago expanded to double its size and encompassed the poblaciones that were built on the border or close-in periphery (De Ramón 1985:209). The term indicated a non-urban location but was retroactive in the sense that even when a población obrera became part of the city it maintained its denomination as a “población.” Once infrastructure was in place around these houses, such as roads that formed blocks, cités could also be built into poblaciones by subdividing the blocks. Conventillos could also exist in poblaciones by subdividing houses (see, e.g., De Ramón 1985:276).

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28 This can be thought of as a dormitory with an open-air central space rather than a corridor.

29 In some cases, this is true even after various decades of urban expansion that engulfed many early poblaciones.
The important similarities and differences between these building types are geographic location (urban vs. non-urban) and spatial composition. Colonial houses with patios (and therefore also conventillos), cités, and hygienic conventillos all took the same basic shape inside existing urban blocks. All had open-air central spaces with multi-family dwellings that surrounded them and came to a dead-end at the back. However, colonial houses and hygienic conventillos were not defined by the grid; they could exist in urban or non-urban locations. Cités and pasajes were inherently urban and their definitions required the infrastructure of streets to exist before they could be built in. But these too were distinguished by space, where a dead-end was differentiated from a passage. While taking essentially the same form as cités and pasajes—rows of houses—poblaciones obreras were differentiated as those on or outside the urban limit. The following sections intend to show that of the new formal building types for workers, while pasajes, poblaciones obreras, and hygienic conventillos had precursors, cités were the outlier. The cultural transformations that occurred in Santiago at the time gave rise to a new name that then became linked to this new form.

**Urbanization and Social Problems**

Around the turn of the 20th century Santiago experienced heavy internal migration from rural parts of the country. Between 1885 and 1930, the population of Santiago went from 177,271 to 542,432.\(^{30}\) The rise in urban industry, largely related to support for mining, brought workers and their families from the North and South to the centrally located capital city, but left them with few housing options. The city was expensive and many newly arrived were forced to settle in the periphery where it was cheaper. This land had no infrastructure but turned into a profitable business for landowners who rented small plots, with no basic services, to rural migrants who were then supposed to “improve” the land on their own (Silva Lerda 1997:22). One of the first housing types to appear at the urban edge was the rancho, a kind of ramshackle house made of straw and mud that was typical of rural

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housing. Poverty was also located in the urban center in conventillos. While there was in-migration to the city from the countryside, there was also out-migration of elites from the city center to the urban edges. Conventillos formed when landowners subdivided vacated colonial houses into individual rooms for families to rent (Hidalgo Dattwyler 2007:54). There were two incarnations of this type, cuartos redondos and “traditional conventillos.” The first were rooms with no windows that had no light or ventilation save what came from an open door. They often opened into other rooms or hallways that also did not have windows. The more expensive rooms opened directly to the street. These houses had no spaces to wash or cook and all activities were carried out in the room.

The other type, which would later become known as the “traditional conventillo” [herein, conventillo], had rooms that opened upon the patio, which was used collectively. The patios sometimes had a water source and communal toilet (Ortega 1985:19) and were used for everyday residential activities. In addition, work that was done in the home—particularly by women—occurred there, as well as community life (Urbina Carrasco 2002). There was high overcrowding, low privacy, and generally inhumane living conditions. However, property owners could expect higher incomes from conventillos than from divided plots in the periphery (Hidalgo Dattwyler 2000:14). The conventillo proliferated and was the principal place of residence for working families and the very poor (Ferrada and Jiménez 2007:32).

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31 Until the 1830s, houses were “just walls”, not always with windows (Vicuña 2010:30). Further, in the three-patio houses, the patio nearest the street did not have rooms facing into it (Silva 2001:13). The rooms surrounding that patio were accessed internally.

32 DeShazo (1983) notes that Santiago conventillo owners were persons of limited means trying to squeeze money out of an investment, although some “slumlords” did exist. A study of 50 conventillos and owners in 1903 showed that 41 owned one building only (p. 62).
Conventillo, Santiago (c. 1917)

Ranchos, cuartos redondos, and conventillos produced problems. They became humid, did not have access to clean (or sometimes any) water, and spit up dust from the unpaved surfaces and unpainted walls into the air. The rise of tuberculosis, typhoid, and measles was a real factor in the increasing death rate (Hidalgo Dattwyler 2000:14)—as well as asphyxiations. The social conditions of the new urban working population led to uprisings in the major Chilean cities of Santiago and the port city of Valparaiso—which, at the time, was experiencing its own versions of the same problems. These uprisings caught the attention of political elites who, given the urban situation, were living in closer proximity to impoverished populations than before. The physical closeness that the industrial city provided also allowed elites to witness the “immoral behavior” of the people from the countryside. Living in such cramped conditions, with no privacy between the sexes, their lifestyle was perceived as one of high promiscuity. They frequented bars, gambled, and were often unmarried with children. This led to unrest for the Chilean elite who feared disease—assumed to stem from the poor—would spread to them. Santiago had its first “housing problem.”
Santiago was not alone in its struggles. This same scenario of rural migration, urbanization, a new worker population, houses divided into rooms for rent, overcrowding, the spread of disease, and the perceived immorality of a certain socio-economic group by another was widespread in industrializing European cities and in the Americas. The stories are remarkably the same all over. For example, in Buenos Aires, houses with patios built for single-family use—known as the “Casa Chorizo”—were converted to conventillos for multi-family occupancy. They had the same colloquial name as the ones in Santiago (referring to “little convents”), with similar living conditions (Ramos 1998). In Mexico City, destitute renters congregated in the central city in abandoned houses of the upper class, now divided into rooms for occupation, called vecindades, where they adapted spaces for collective cooking and washing (Esquivel Hernández 2003). In the Mexican state of Veracruz, existing buildings were subdivided by property owners and rented as crowded rooms around a common courtyard known as patios de vecindad (Wood 2001:6-7). In Havana, Cuba, abandoned palaces with central patios became cuarterías or ciudadelas rented to families of very low resources (Sardiñas Gómez 2011:106). In Chicago, old houses were turned into tenements for the poor; only this time, the residents had not migrated from the rural US but from rural parts of Italy (Norton 1913:531). In Lisbon, abandoned palaces and other buildings were divided into rooms for workers, known as pátios, and were attached to the same “entrepreneurial spirit” of landowners for rents (Teotónio Pereira 1994:51).

Urban housing problems across the West started to culminate in change in Paris. During this epoch, “Napoléon III and Haussmann created much of the modern Parisian cityscape, but reconstruction displaced thousands of poor Parisians, even as public-works projects attracted thousands of job-seekers from the provinces to the capital” (Newsome 2009:11). The housing conditions that ensued coupled with workers’ uprisings sparked among the first attempts at the creation of new housing types for workers.33 Elites at the

33 England preceded France in experimenting with new communal housing types for working families. These were alternatives to the live/work spaces that had been common (Markus 1993:286).
time rationalized that both physical diseases and moral ones stemmed from insufficient living conditions of the poor. If the housing situation could be remedied, the worker population would become “civil citizens”, ending the ills that had fallen upon cities. This became the beginning of the Hygiene Movement, later spread throughout the West, centered on ideology that aimed to “purify” the working classes through improvement of the residential built environment.\(^{34}\)

The first of these attempts in Paris is called the Cité Napoléon, constructed between 1849 and 1851 by then president Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte. This four-story building, currently still in use, is in the 9\(^{th}\) arrondissement of Paris and comprised of 86 housing units organized around a courtyard in the block’s interior (Power 1993:29). Courtyards were an economical way to build on urban land (Gutman 2010:175) but also allowed ventilation in a time before germs were understood and exhalations from “polluted” humans were thought to cause disease (See, Yanni 2007:33-34). “The Cité employed a gatekeeper, located inside a central portal, to monitor the activities of potentially subversive residents, who were subject to a 10:00 p.m. curfew and a host of hygienic regulations” (Newsome 2009:12). This format of public housing did not catch on and was not replicated. However, the problems continued. Simultaneous “slum clearance reduced the availability of low-cost housing in the city center. As a result, some working-class families squeezed into downtown apartments that were already overcrowded. Others drifted to the recently annexed suburbs where they subdivided existing buildings or moved into new but often poorly constructed apartments and houses. Still others settled in shantytowns that sprang up on the edge of the city” (Newsome 2009:12).

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\(^{34}\) At the turn of the century it wasn’t just hygiene that occupied the minds of political and social elites, but building conditions in general that were thought to contribute to behavior. Industrialists studied what housing types resulted in better employees (and built new types) and social scientists began to study the relationship between overcrowding and physical and psychological health. In asylums for the mentally ill, it was believed that the building not only could influence behavior but cure a disease (Yanni 2007:8).
In 1891 Pope Leo XIII’s open letter *Rerum Novarum* called attention to the condition of the working classes by expressing the Rights and Responsibilities of Labor and Capital. This affected thinking in both France and Chile. In France, those on the forefront of the hygiene movement used it as a provocation for “the wealthy to meet their moral obligation to their social inferiors by funding the construction of workers’ housing” (Newsome 2009:15). This was one factor that led to the next attempts at collective housing models following the hygiene dictum to be forged by private enterprises and not the State. Owners of large businesses started to construct housing for their workers, however with the idea that rented apartments could not change their moral conditions. The new idea was to build houses for purchase through low-interest mortgages. “If workers became homeowners, thought reformers, then they would keep their houses clean, eradicating a source of disease; they would till their gardens, eliminating drunken disorder as they stayed away from cabarets; and they would gain a stake in the existing social, economic, and political order, ending the revolutionary threat to society…” (Newsome 2009:14). This model became widely known as *las cités ouvrières*, referring to a parcel of land with privately built housing for workers (Paris City Hall 2013:4). Under this regime over the next decades in France, these took the form of various configurations of attached and detached houses.

In Santiago, following the Pope’s call, the archbishop of Chile had called on Catholics to “promote the formation of worker associations as well as charitable organizations with a double objective: to better the living conditions of workers and to impede the advancement of socialist ideas amongst the people” (Hidalgo Dattwyler et al. 2005:8). Elites started private foundations, in the name of the Church to pioneer the construction of worker housing (Hidalgo Dattwyler et al. 2005:8). The first organization to arise was the Institución León XIII, founded by a wealthy Catholic named

35 The push toward detached houses (over apartments) would become popular in Western Europe again after the world wars for precisely the same reasons, but through state intervention (Wajcman 1991:115).

36 The Cité Napoléon is considered a *cité ouvrière*, but the private model proliferated.
Melchor Concha y Toro. For workers to obtain houses in the new constructions they had to present certain “habits of order and morality” (Hidalgo Dattwyler et al. 2005:10). The first worker housing was called the Población León, built in 1894 on what was, at the time, the outskirts of the city where land was more affordable and there was fresh air not found inside the city (Hidalgo Dattwyler et al. 2005:11). After this, other private foundations financed by wealthy families arose in the name of the Catholic Church to build economical housing at varying price points. They received another push in 1906 when Chile passed its first national housing law based on the ideas of the hygiene movement and modeled after economic funding schemes attempted earlier in France. The new law mandated that all rental housing be inspected and those deemed unhygienic be fixed or demolished within a given time. It also encouraged the creation of more private foundations to build economical housing for “workers” and listed a number of benefits that private investors would receive in exchange for building. A hygiene council was appointed to do the inspections and many cuartos redondos and conventillos were considered unhygienic. Roughly 16,000 rental units (Hidalgo Dattwyler 2000:12) were demolished within the next 19-year period before the housing law changed, leading to a situation similar to Paris where “slum clearance” resulted in increased overcrowding in specific areas. Not enough new housing was built to take the place of demolished conventillos and the population continued to grow (e.g., Hidalgo Dattwyler 2002:93; DeShazo 1983:59). In addition, the law only addressed hygiene and did not specify prices of construction materials or maximum rents. The collective housing types that sprang up in their place were often too expensive for those most in need. Among those were cités.

How did the cité, developed in France, get to Chile? And further, we have just read that “cité ouvrière” is a general term that accounted for various

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37 It was also the first in Latin America (Hidalgo Dattwyler 1999:1).
38 The governmental promotion of private home ownership over direct public housing was not limited to Chile and France. Between 1880 and 1930 other nations established similar regulation, including Argentina, Belgium, Denmark, Greece, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Portugal, Scotland, Sweden, the US, and Wales (Wood 2001:212).
architectural forms over time. How did “cité” in Santiago come to specify an urban form? In the next section I argue that the documented transmission of French culture through urban elites that brought architects to Santiago to build public buildings, and sent young Chileans to Paris to become architects, resulted in the word “cité” entering the language. Architects helped to bring the new housing models in Europe to Chile. However, how the cité got its current definition as a fixed urban form, while simultaneously being distinguished from other building types with similar forms, has to do with (1) the prior existence of words to explain other new building types with a corresponding absence for this type and (2) the spatial similarities of all urban collective housing types due to the grid infrastructure. Essentially, once the new form was linked to the new name, all collective housing types that took similar forms within the grid converged on the same name.

The French Connection

Chile was a mostly rural society until the 1930s but the elite that governed the country beginning with independence in 1810 soon “transformed into an urban class solidly planted in the center of [Santiago]” where a small group of families controlled the whole country (Vicuña 2001:23). Chile’s economic boom started in 1884 with the export of the nitrate salitre [saltpeter] from the northern territories it had won in the Pacific War (1879-84) against Peru and Bolivia (DeShazo 1983:3). During this boom, for the first time, there were many public works projects and private constructions (DeShazo 1983:5). The period also marked the rise of conspicuous consumption among elites (Vicuña 2001:252). Social attitudes and practices started to change and the wealthy became serious consumers of foreign goods and European fashion. As early as midcentury, there was a “great number of artisans and professionals from France settled in the country” and the women of the upper class were especially enraptured: French beauty salons advertised in the newspaper and French tailors and clothing makers became the “undisputed arbiters of local fashion” (Vicuña 2010:31). For the

39 In France and Belgium today the term cité has come to refer to low-income “housing projects” or “estates” that are often towers.
wealthy, French and English styles “represented the most legitimate expressions of modern civilization” (Vicuña 2010:33).

The infatuation with Europe started with objects and worked its way out to architecture. In the 1850s, a US resident in the port city of Valparaiso noted that the upper class in Santiago had modest homes on the outside but inside had “all the luxuries that money can buy” (Vicuña 2010:33). By the end of the 1860s, this had changed and elites began to adopt European architecture to reimagine the city. In the Transformation Plan of Santiago of 1872, Mayor Benjamin Vicuña Mackenna, on the day he took office, stated his intention for the city to emulate Haussmann’s “sophisticated and beautiful” Paris, through architecture, parks, promenades, and culture (Rodríguez-Cano Aranda et al. 2007: 23). In the conclusion of that proposal, he declared that he aspired for Santiago to be “The Paris of America” (Vicuña 1996:87). This was the beginning of a concerted aesthetic undertaking that sought to transform the visual landscape of the city moving away from colonial architecture and repositioning the capital of the now independent nation by “adopting a European lifestyle” (Bergot 2009:32). Under Vicuña Mackenna, gas lights were installed in 1873, electricity in the 1880s, an urban railway began to replace horse-drawn trams in 1882, and electric trams began in 1900 (DeShazo 1983:6). In 1903, pavement was added to major thoroughfares and streets in wealthy parts of the city center (DeShazo 1983:7) and between 1905 and 1906, the first plumbing and sewage systems were built. Architects often point out that in the urbanization process, Santiago did not build wide diagonal boulevards in new Parisian fashion, but instead maintained the colonial grid. However, as some architects and historians have noted this may have been due to cost and technological restrictions (see, Abuauad 2002:27; DeShazo 1983:7) rather than a belief in the beauty or functionality of the grid.40

40 “The reflection of that post-Haussmann Paris that does not materialize in Santiago, not in the span of the works or in the layout of breaks in the grid, turns out more precisely as a distant inspiration, a model of a sophisticated and beautiful city, reachable only in small fragments or stylistic evocations” (Abuauad 2002:25, 27).
Earlier, starting around 1840, the State contracted architects from France and Italy to move to Santiago and develop it (Rodriguez-Cano Aranda et al. 2007:30). At the time, there were no architectural schools in Chile and the first architect, Claude Francois Brunet de Baines, was contracted to direct the first school if he arrived to found it—which he did, opening in 1849 at the Universidad de Chile (Junta de Andalucía et al. 2000:15). At the same time, a number of Chileans went to Paris to study architecture and would later return home to practice their craft, bringing back “fashionable” methods (Rodriguez-Cano Aranda et al. 2007:30). The first round of contracted French architects were practitioners and teachers of the Beaux Arts style of neoclassicism, while the second round, along with the Chilean architects trained in France, were additionally influenced by Art Nouveau. In the late 19th and early 20th century, many public buildings were erected paying homage to French architecture. During what some have called the Chilean Belle Epoche (~1872-1918), the wealthiest elite families left behind traditional houses in the city center and moved to the southwest district of the city to construct new mansions (palacios) with heavily ornamented facades. In 1850, the first of the commercial pasajes, sometimes known as galerías or portales modeled after the Parisian passages, was built, later to be followed by more (El Mercurio 5 April 2014).41 A traveler from Belgium in 1889 noted the luxuriousness of the architecture in Central Santiago, comparing it to Brussels, as he “walked through galleries and portals bordered by shops and had the definitive impression of being in a great capital city” (Dussaillant Christie 2011:27). For all these projects, furniture, ornamentation, and construction materials were imported from Europe (Bergot 2009:34). Although, Paris was the “cultural capital” of the 19th century and extended influence through Europe and the Americas, wealthy Chilean families made possible the material exchanges between Santiago and Paris (Bergot 2009:32).

41 Commercial pasajes in Santiago resembled closely Parisian arcades, “…glass-roofed, marble corridors extending through whole blocks of buildings…Lining both sides of the arcade, which gets its light from above, are the most elegant shops…” (Benjamin 1999:15). These features define the building type, notable throughout European cities during the era (Neufert 2011:373-376). Santiago has ~40 commercial pasajes still in use today.
French Architectural Influence in Santiago

Municipal Theater. Architect Claude Francois Brunet de Baines (c. 1857)
Photo: Author 2016

Courthouse. Architect Emile Doyère (c. 1913)
Photo: Author 2014
Sacramentinos Church. Architect Ricardo Larraín Bravo (c. 1922)
Photo: Author 2016

Palacio Concha-Cazotte [private residence]
Photo: Obder Heffer (c. 1883), Universidad Diego Portales Photo Archive
Names

In addition to materials between cities, the ideas that diffused within Santiago were also product of the Chilean elite’s network. A new European collective housing model, as well as the word “cité” traveled from Paris and dispersed in Santiago with the help of architects that were linked in to the powerful realms of society. In France, workers’ housing was known as “cités ouvrières” independent of layout, level of urban planning, or urban or non-urban land. The name was a social concept that denoted their intended users. Architects trained in France during this period were aware of the French concept as well as the variation in housing models that existed. In 1901, a French-trained architect named Ricardo Larraín Bravo published a book about hygienic housing for workers based on ideas prominent in Europe. It was addressed to the local government and made policy suggestions for Santiago.\(^{42}\) In it, he lists famous industrialists and a typology of cités ouvrières, developed for their workers, noting which were the most economical and the most successful in terms of hygiene. Cités ouvrières could be built along existing roads, stretching as long as the road would allow, or they could be built—houses and roads—from the ground up, where the whole infrastructure of the community was planned. In these cases, there were varying spatial setups: freestanding houses, rows of houses attached at the sides or backs (or both), houses in a quadrangle, or pairs of rows facing each other, to name a few. Sets of houses were an economical way to build because each wall could be shared with the neighboring houses. He proposes that in Santiago, although it would be preferable to have isolated houses for all workers, it would not be feasible given the costs (Larraín Bravo 1901:2). Instead, he advocates collective housing—specifically, “blocks” of houses. Although the book is written in Spanish, having trained in France, he refers

\(^{42}\) At the time, he also taught a class at the Catholic University of Chile on the relationship between hygiene, the body, and the built environment propelling the ideas he wrote about in his book and calling on architects to solve problems of hygiene both inside and outside the city (Larraín Bravo 1902: “Higiene Aplicada a las Construcciones”).
to all groups of houses for workers as “cités”.\textsuperscript{43} He interchanges the term “población obrera”, sometimes even “cité obrera” (e.g., p. 21), throughout the book, indicating he refers to a general concept for workers’ houses not a specific form.\textsuperscript{44} In other European cities too, particularly in French speaking places the concept “cités ouvrières” proliferated as the name for “worker housing” independent of form.\textsuperscript{45}

Notably some of the book’s recommendations for building types were the same as those taken up by the Catholic organizations—headed by wealthy Chileans—that were already building workers’ housing. The connection between the architects and the financiers of all new buildings in the city affected which building types were erected. For example, Melchor Concha y Toro, who founded the first and was affiliated with the second of the philanthropic organizations to build workers’ housing, held an architectural competition in 1903, inviting the most prominent architects in Chile (including Larrain Bravo), to innovate on hygienic housing types (Hidalgo Dattwyler et al. 2005:36). Chileans trained in Paris were from upper class families and, because of the dearth of architects in the country, the same architects built the city from “high” to “low.” Larraín Bravo, for example, designed the public building Sacramentinos Church—modeled after Sacré-Coeur in Montmartre (1913-1922) [photo above], the Población Huemul—a población obrera just on the urban edge that was avant-garde for its incorporation of public space and services (1911-1918), the Cité (turned pasaje) Adriana Cousiño (1914) and Cité San Fuentes (1929)—built for the new middle-income workers of the city.

\textsuperscript{43} He does this independent of the country he’s discussing. For example, he calls English worker housing “cités” which was not the term in England.  
\textsuperscript{44} He does make a distinction between apartment buildings and houses. “Cités” only refer to groups of houses in various conglomerations. Apartment buildings are “collective houses” (e.g., p. 28).  
\textsuperscript{45} Famous examples include the planned community “Cité Mulhouse” in France, the open row of houses “Cité Suchard” in Switzerland, or the planned houses and apartments of “Cité Kuchen” in Germany.
In general, elite networks are known to be small, closed, and dense (Gould 1989:539). In Chile, “the political hegemony, the economic power, and the social influence of [the elite] rested on family networks…” (Vicuña 2010:12). Family connections allowed not only the superior range of positions in the State and Church, but also the ownership of large plots of land (haciendas) in the non-urban parts of central Chile (near Santiago) (Vicuña 2010:23). Through social networks, a “select group of families tended to monopolize the political and economic power of the nation” (Vicuña 2010:23-24). Individuals overlapped as religious benefactors, government officers, and real estate owners, and architects were tightly affiliated with them. They served in ministries and as consultants to provide technical knowledge to the national government, particularly in matters of hygiene (Ibarra 2015:9). In network sociological terms, architects acted as “bridges” between Paris and Santiago where information was able to move into the closed upper class network in Chile by virtue of the positions of architects in networks on both sides (Burt 2005; Granovetter 1973). They were part of the architectural professional community in Paris, where they trained, as well as part of the upper class in Santiago, where they worked. As we have seen, Parisian culture was preferred among this group, allowing uptake of transferred ideas. Further, because of the properties of the network in Santiago, information could diffuse rapidly once introduced (Katz and Lazarsfeld 1955). Under these conditions, ideas about collective housing models, dictums of the Church, architectural styles, mortgaging systems, fears of the working class, and a common language could move between realms of society, as they did between Santiago and Paris.46

Due to both costs and hygiene rhetoric, Santiago largely only adopted one collective housing model: rows of shared-wall dwellings. However, although these were all termed “cités” in the architects’ French understanding,

46 Slaton (2001) found a similar relationship in the US during the same period, where architects shared ideologies with "educators, engineers, industrialists, and builders" given their social network affiliations; they were not just partners in business but attended the same churches and country clubs (p. x). In the case of Santiago, the networks of architects are likely a product of class position as well as profession.
different names emerged based on geographic location, dwelling type, and level of enclosure. *Poblaciones obreras*, by definition located outside the urban limit, took a variation of the word that already existed for non-urban settlements (“población”). Hygienic conventillos, defined as rooms around a patio, were the improved versions of preexisting conventillos. Residential pasajes, which described the space that allowed passage through a block, had their predecessors in the commercial pasajes downtown. But the dead-end, *pasajes sin salida*, had no equivalent. “Cité”, a once-general term, became the marker for the new collective housing model of rows of houses incorporated into the existing urban grid. Architects today claim that the form is determined by the physical infrastructure of the grid. This isn’t exactly correct. Cités and poblaciones take the same essential form of houses in rows, and both should have been called cités if they followed the French definition. But they did not. There was a cultural differentiation, not a physical determination, that separated and defined what was a cité.

**Urban Forms**

Just before Melchor Concha y Toro founded the Institución León XIII to build the first *población obrera*, he reportedly also built the first cité, although not for workers. French architect Emile Doyère was commissioned to build the Cité Concha y Toro in 1891 “for friends and family suffering economic hardship” (Ortega 1985). It was located in one of the wealthiest areas of the central city and composed of seven two-story houses, three to each side and one at the back, forming a small, privatized common space at the center. Although very grand with architectural details that manifested the aesthetic preferences of the upper class, it was a collective housing building with shared walls and a shared central space. Given all these details together,

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47 The architectural article mentioning the “first cité” has been cited extensively, however, I was unable to locate independent confirmation of the information.

48 The three most expensive properties in the urban area in 1896 were shopping arcades for the wealthy, located around the Plaza de Armas (Espinoza 1887:226). Cité Concha y Toro was located on Huérfanos Street, two blocks from the Plaza, and demolished in the 1980s.
coupled with the severe socio-economic segregation in Chile, the intended user group appears to be down-and-out members of the upper class. Called a cité by the French architect who built it, the form was similar to the cités of Paris.

**Earliest Known Cité in Santiago (c. 1891)**

![Image of Cité Concha y Toro, interior.](image)

Source: *Revista Sucesos* (January 18, 1917, XV, N. 747, p. 34)

In contemporary Paris, there are many examples of urban spaces labeled cités, remnants of a prior era. They are notable for similarities in their spatial-architectural composition, with pedestrian paths between buildings
that lead to a dead-end or allow passage. Sometimes they are gated, creating a private, interior space, much like the cités in Santiago.\(^{49}\) In these examples, the passages exist as crevices in the urban fabric. One of the first of this kind, a contemporary of the Cité Napoléon, built between 1852 and 1855 in what is now the 13\(^{th}\) arrondissement, is commonly called the Cité d’Enfer (later called Passage d’Enfer). The cité takes the form of a row of small buildings that, today, is organized along a path through an urban block. However, Cité d’enfer and other early, privately built housing on the edge of Paris became part of the city in 1860 when the lands were annexed (Paris city hall 2013:4). As urbanization occurred and the century closed, more cités were built in these working class districts. The earliest cités became a part of the new urban fabric but appeared as if they had been carved into of it.

\(^{49}\) Examples of cités with pedestrian paths in contemporary Paris, built in the late 1800s: Cité Véron (18\(^{th}\)), Cité du Midi (18\(^{th}\)), La Villa des Arts (18\(^{th}\), gated), Cité des Fleurs (17\(^{th}\), gated), Cité Florale (13\(^{th}\)), La Passage de la Sorcière (18\(^{th}\), gated), Cité de la Mairie (18\(^{th}\)).
Examples of Cités in Contemporary Paris

Photo: Author 2015
Photo: Author 2015

Cité d’Enfer, Paris (c. 1855)
Source: *Low-Cost Housing* (Paris City Hall 2013:4)
Because the urbanization of Paris began prior to that of Santiago, and we know that Chilean elites appropriated many features of urban culture from Paris, we could assume that the cités that proliferated in Santiago were a direct copy of Parisian cités, although not the rest of France. However, I think this process happened in two parts. The Cité Concha y Toro was the only cité to be built so close to the center of the city, as all that followed would be further from the original city center in areas that would become worker districts. It was also among the minority that would be truly well constructed with ornate and varied architectural style. This particular cité seems to be an import from Paris, given its early date, location, intended user group, architectural detail, and designer. But the cités that proliferated would be housing for “workers.” Melchor Concha y Toro and other elite-run Church organizations pioneered worker housing with architects’ help. Their models included “poblaciones” and “cités”, differentiated by the grid, and it seems it was their language that also spread. Above I described my understanding of the process for how cités took their name as the default language of architects, linking an urban form to a specific name. As such, I do not think the form itself was a direct copy from Paris but a consequence of differences in urban planning in the two cities that resulted in similar urban forms through urbanization. Elongated stretches of housing had always existed in Santiago to comply with the urban grid structure. When colonial houses were demolished, the rows of houses that replaced them took the same form. Long, narrow paths were squeezed in, carving up the urban fabric. In Paris, buildings with courtyards filled in urban space but elongated stretches of houses were on the periphery. Those annexed lands later densified and became urban, resulting in similar paths that had not been carved in but looked like they were. As the economic and political changes that caused urban expansion unfolded, more cités were built into now urbanized areas in both Santiago and Paris. In Paris, new cités fit in with old cités, and in Santiago new cités crept into existing poblaciones obreras. The names and the forms were by then the same in the two cities, but it was by way of two different processes. While other cities intended to copy the urban planning of Paris, ripping up urban infrastructure, Santiago copied only aesthetics.
The word “cité” seemed to change definition again within Santiago in the first few decades of its existence. Today the change is expressed in the different definitions of the building type given by architects and historians. For the first, it came to mean collective buildings with individual “basic services” (e.g., drinking water and toilet), while for the second it came to mean any hygienically built collective housing, whether services were shared or individual. For both, the urban definition remains. How these changes happened has to do with visual similarities due to spatial compositions. Building types in the urban grid were all limited by the existing infrastructure, not just cités. Cités started out as houses in rows built into the urban grid structure but as the type proliferated they became smaller units of 1-2 room apartments (see, DeShazo 1983:62; Urmeneta de la Barrera 1984:73). Architects seem to allow for the whole spectrum to be called cités as long as all have individual basic services. Cités originally had basic services in each dwelling because they were houses. But now, because they have individual basic services, they are cités. The definition expanded as details within the type varied but the urban form remained constant. Hygienic conventillos were the other model that appeared in the grid. These were dormitory-style buildings with shared services. Historical accounts of collective housing buildings usually rely on the language of early residents to describe them. From their accounts, it seems that as the low-end models of cités became more similar to hygienic conventillos (aesthetically and in size), residents did not make a distinction between the two, using the word “cité” for both. The forms were conflated and the definition again expanded to include all spatially similar “hygienic” urban forms.50 In this way, a name and a form were linked into the definition of a building type, and the definition changed to include more spatially similar urban forms over time, creating variation on the type.

50 Although historians get their language from accounts of residents, there is the possibility that residents did not originate the overlap in terms. The proliferation of cités on a large scale was not by architects but by real estate owners (Hidalgo 2002:95). I cannot rule out the scenario where “cité” was applied to visually similar urban forms as a marketing tactic.
“Workers’ Housing”

How cités are defined also tells us something about how workers were defined. The social function of the new hygienic collective housing types was to house “workers.” The first national housing law, *Ley Sobre Habitaciones Obreras* [Workers’ Housing Law], states in Article 1 that the purpose is the “construction of hygienic and cheap housing intended for the proletariat class” (Diario Oficial 1906: “Ley sobre habitaciones obreras”). However, the new building types housed people that were not (or did not want to be) part of a “proletariat class”. It was a term that included anyone who would benefit from a cheaper housing option, which ran the gamut from the urban poor, to workers in labor unions, to salaried professionals.\(^{51}\) Although “classes” could be divided based on job category, it is problematic because salaried professionals “could hardly be considered of middle-class status, since they often earned nearly the same wages as many proletarians” (DeShazo 1983:18). With unions, skilled tradesmen were paid more than low-level salaried professionals. However, class attitudes were present. Laborers did not want to identify with the “middle class” (which were thought to aspire to elite tastes (Vicuña 2010:34)). At the same time, there was a divide among laborers that newspapers stated as the “lowest class” and the “working class,” although more highly paid laborers often organized and spread “revolutionary ideology” to other workers (DeShazo 1983:54-55), indicating a level of solidarity. Although they were all “workers” in the language of elites, this diversity among the group translated into variation in the material outcomes of individual buildings within the type cités.\(^{52}\)

Aside from the Cité Concha y Toro other buildings appeared with ornamented European facades, larger size, and generally better quality of construction. Since the housing law that benefited the supply side did not specify the income level of future inhabitants of new builds, or the maximum prices of rents, wealthy families often commissioned cités for those in middle-income occupations. Especially between 1910 and 1935,

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\(^{51}\) This is not to say that all these people *did* benefit.

\(^{52}\) The residential typology itself is a partial product of these differences. Conventillos remained for the poorest urbanites.
many culminated in European architectural details. For example, Cité Capitol (c. 1927), an ornate two-story cité with expansive central patio and Spanish-style details, was commissioned as middle-income rental properties (CNCA 2015:88). The now heritage-protected Pasaje Lucrecia Valdez (c. 1924) was built by a wealthy politician, Luis Barros Borgoño, for executives of the National Savings Bank (CNCA 2015:27) and Cité San Francisco (c. 1908) was for the employees of the Public Hospital (CNCA 2015:86). The largest ones have 5 bedrooms, plus facilities. These buildings were organized by profession and while guaranteeing a certain level of income also contributed to the image of the city that elites strove for. The aesthetic distinctions that arose in cités did not emerge in poblaciones obreras. While the houses of middle-income poblaciones are larger than lower income ones, they have “monotonous facades” (De Ramón 1985:217). On one hand this may tell us about the difference between urban and non-urban middle income residents. On the other, wealthy individuals or elite-run foundations commissioned both cités and poblaciones. The styles that were constructed in the urban center, emulated the city they wanted Santiago to become.53

Understanding the buildings through their intended social function—to house workers—puts us in the mindset of Santiago’s historical elites. “Starting from the 1850s, the increasing disparities in income levels significantly augmented the inequalities between the different social classes” and the economy based on exports of raw materials intensified the rigid social structure of the colony (Vicuña 2010:29). In cultural terms, elites were trying to establish themselves as a class (Vicuña 2001:12-13) and looked for modes of social distinction to clarify their class identity (Vicuña 2001:13). As Bergot (2009) argues, the new residential palacios congealed them into an “upper class.” “Buildings classify”, separating those with power from others while also creating bonds between those classified together (Markus 1993:25). The rise of palacios created a material divide in the urban landscape that, for the first time in the country’s history, visually distinguished the upper class as a “class.” In their construction of a unified identity, the simultaneous rise of collective housing created a contrast.

53 Elites still lived in the urban area at this time, and downtown Santiago remained the center of commerce.
However, collective housing residents varied greatly. There was economic and ideological diversity between the groups living in the new collective housing buildings and they would not forge a class identity based on their contrast to elites alone.\textsuperscript{54}

The spectrums that arose for both cités and poblaciones show that “workers” were diverse and that neither type housed a discrete income group. Instead, there was a divide based on urban and non-urban living. In urban neighborhoods, income differences were marked by aesthetics of buildings, while in the periphery they were marked by spatial segregation. Expensive cités were architecturally unique and, at the highest end, each house had stylistically different facades within the building. Less expensive cités blended into city blocks and sometimes became hidden from the street. However, urban neighborhoods generally had a range of residential building types. In the wealthiest residential neighborhood (today, Barrio República), the \textit{palacios} of elites were on main avenues while cités were on the side streets.\textsuperscript{55} Barrio Yungay was a mix of upscale cités amongst bland cités, early poblaciones (now incorporated), and conventillos (see, e.g., De Ramón 1985:222), housing salaried professionals, wage laborers, and “illustrious” artists and intellectuals living the bohemian life, as well as poor urbanites (Areizada Bravo 1972:146). The southeastern neighborhoods of the city (today, Barrios Franklin, San Diego, Matta Sur) began with \textit{poblaciones obreras} for manual laborers and later interpolated cités for low and middle-income workers, as well as maintained conventillos.\textsuperscript{56} On the urban edges

\textsuperscript{54} Note that this presentation of social class differentiation, as seen through buildings, is similar to Marx’s notion that the contrast to the “ruling class” creates the potential “working class” (Calhoun et al. 2012:144-45). But, as Marx realized in his later writings, class identity among workers was not forged in this contrast and other social classes emerged among the group (namely, “the petite bourgeoisie”) (Calhoun et al. 2012:190-91).

\textsuperscript{55} It seems these \textit{cités} often housed staff that worked in the mansions. Both building types are still present in the neighborhood today.

\textsuperscript{56} See, De Ramón (1985:265) for mix of social “classes”; Hidalgo (2002:95) for original poblaciones; and Urmeneta de la Barrera (1984) for locations of cités, pasajes, and conventillos.
though, houses in *poblaciones obreras* were aesthetically similar but geographically separated across income groups.

**Cités in Santiago**

Santiago’s historical upper class, enmeshed in Parisian high culture, helped to constitute an everyday building type in both name and form. While the name appears to have diffused from Paris to Santiago via a bi-national network of elites, the form became urban through a process of local differentiation. Architects especially played a role in the name transfer via knowledge of the French word that signified economically built housing for workers. Their ability to transfer the word rested in their position both as architects and members of the upper class (which were coupled during that generation). When the same connected individuals write briefs for competitions, introduce and support building legislation, and educate professionals, documents “will be couched in their language which [others] adopt” (Markus 1993:23). However, this was coupled with the non-existence of a precedent for formally built urban collective houses, where the differentiation of other similar collective housing types relied on precedents for names. A spectrum of cités emerged, product of distinct residential user groups and as the name proliferated, other building types of similar urban form became known as cités. Even if cités in Santiago do match the Parisian forms, the word “cité”, on its travels to Chile, changed definition. It went from a general concept to a specific urban form, but then expanded to include variation on that form within the society.

As society brings about a new building type, the society also changes in the process. The addition of the new buildings changed the material landscape of the city. The transition to mansions and collective housing buildings created visual urban divides. Simmel wrote in “The Sociology of Space” that bonds to things can create bonds between people, and that space has significance in social formations because it fixes their contents (1997b:146). The material outcomes here are not only effects of social differentiation processes but become structures themselves, fixed in the landscape. Remember that prior to this, income level was not starkly differentiated by
housing type in the urban area. New building types became visual markers that enabled categorization. Zerubavel (1996) writes about “intersubjective” mental clustering to explain how social categories are formed and take meaning. Objects are “lumped” together when they are understood to be more similar to one another than to things outside the category (or “cluster”) and differences among lumped objects are ignored (p. 422). Buildings in the type “cité”, even with variation, were all categorized under one name because the occupants were all “workers”. Spatio-compositional overlap converged urban collective housing models, lumping them together, and expanding the definition of the type to include poorer residents and smaller housing units. Categorizing the new types also clusters the users, where they are all seen as similar too (Zerubavel 1996:423). How we define people is then embedded in how we have categorized buildings. In this way the buildings don’t just stabilize social categories, they play a role in how categorization occurs. The new associations between social category and urban object were further solidified as new types had new names. As Zerubavel points out “it is language that helps us carve out of experiential continua discrete categories…” (1996:427). Although differences were ignored in terms of defining the type “cité” (giving it a name), within-type material distinctions emerged due to differences among residents. Cités were distinguished by sizes of houses, spaces of patios, number of services, and architectural styles. The definition of “cité” was sealed, with all its variation.

Further variation would occur over time, as the higher prestige of cités over conventillos would flatten. From the outset, the word “conventillo” connoted “slum”. Today, in popular lexicon, the words “cité” and “conventillo” are often used interchangeably.57 Two things happened between the 1930s and the 1960s that led to the decline of cités. First, the “garden city movement” (Howard 1902) moved from England to the Americas, converting to “garden suburbs” in the process, and the trend toward detached houses came back in

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57 In my observations, “cité” is dominant. Cités with “architecturally important” facades are not called conventillos.
fashion. Second, worldwide modernist ideology brought apartment buildings to Santiago. For these and other reasons, cités were no longer built. From the 1930s onward (until recently), Central Santiago experienced declines in the population as the wealthiest moved east toward the Andes Mountains, followed by the middle classes. Over time, new commercial centers cropped up in the city and the center lost status. Industrial era collective housing, located in the center, became a vestige of its time. By the 1970s, the buildings were associated with “the poor” and, from the perspective of the powerful, viewed as part of the “marginal” populations of Santiago (Castells 1973:12). Modes of identity distinction arose for cité dwellers to differentiate themselves both from conventillos (also located in the center) and from newer forms of low-income housing (located on the new urban periphery). “Cité”, although some might say evoked poverty, also was synonymous with urbanity and the pride felt by cité dwellers for living inside the city and not on the impoverished periphery became a distinguishing factor in their identities (see, Calderón Trujillo 2010; Dannemann et al. 2005; Garcia 2004; Tapia and Pulgar 2008 for how residents view their identities as they relate to living in the Center). At the same time though, because cités and conventillos were convoluted (based on visual and spatial similarities and perceived similarity in user groups), middle-income cité dwellers would, over time, call their buildings “pasajes” in an attempt to distinguish them from lower income buildings. It seems pasajes—with a double outlet—were not confused with conventillos. Here we see how the word “cité” takes on further variation (signifies more

58 This was directed at the working class in England (Wajcman 1991:115). In Santiago, it became an overarching trend for city planning as the city expanded.

59 This propelled a trend that continues today of wealth moving further out, followed by middle income. It is notable because it follows the model of “invasion and succession” laid out by the urban sociologists of the Chicago School in the 1920s. In this case, because the politically and economically powerful have always pushed the poorest to the city’s periphery, it is the wealthiest that invade the spaces of the poorest forcing them even further out as the middle-class tries to play catch-up (see, Hidalgo Dattwyler and Zunino Edelsberg (1992) and Ureta (2007a:317) for this relationship).
material objects) and how the buildings start to gain meanings. This will be addressed in the next chapter as we examine the larger issue of how the material aspects of buildings affect their use.
III: Uses of Space

Urban Space and Everyday Use

The last chapter focused on the constitution of a building type and concurrent changes to the physical (and social) landscape of a city. This chapter scales down to the level of interactional space in buildings. Given the spatial form that was already established, this chapter examines shared patio spaces in contemporary residential cités to try to understand patterns of use in a few buildings. I try to answer the questions: how is space used in a given cité? And, does the building contribute to patterns of use that occur there? These questions are aimed at understanding the possible roles of buildings as material structures that contribute to the development of practices, in this case, in private collective spaces. There is a history of research about how patterned practices are constrained or made possible by built environments, and may shift according to spatial arrangements (Fine 2008:ch. 3; Gans 2002; Gieryn 2002a, 2002b; Grannis 1998, 2009; Hillier and Hanson 1984; Hillier et al. 1984; Pinch 2010; Whyte 2009). Here we will compare similar building forms with variance in inhabitants to look for similar uses of space, as well as briefly compare similar inhabitants in other building forms. The idea is that building forms may be relevant where there is overlap between varied groups. I will focus on one case of a patio in a low-income residential building to describe patterns of use. The comparisons will come from published studies that address how people use space in middle-income cités, as well as how low-income residents in other building types use (or don’t use) collective spaces. The larger intent of this chapter is to show how buildings contribute to practices and how practices can then affect meanings given to the building type.

60 In Spanish the translation is “common space” rather than “collective space.” I have called them “collective” over “common” for two reasons: 1) for clarity because the latter term can refer to regularity, normalcy, or repetition, which might be confusing in some instances and 2) because we have been discussing “collective housing”, the term “collective space” within the housing seems apt.
The relationship between the built environment and behavior is an old question in both sociology and architecture. Do buildings determine behavior? Many architectural practices still develop around an affirmative belief where, for example, the design of open spaces in a building will “encourage collaboration and community” (Nielsen quoted in Designboom 29 October 2014). There is an understanding of a direct relationship between the two, which seems to rely on specific imaginaries of users and use. Sociologists first criticized architectural assumptions in the 1930s when they questioned the influence of housing on behavior (Gutman 2010:156). Since then, urban researchers have tried to understand the relationships between built and unbuilt spaces, their users, and use. The early Chicago School ethnographers, although they were interested in city-level geographical spaces, understood the importance of the relationship between urban spaces and their users in terms of how urban processes unfold (Park, Burgess, and McKenzie 1925). Wirth’s (1938) notion that the effects of urbanism were social disorganization and individual alienation led to the central lines of research that followed. Throughout the 1950s, 60s, and 70s, urban theory and community studies revolved around spatial relationships in urban and suburban neighborhoods and buildings to understand how community deteriorates, namely through crime (Jacobs 1961; Newman 1972) and how it is built, through networks and sociability (Gans 1968; Festinger et al. 1950; Whyte 1956). Studies of uses of streets and plazas were a staple during this time aimed at improving urban public spaces to align with how people actually used them (Gehl 2011; Whyte 2009). At the same time, other social theorists often treated space as a setting for interaction (Goffman 1959, 1963) or as a representation of existing social organization (Bourdieu 1970), rather than a factor in use or behavior. That is, it was those interested in architecture and urban planning that understood space as an influence on the

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61 Architects generally operate on determinism and only rarely question this assumption (e.g., Gutman (Cuff and Wriedt 2010) and Gans (1968, 2002)—both crossover artists, the former trained in sociology and architecture and the latter urban planning and sociology).

62 Goffman (1963) tried to lay the groundwork for how people interact in semi-public “gathering” places, but the place was used as a reference for rules of conduct (a frame), rather than playing a material role in interactions.
social. This interest continued into the 1980s with the development of Space Syntax studies (Hillier and Hanson 1984), which moved studies of spatial interaction off the “streets” and into office buildings and houses. Space syntax interprets relationships between spaces within a “complex” (a building), taking into account all other spaces in the complex (Hillier et al. 1987:363). Essentially it quantifies opportunities for interaction to predict outcomes. This method for understanding spaces and bounds as opportunities and restrictions for action was built upon more recently by technology studies where a building “structures agency”. However, in this framework, buildings are made “whole” by understanding how space and materiality are designed and constructed, then how they structure (including through physical bounds), and finally how they are restructured through interpretation (Gieryn 2002b). Lastly, there are many studies that have explored themes of public versus private space in cities, and recently researchers have taken seriously the role of the built environment in not only symbolically reconstructing differentiation but actually helping to produce it (Low 2003; Smithsimon 2009).

Here we will look to understand if or how the formal composition of a building affects how collective space is used. Does use fall in line with intended uses of the space? Are new practices developed in space? Recall that the patio in collective housing buildings was built to be a transition space that moves residents from the entrance/exit to the doors of their homes (see Hillier and Hanson 1984 on transition spaces). The elements of this transition space are based on the principles of hygiene (and economy): it is without a roof to allow light and air into the building and windows and doors face the patio to ensure each home has access to ventilation. However, studies have shown that the patio is used not only as a transition space, but as a collective space for dwelling (Calderón Trujillo 2010; Dannemann et al. 2005; Garcia 2004). Use appears to differ between cités though. Although the patio spaces have similar forms between buildings, their use ranges from transitional space, to leisure space, to spaces that meet everyday needs.63 This variation tells us that the building does not determine use of space—

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63 These are not mutually exclusive.
through its material form or its intended function. In this analysis we will explore how the spaces create opportunities for use that are similar across buildings, how patterns of actual use differ between groups, and what elements of the material form may affect these differences, particularly by demarcating the public from the private space.

First I will describe the conditions of the space and how it is used. From the data of the primary case, it is evident that the residents use the patio space partially out of lack of space indoors. This ties to studies on urban density and poverty where activities in the public space (streets, parks, plazas) can be linked to residential overcrowding. However, in the case of cités, because of the patio between the public street and the private home, residents have an alternative to streets, plazas, etc. This creates another dynamic than houses that open directly to the sidewalk. For example, residents hang laundry across the patio between their homes, bicycles are left tilted against the walls unchained, old furniture is left in the patio, garbage piles up—practices that do not occur without problems in the public spaces between buildings. The dynamic is one of privacy but also one of seclusion in the sense that, in this case, the central patio has low visibility from the street. The private collective space creates an opportunity for daily practices that is an alternative to both the crowded residences and the public space. However, although the spatial composition is similar across cités, density differs—meaning that the lack of space that drives people outside to dwell is not a factor in use of patios in some cités. This brings up the question of what other factors draw people outside to dwell in this space.

I have not done action mapping or studied behavior, but looked for evident patterns of spatial practices. I use the term “practices” here to recount things like “storing belongings” in the patio, which is perhaps not the standard definition. However, keep in mind that these practices are spatialized. The point is to understand what the space allows and how the uses come about. One way to see it is the difference between asking “what is the function of the space?” and “how does the space function?”. In the first, the answer

Although some action paths are highly determined: e.g., if one wants to exit the building, one should pass through the door.
relates to the intended purpose for which the space is used (in this case, transit—of bodies, air, eyes). The second question relates to how else the space is actually utilized (in this case, dwelling—in the various shapes it takes: hanging laundry, playing children, napping dogs, stored objects, conversing residents and guests). This allows the perspective to flip from practices of people to properties of space within a building.65

Aside from the global interest in answering questions about the relationship between built form and spatial use, there is also a local interest in questions about use of patio space. Currently in Santiago, there is a preservationist movement that seeks to maintain some cités under the protection of “heritage”. It is clear that the most vocal group is interested in saving cités that are “architecturally important” (Consejo Nacional de la Cultura y Las Artes 2015). At the same time, the group tells a narrative about cités that utilizes the idea that the built form leads to a sense of community. The leading voices are architects and their explanation is simple: the design of the space, at the low densities that cités provide, promotes community (Adrián Araneda 2015:10-11). Essentially, everyone must go through the same space to enter and exit, leading to repeated interactions (this assumption rests on use as a transition space). Heritage status is not sought for buildings that are not beautiful or offer no “historical importance”, although, according to the argument, these buildings too should promote a sense of community that is good for the neighbors.

My empirical case does not look at ties between neighbors or their perceptions of community. However, by addressing how space is actually used we can start to see that what preservationists assume to be a deterministic use of the patio, is more complicated. Residents do not use space the same way between buildings. In the first part of this chapter, we will see how low-income residents in one building use the space to meet daily needs, as well as for traversing and leisure. A comparison case of

65 The idea of practices as intended and unintended uses of space is exemplified in the public toilet where, seemingly for urinating/defecating, people regularly do drugs, nap, have sex, read, vandalize/graffiti, talk on the phone, groom, smoke or drink (Molotch and Norén 2010:9).
middle-income residents from a prior study shows they use the space decoratively on a daily basis, but only occupy it with neighbors for special occasions or in a more leisurely fashion. They also report a high sense of community with neighbors. This group has the least necessity to use the space and it poses a question about how the building might play a role in contributing to these interactions. My analysis concludes that it is not the simple existence of the patio that contributes to extended use of the space but instead its level of enclosure. In brief observations, cités with no gates at their entrances appear to have little use outside of transit. The cités described in this study, with gated entrances, have patios that are used by residents at both the lowest and highest ends of the income spectrum. While low-income residents gain in the cité a space visually and materially separated from the street, allowing everyday practices that may not have a place to occur in other forms of low-income housing, middle-income residents gain a space that cuts them off from the rest of the neighborhood providing a secure environment to associate with neighbors. These motivations will be explored within literature on gated communities as an analogous context where material and symbolic demarcations between public and private collective spaces affect social life.

Contemporary Cités

Cités are located in seven central communes of Santiago (Adrián Araneda 2008). According to a 2012 government study of cités and pasajes the majority of residents in all sectors are (1) elderly Chileans and (2) young immigrant families with small children—mostly from Peru, with a mentionable number from Colombia and Ecuador—in overcrowded conditions. The economic situation of cités ranges from middle income to very low income, with 60% rental units and 40% owned units (Seisdedos Morales 2012:VI.36). Low-income residents who live in cités are among the minority of poor urbanites that live in or near the city center. Social housing has been pushed further to the peripheral lands of the ever-expanding city, now home to almost 7 million inhabitants. After central-city decline starting in the 1930s, redevelopment in central Santiago since the 1990s has started to bring back some residents and for the first time in decades the population
of the center is growing. New residential developments are primarily high-rise, isolated towers that aim to rent or sell to individuals and young couples, outside the demographic of current cité residents. This has led to recent disputes about the “heritage” of the city, when old buildings are demolished for new constructions. Cités, which in some cases have housed generations of the same family since their construction (Velasco Villafaña 2015:47), have become a star in the preservationist catalogue as some of them are also visually appealing and “architecturally important”. Further, given that cités were constructed during a finite period, they are old and become more scarce not only through demolitions, but through deterioration from normal wear and repeated earthquakes. This also makes the living conditions in cités more precarious. Starting in the late 1980s, a private-public partnership between the Municipality of Central Santiago and the Santiago Development Corporation (CORDESAN) began to recuperate and make improvements to a small minority of cités. According to the organization’s website their current phase, which includes reparation of ten cités between 2014 and 2016, prioritizes improvements to security (gates and lighting), beautification (facades and greenery), and roofing (awnings and eavestroughs) (accessed May 1, 2015). Some residents from earlier phases of the project have complained that the reparations are superficial because the plumbing and building structure are still in poor condition (Plataforma Urbana 2012; Rajevic 2013).

Conventillos are still present in central Santiago also. A 1984 study compared living conditions in collective housing in the central city between 1910 and 1982 and noted that things had not changed much, finding rotting roofs, adobe walls that are close to falling, patios without sewage or drains leaving floods when it rains, deteriorating or non-existent bathrooms, no pressure in the sinks, dangerous electrical work with possible fire hazard, broken glass in windows, and walls without proper insulation or covering, collecting humidity (Urmeneta de la Barrera 1984:9). Like cités, in recent years these have become home to new Latin American immigrants, mostly from Peru, with some families renting living spaces as small as six meters squared (Márquez 2014:61-2). The “slim entranceways and old facades” of conventillos are often confused with the facades of the old houses that surround them (Urmeneta de la Barrera 1984:3). This is likely because
conventillos are houses adapted to multi-family use. All the facades on a block may be similar while some still function as single-family homes and others have converted to conventillos. In the next sections, I introduce the case of one building with a collective use patio, which will elucidate the formal relationship between cités and conventillos.

The Patio

This section describes use of the patio space in one residential cité in Santiago. The cité described is located in a district in the southwest part of the city. It is a small cité with only 4 separate homes inside. There is a mix of families of Chilean and non-Chilean nationalities and at least eight young children living there. According to statistics by the National Ministry of Social Development, in 2013 the area in which the building is located had a poverty rate five percentage points higher than the metropolitan average, with residential sanitary deficiencies double the urban average, although rates of residential overcrowding were similar. The living conditions in the building described herein are visibly poor. The purpose of the description is to understand everyday use of collective space by the residents and try to assess if the building plays a role in these practices. To address this question, it would have been optimal to systematically study variation in other cases, but this was not possible due to resources. Instead, the following sections compare a prior published study that looked at use of patio space in two cités by residents with higher incomes. This will highlight spatial practices that may be related to variation in income or dwelling unit density. The case is not meant to be representative of all cités. However, the comparisons between this case and prior studies help to point to building features that may contribute to patterns of use.

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I have not named the location or building to protect the identities of the residents. See the appendix for a description of ethical practices.

Other case study researchers have used this tactic to generate hypotheses as well. See, Small (2004), for an in-depth study of one neighborhood with prior study comparisons to focus on generalizable conditions of neighborhoods rather than representativeness; also, Vaughan (2014) on
Methodologically, this section relies on a visual analysis of photos taken by a volunteer organization that visited the cité once a week for six months in 2015. I have analyzed 45 photos from the first four months of their visits. Their aim was to provide extra academic support to the children living there and their photo depictions are from this point of view, to show their process of teaching. For this reason, I am primarily interested in what is depicted in the photos in terms of patterns of general spatial use, rather than the depictions themselves. I have followed the advice of Howard Becker (1974) here by looking at the photos for five minutes each while saying aloud what is depicted (p. 5). This creates a mental recollection of each photo as the analyst moves along with each subsequent photo. I then wrote descriptions of each photo in the series on two occasions, roughly one year apart, using this method. Herein, I note what repeats in the series over time as an entrance to understanding everyday use of the space. I also note material features used in unexpected ways—that is, when an architectural element appears to be for one purpose but is used in another. Because these photos show volunteers and kids engrossed in teaching/studying, I have focused little on the interactions between individuals, which are likely not representative of the everyday. However, I have observed how they are positioned within the space.

cross-case comparisons, including using previously published studies together with a focal case (p. 65).

68 When I obtained the photos they had only completed four months of visits. The 45 photos that I analyzed are from the 88 that were available for the four-month period. I examined all photos and chose not to include those where the space was not visible (e.g., close-ups of faces) or duplicate perspectives on the same day.

69 The written descriptions took place in the middle of fieldwork and after it completed to crosscheck description and assess initial interpretations. The descriptions were largely the same on both occasions, while the second round relied on a more nuanced definition of “cité” that allowed comparative interpretations to other contexts.
I have called the building in this section a cité because it is defined that way by the organization that worked there, likely based on what the residents call it, as they have worked together closely. However, I believe this building may have been a house that was converted to multi-family use over the years in a makeshift sort of way. This meets the description we discussed earlier of a conventillo. I chose this analysis because of the aforementioned overlap in urban forms between residential housing types, and the spectrum of cités in existence. The key component that makes cités and conventillos “interchangeable” is the distinctive central space, where dwellings open into a collective-use patio. The patio only has one entrance/exit to the street, which is often gated. What has distinguished cités from conventillos in the past is the number of services (e.g. toilets) and whether they are shared between dwellings or each home has its own. However, the particularity of spatial form that they share is what differentiates them from other housing types, and what makes them confusable. In this case, we have an opportunity to look at the building’s form, and its possible role in everyday practices, by comparing it with “definitional” cités. The variations between this case and the comparison studies are (1) income of residents, (2) tenure, (3) age of residents, (4) size of houses to number of residents ratio (density), and (5) level of visibility from the street. They have in common the spatial form of private dwellings around a shared space and demarcation of private collective space from the public street. Although in other chapters I address the building type as a whole or as a collection of buildings, in this chapter I am interested in the interactional space at the interior of buildings. Because this space is similar in cités and conventillos, this analysis allows us to assess the implications of the urban form with a high degree of variation. This is to say that any similarities that we find between cases may provide a clue to the role of the building, if any, in everyday practices.

70 It is not clear to me if the services are shared or individual in this case.
71 It should be noted that tenure, density, and visibility are all related to income. Higher income residents are more likely to be owners, with lower density and higher visibility from the street. This is why the cases were selected on income variation and the descriptions will focus largely on this variation.
Description of Conditions

I will first give a description of the space and its conditions that relies on the compilation of all photos. I will then describe the patterns of use. The purpose of these two descriptive sections is to illustrate for the reader the living conditions and uses of the patio in an effort to present the data without providing the photos. The patio is rectangular. Along the length, to either side, there are blue-painted pillars on square, red-clay colored pedestals. The patio space between pillars appears about 2.5 meters wide, and the space to the outsides of the pillars, between them and the homes, is roughly 1.5 meters to one side and 2.5 to the other. On the smaller side, the pillars connect to a roof—the overhang that covers the doors to two of the homes. On the wider side, the pillar does not connect to a roof as the wall is pushed back. The floor is tiled with clay-brick squares laid in rows of faded red and gray in the central patio, shifting to concrete toward the perimeter. There is another type of tile toward the back of the space where it appears that broken and uneven concrete may have been replaced—which is what lays next to it. Tiles often appear to be wet in spots, but never the same ones. To the wider side of the space, the floor is an elevated platform, about one step high. The perimeter of this elevated space, and part of the platform, is concrete, but the rest appears to be compressed dirt and small rocks. There is a thin, tall tree growing out of the dirt and a small plant growing out of a crack in the concrete. To one side there is an inclined trough, empty of water, that appears purposefully built into the ground. It has small debris in it suggesting there has been no liquid running through it recently. In some sections the concrete is broken and crumbling. There is an exposed PVC pipe that runs along the floor, then into the concrete platform, then out the side of the elevation, curving down the step to run along the patio floor. A few paces further on the platform, toward the homes, there is another concrete divide covered in moss, about half the height of the platform, behind which logs, boards, metal objects, and siding are piled. The front wall of the patio, to the side of the entrance/exit, is compiled of sizes of plywood. It appears not to be stacked against the wall but a makeshift wall itself. Between the doorway and where the plywood wall begins, there are the remnants of panels of windows. It appears this may have been another
door with 8 small panes of glass, but only 5 remain. There is a large plastic tarp attached to the roof with ropes that extends out above the plywood wall.

There are four doors within the cité that appear to be entrances to homes. Along one side, there are two white doors on a purple wall. One door has a locked padlock on the outside. A square patch near the door’s handle covers what seems to have been a hole. The door is either missing paint or stained at the bottom. The window to its left is covered with closed curtains. The walls and doors have visible dirt, scuff marks, and possible paint or chalk markings. The other white door appears to have two strips of duct tape running across it. The window to its right is covered from the inside with a patterned curtain or sheet, pulled taut with no pleats. The surrounding wall is a series of boards. The nail marks and divisions between planks are visible. There are damages to the bottom of the wall, where some of the plies have chipped off, but it has been repainted a solid purple. Both of the doors on this side are the hollow type one would expect in the interior of a home—like a bedroom or bathroom door. They are not the type usually used for exterior doors. The doors and windows are both contemporary, although different styles, and of inexpensive material. The unsealed wood of the door and window frames, the mismatched doors, and the purple-painted plywood walls indicate the makeshift quality of the cité.

On the opposite wall of the patio, there is another door. This is the elevated side of the space and most of this side is covered with stuff (as is described in the next section). There is a white, modern door like the others with a window to the right that is covered with a sheet or curtain. There are usually 1-3 bike’s parked in front, leaning against a concrete trough with green plants growing, that is in front of the home. A ledge in front of the window sometimes has objects on it and is sometimes empty. At the back of the patio there is the last door, and it is older. It is a double door, white with glass windows and another set of red double doors behind it. The once white doors are covered in black but the glass windows are clean. The window to the left side of the doors is either boarded up on the inside or covered with a yellow cloth. A plastic bag filled with some heavy material sits atop a concrete block beneath the window. The paint is wearing off the wall behind it and a valve is sticking out of the wall above it. There is another window to
the right side of the door, covered with a blue curtain or opaque cloth. Finally, there are two “boxes” with doors built into the patio space that are taller than the height of a person. One is at the front of the patio, to the side of the plywood wall, with a green painted door and wood-slatted sides. The other is toward the back of the space, on the opposite side, painted purple. The purple “box” has a small window and a tiny metal sign at the top of the door [illegible in photos]. It also has a metal latch that would appear to be where a padlock might go, although it is unlatched in the photo.

The building is one story, as are most of the buildings on the block. Shadows in the photos show how sunlight moves through the space. There are variations in the amount of light that hits the patio throughout the day. At times a heavy shadow is cast across the space, where the walls block the light. Later, the light is filtered through hanging clothes, scant trees, or patio furniture and falls in patterns on the floor or faces of occupants. The door toward the outside is always open, although it is evident that there is an entranceway or portico that separates the visible doorway from the gate on the façade of the building. A look at Google Maps Streetview shows images of the front of the building from January 2012 and April 2014. The exterior of the building is a plain, flat façade that blends with all the other facades on the block. It has one window, one gated entrance, and a large door like that on a garage or barn. The plywood wall on the interior appears to be covering this larger door from the inside. The building facades on the block have faded paint and other signs of wear such as crumbling brick. The walls are dirty and marked. The sidewalk is cracked into pieces and crumbling. Apart from a dog that has gone through the trash piled at the curb, the street is clear (e.g., of litter, bikes, furniture, or people). The houses on the street have similar gated or ungated doors. When there is a gate it is often covering the double doors to a house. The gate on the cité doesn’t have a regular door behind it or, if it does, it is left open in all the photos, while the gate remains closed. This makes it “cité-like”, even if it is a conventillo, in that the patio space is closed off from the street but still could be visible to passersby.

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72 Given that the other three doors are modern types, it is possible this is not an access to a home but boarded up.
73 I can only guess but I believe these boxes may be toilets.
Doors to four dwellings open into the tiled patio. Elevation is shown by the white space at the bottom right. Pillars are indicated by dots. Two small “rooms” (that I have called “boxes”) are shown in the patio. The public street is at left, with the entrance/exit.

Image: Daniel Lazo 2016 [rendered from author’s accounts]

**Description of Use**

Here I describe the patterns of use that recur over the course of the 12 visits.\(^74\) Although the central space between the pillars is maintained clear, the areas at the front of the patio and to the elevated side are crowded with objects: two large, green, municipal recycling containers make their way

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\(^74\) Although the organization states that they go to the cité every week, the photos average to about 3 times a month.
around the space at various times. At least one is always positioned near the entrance/exit, sometimes with cardboard boxes piled around or a plastic yellow crate on top. Plywood, boards, folding chairs, and pieces of aluminum siding are stacked against a wall. Initially, a blue tarp or blanket covers some of this, but is later removed, and cloth or blankets are also piled into a corner. There is a vintage piece of furniture, standing on delicate wooden legs, partially visible outside one door on the purple wall. This is later replaced with another shelf that looks to be made of fiberboard. There is always a large bottle of laundry detergent on the floor next to it. One week, the ledge in front of the dwelling on the platform shelves a half-liter bottle filled with a red drink and various other small objects. An old, red window frame is leaned against the ledge for various weeks and then is gone. There are boy’s bikes in like-new condition, along with bike wheels, persistently stationed against the wall in front. Next to the bikes there is a plaid couch or mattress with cardboard and wood stacked on it, but it is later gone. A piece of a black metal railing is once leaning against a pillar, later against a tree. One to two shopping carts are parked in different locations, sometimes empty, other times filled with materials (that appear to be papers). A broom and dustpan are settled near the door on one occasion. Potted plants seem to change locations also, sometimes close to the front of the space, another time on the elevated platform, with another pot tipped on its side empty. A white shelf is in a corner crevice with a branch or board hanging off it that elevates a blue plastic bag with bottles in it. There are, at various times, a shovel, cardboard, construction buckets, a pile of PVC pipes, multiple metal objects, plastic bags, and a homemade plywood box strewn around. Many of these materials, stored in the space, are replicated in the space itself: the PVC pipe that runs along the floor, the aluminum siding that covers half the roof, and the makeshift plywood walls.

The central space is where tables are set up for the kids and volunteers to interact. When the teachers are there, there is an average of about nine people in the patio space at any given time. The kids range in age from roughly 2-11, although the babies don’t usually participate. On every occasion, students and teachers are actively immersed in their papers on the tabletop. It appears that the teachers have brought the tables, as they do not appear in photos of their first visit, and later alternate between four folding
tables at subsequent visits. Consistent are the variety of chairs: white, plastic lawn chairs with arms, wooden school chairs, backless red and black plastic stools for children, and wood and metal dining-table-style chairs. At their first visit, with only chairs, they position themselves in the space with one teacher to a child. There are three groups. They sit in the center of the patio, facing in, although all the space is available to them. They do not position themselves near the doors to the homes or on the elevated part, for example. They do not turn away from the other groups, almost as if positioned around a table.

Clothing hangs from lines at crisscrossing angles that practically falls on the heads of the teachers and kids. The laundry blocks the sun from the tables. Laundry lines are strung across the patio at various angles with wet towels, sheets, adults’ pants, shirts, jeans, and a dress, and kids’ jackets, sweats, and other clothes, pinned on with wooden clips. The lines are attached at the roof in some places and to pillars in others. One pillar has a clothesline attached while the extra rope hangs down the side. All the lines are always full. They cover the patio space and in some cases run close to a wall or in front of a window. In the majority of the photos there is at least a sleeve or pant leg that falls into the frame, if not an entire background of clothing. A washing machine is located toward the front of the patio, connected and in use. The extension chord dangles above it, plugging it to electricity, and the water hose is visible coming out the back. Other cables, wound into a circle, hang from the roof nearby. The washing machine is located in another spot early on, and disappears from the photos later. In one of the only photos to show active use of the space that is not related to tutoring, one of the mothers of the kids is standing by the washing machine with one foot on a pedestal of a pillar and one on the wooden platform or pallet that holds the machine. She appears to be waiting for the laundry.75

There are at least two dogs that live in the cité. One is seen repeatedly lying in the sun. Often when the kids and teachers are covered in shade, the dog

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75 Although it is possible that there is always laundry in the space because the volunteers are there on weekends, it doesn’t change that we are observing typical uses of space for everyday needs.
has found a sunny spot somewhere in the background. In one photo a woman is walking toward the exit with another, smaller dog on a leash. The students and teachers use the elevated side of the patio as a seat. One can see the top of the step that was painted white but has chipped badly from use. Although this elevated section that is sometimes used for a seat is now covered with dry dirt, one imagines that in the rain it turns to mud. On this section, a piece of cardboard is laid out flat for the kids to put their coloring books so they don’t sit directly in the dirt.

Although all activity takes place in the patio during the visits, one might think that an interaction would occur between the indoor space of the homes and the collective space of the patio. However, in only one photo does a door to a dwelling appear open. In general the doors are shut or even padlocked, and the windows covered with heavy opaque curtains. We can see from the photos that the patio space is not only used for interaction with “guests” (teachers), but also for daily activities such as a kids play area, washing and hanging laundry, storage, and pets. In addition, we see that some elements of the space are adapted for the residents needs to be used in unintended ways, for example, by using the step/platform as a bench for sitting and by using the structural pillars to hang clothes lines.

Conditions in conventillos are often compared to other housing types for people with similar socio-economic situations. However, I am interested in how the building itself plays a role in resident practices in space. To understand this, we need to compare similar material forms with differences in inhabitants. Studies of “formal” cités—as opposed to “informal” conventillos—can provide this comparison. Throughout this dissertation, we have seen the spatial setup of the cité, with one entrance/exit leading to a collective space and dwellings that face into it. We have seen above that this is also the spatial setup of the building described here [patio floor plan above]. In the next sections we will look at a study of use of patio space in two cités occupied by middle-income residents. In these cases, the patio is usually clear of clutter, used as a transitional space, and used for special events and activities, more than for daily needs. The obvious answer as to “why?” would be that the individual houses are bigger, giving the residents more space indoors to meet daily needs, so that daily activities don’t take
place in the patio. In fact, one of the cités at this income level has interior patios in each house that would seem to make the exterior collective space unnecessary for anything other than traversing. And yet, in these cités there is talk of a “sense of community” that has been explained by how the patio space fosters neighborly relations. But what conditions give rise to use of the common patio if not out of necessity? Further, one could similarly question the low-income case just described: if use arises out of need, what conditions would preclude use of outdoor space? These two different situations—one seemingly “use out of need” and one a more leisurely type of use—lead me to one common feature of the buildings: the gate. In both instances, the enclosure seems to play a role in opportunities for use of the patio space. In brief observations of cités without gates, the patios appear not to be used for dwelling. In the analysis that follows, I will explore how the gated enclosure gives rise to opportunities for use at varying income levels. While one might be seen as use born of “exclusion”, or invisibility, the other may be understood as use through exclusivity.

**Comparisons of Use**

I have used a study of two cités that describes contemporary use of patio spaces by middle-income residents (which is the upper income level of people that live in cités). I chose this study for two reasons: 1) it was one of the few that focused on the spatial practices of middle-income residents of cités, rather than on the most in-need residents and 2) it relies on independent investigation to try to understand the relationship between the central space in cités and the behavior of residents in their daily lives. In their study “Collective Living Space and Improvements in Two Cités in Santiago, Chile”, Dannemann, Rebolledo, and Tapia (2005) interview residents at their homes in two cités. They describe the similar economic conditions

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76 This research article was to be the first report of a larger study on contemporary living in cités by the Institute for Housing at the University of Chile (INVI). However, the study never resulted in any further publications (Personal email communication with R. Tapia 15 April 2015). The two cités described here are located at Avenida Bernardo O’Higgins 2542 and San Francisco 366.
circumstances between the two buildings by saying that everyone has sufficient means to live without problem satisfying basic needs, which, the authors note, “distinguishes them with respect to the usual monetary income of the general population of cités, that is more precarious” (Dannemann et al. 2005:220). These cités are mostly comprised of elderly residents who own their homes, however there are twenty-two young people living in one and four living in the other (Dannemann et al. 2005:212-13). The houses in both cités are painted brick and well maintained.

The first cité has 26 houses surrounding the central space, in an elongated U shape. It has a gated portico entrance about two meters wide that leads into the roofless space. The first two houses on either side are two stories each, while the rest are one story (Dannemann et al. 2005:207). The central space is neatly groomed in the photos presented in the study. There is a row of large green potted plants running down the center of the long space, interspersed with wooden benches. In this manner, every two houses have a seat in front of their doors. A vintage style lamppost with large, round white-balloon bulbs is installed in the center of the space. In front of the taller, two-story buildings, there are large leafy trees. According to the authors, there is a whiteboard in the center where the residents write information for one another. The maintenance of the central space is assigned to each house on a weekly rotating basis (Dannemann et al. 2005:207). The second cité, originally constructed in 1908 for workers of the Public Hospital, has 18, one-story houses around a long, narrow central space (Dannemann et al. 2005:208). Moving toward the back of the patio space, about halfway through, there are three steps that lead up to the rest of the houses in the back, creating a multi-level patio. Also near the center, there is a metal arch with a lantern hanging from it that connects at the roofs of two opposing houses and balances across the space. Against the facades of many of the houses are meter-high potted plants, usually to either side of a door. All the facades are nicely painted and some doors have short awnings to cover them. The authors note that in both cités the gates at the front entrance are electric with intercoms, and that all the houses have electricity, drinking water, sewage, and landline telephone service (Dannemann et al. 2005:209).

The patio is used for meetings/hanging out, organization, celebration, and
transit (Dannemann et al. 2005:216). “In the summer, at sunset, the residents of Cité San Francisco take their chairs to the doors of their houses, in the patio, to get fresh air and talk. It’s here also where the kids play, without much danger or risk to the tranquility of their parents” (Dannemann et al. 2005:216). They meet in the patio to discuss problems in the building or bring up interesting subjects for the community (Dannemann et al. 2005:216). On the big holidays—Independence Day, Christmas, and New Year—the residents celebrate and decorate the patio together and, in one cité, they put a Christmas tree in the patio each year (in addition to the trees in their houses) (Dannemann et al. 2005:219). On occasion, they bring a table outside to have once [afternoon tea] together or organize an event for everyone to celebrate when, for example, the building gets an update (Dannemann et al. 2005:220). In one building, they get together to pray during religious days (Dannemann et al. 2005:220). The authors note that these buildings took part in the municipal restoration project mentioned earlier, however, the lamps and benches in the patio were added by the residents themselves (Dannemann et al. 2005:222).

In terms of “community”, the residents describe their neighbors within their cité as a “big family”, although they admit that there are cliques within the group (Dannemann et al. 2005:213-14). They have organized building/community leaders and there are building rules that everyone must follow. For example, in one cité, no pets are allowed, while in the other everyone must care for their own pets so they don’t bother others (Dannemann et al. 2005:215 & 217). They report feelings of security and tranquility in their buildings, as well as trust and solidarity (Dannemann et al. 2005:216). The residents mention that when someone goes on vacation they leave their house keys with neighbors to care for the place (Dannemann et al. 2005:217). Some even leave their doors unlocked on a regular basis because, as one interviewee explained, “everyone knows everyone. It’s calm, there are no drugs, no noise” (Dannemann et al. 2005:217). In one cité, this sense of community extends outside the patio when residents go to mass together on important holidays. However, in general, the patio replaces the public spaces of street or plaza, and residents instead “hang out, have fun, meet, rest, and play games” in the collective space of the building (Dannemann et al. 2005:217). The authors put it succinctly: the downside of
In the cases described, we can note a few things. First, all use the patio space for dwelling, as well as traversing. Second, the manners of use are somewhat distinct. While low-income residents use the space to meet daily needs such as hanging clothes, middle-income residents do not. However, both appear to use the space for leisure, such as a place for kids to play or to converse. The leisure activities of the middle-income residents are their primary use of the space, and have a high degree of formal organization. The question I put forth in the introduction was: does the building contribute to these practices? On one hand, the interiors of the homes have different densities, which might produce differential need for the space. In low-income urban neighborhoods much of life is lived outside the private home, in the public spaces, partially due to dwelling unit density (e.g. Clark 1967; Gans 1968:7, 2002:332; Small 2004:41; Whyte 1943). Here, the patio may be a semi-private alternative to public space. On the other hand, we have read that in the middle-income cités they feel a sense of “security” in the patio that also puts it in opposition to public space. In both instances, there is an option for the private over the public and suggests that the building provides an opportunity for activities that may not occur otherwise.

In the low-income patio, the residents leave property unattended, kids play, and pets wander. These practices differ in the “social housing estates” located on the city’s periphery, where low-income residents live in short-statured apartment buildings. Ureta (2007a), in his ethnographic research about families that moved from shantytowns to housing estates on the borders of Santiago, writes that they felt safe from the physical elements, such as rain or cold, in their new homes, but not secure against “social threats, such as robberies or violence” (p. 319), where a genuine threat exists among this population. The author asserts that the perception of insecurity lies in the problem of “delimiting clearly a space of privacy between the home sphere and the environment” (Ureta 2007a:320). He continues that although the public areas in the shantytown were likely just as dangerous, one interviewee stated she could demarcate her home from the public areas and, for example, did not allow her daughter to go outside their piece of land.
Consequently, windows and small balconies in the new social housing buildings were guarded with homemade metal defenses. In the case of a cité, the patio is the limit between the “home sphere” and the rest of the neighborhood, which may contribute to differential feelings of security than those described by residents of social housing buildings.

Most families in social housing buildings complained about lack of space (Ureta 2007a:321, 2007b). Overcrowding is a problem amongst the poor in Santiago, as elsewhere, and in the housing estates one solution is to build an informal extension on the outside of an apartment building, which can cause problems between neighbors (Ureta 2007a:322). In many cases the residents “do not respect the original plans of buildings” and make alterations to try to accommodate their needs (Ureta 2007a:324). Some families had to get rid of the majority of their furniture and belongings when they moved to social housing due to lack of space (Ureta 2007a:323). Here also we see a difference between building types that affects practices. In cités, usable space is increased for storage of belongings—which we saw was one principle use. Of course, this has to be assessed within the context of the prior paragraph, where increased security is involved in this practice. Also, patios do not have strong programs— they are empty spaces—this increases the variance in how the space is able to be used by residents, where a transit space becomes a dwelling space and dwelling takes on many properties.

While the patio in cités may provide an opportunity for practices that don’t occur in other building types at similar income levels, there is a factor in the patio of low-income cités that also differentiates it from higher incomes cités: visibility. Poorer cités are often visually cut off from the street—divided by doors or small entrances. This is usually not the case with larger,

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77 An “architectural program” refers to a list of actions or possible uses of spaces that are inscribed in the design. Strong programs specify how spaces are to be used. For example, in a doctor’s office, each space is for a specific action (waiting room, check-in area, examination rooms) and these are further demarcated by “front” (patients) and “back” (doctors) spaces within the building (this example from Hillier et al. 1984:67).
higher-income cités, which have wider gates, including the ones presented here; in general the gates allow the central space to be visible from the street. Some contemporary researchers have addressed invisibility in cités and conventillos, noting that poorer residents and their living conditions may go unnoticed. However, without this privatized space, certain practices may have nowhere to occur but in the street—or not at all. Being “invisible” in the neighborhood may provide a type of privacy in some cases that excludes both bodies and surveillance, where surveillance is a mechanism for social control that might prohibit certain practices also. The prior literature suggests that these residents are excluded and invisible, but there may also be a sense of security that affects practices here as with higher income cités.

The discussion of “security” is prominent in the middle-income neighbors’ views about their cités. The idea that they use the interior patio space in lieu of public plazas brings to the forefront the demarcation between private and public space. It seems that the material boundary provided by the gate at the entrance/exit plays a role in the practices and attitudes of the residents by fully enclosing the space. In studies of gated communities in both urban and suburban settings in the US, similar outcomes have been found (Low 2003; Smithsimon 2009), making the analogy between a cité and a gated community seem apt. In fact, it has been suggested that the colonial “three-patio house”, the conventillo, and the cité, were precursors to modern day gated communities in Chile. Although external factors like globalization of US models gave rise to the Santiago of today—where a vast majority of buildings, houses, and “communities” are behind gates—exclusivity was part of the traditional spatial relations of housing in Chile (Borsdof and Hidalgo 2004). This has to do with the patio—the family’s collective outdoor space—being located inside the center of the house (rather than later housing models that locate it in a front yard). All housing spaces were based around the idea of an enclosure that turned inward, rather than outward toward the street.

Residents of cités have opportunities to use the space to meet daily needs that similar income residents in other housing types don’t have. However, this maintains a kind of invisibility of the housing conditions of the poorest residents, that otherwise would be evident to outsiders or passersby. As
addressed in the next section, it also seems to affect the practices and
attitudes of middle-income residents who unite in the patio and distinguish
themselves from other neighborhood residents. The high external visibility
does not make them invisible, like poor residents, but fosters a kind of
exclusivity.

Gates: Exclusion and Exclusivity

As detailed in the last chapter, the form of cités is related to the utilization of
existing city blocks, which cut the private collective space off from the
public street, usually via a gate. How we understand this boundary often has
to do with who lives inside. In a study of central-city collective housing in
the 1980s, one author notes that especially in conventillos but also in
poverty-level cités, “…there exists an effect of the façade that makes the
conditions of life of people in this collective housing imperceptible…
because many times the facades are not so deteriorated” (Urmeneta de la
Barrera 1984:9-10). Here he is referring to the fact that the interior
conditions can be impoverished, but from the outside one cannot see it. He
juxtaposes this to the poblaciones (still the name for low-income housing on
the outskirts of the city) where living conditions of the poor are more visible
(intimating that it is because the houses in poblaciones are open to the
street). Another author writes more recently that in the case of some newly
arrived Latin American immigrants, they remain in motion constantly due to
the precariousness of their housing situations in abandoned cités and pasajes,
transformed into labyrinthine passages [inside the block], giving residents an
“ephemeral visibility” (Márquez 2014:62). Both of these quotes reflect the
conditions of low-income residents in cités and conventillos as invisible.
Their residence in hidden urban spaces may be a further reflection of their
exclusion from the larger society. However, in the case observed, perhaps
the space, thought to reflect social exclusion and obscure the lives of
residents, also promotes an opportunity to meet everyday needs in a different
way. Practices of leaving bikes unlocked against the wall, kids playing
outside, and goods stored in the open are perhaps indicators of a certain level
of security that does not exist in other housing types for these groups\(^78\) (who, while they are more “visible”, are also geographically excluded by being on the outskirts of the city).

It is not the existence of a collective space that leads to use. In both cases, we see the private collective space presented as a secure alternative to public collective spaces. Instead the enclosure of the patio, created by the locked gate, allows practices that may not occur under other circumstances. The materiality of the building structures opportunity through demarcation of private space from the public space of the street. In the low-income cité, practices that would not occur in cramped internal conditions (or possibly dangerous external conditions) now have a place to occur. Everyday needs can be met and leisure activities can occur in semi-private space. In the middle-income cités, patios not only give people a place to congregate for organized leisure activities, but also a reason not to use public parks or plazas (i.e. the patio is perceived to be a secure space). This presents as an opportunity for exclusive behavior that could contribute to the sense of community that they report—as bonding can occur through exclusivity.\(^79\)

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\(^78\) One could argue that this is also due to the ease of surveillance of each other’s homes in a cité, given that rooms situated around courtyards historically had surveillance as a function (Yanni 2007). However, in the case here, the windows were covered with opaque cloths or window dressings apparently to shield others from looking in—giving up the practice of looking out.

\(^79\) As a comparison, I wanted to observe the central patios of cités without gates to get a sense of their use. I found that it is most often pasajes—those that cut all the way through the block—that do not have gates. Pasajes present a slightly different case because, although they have the same basic design as a cité, when there is no gate, not only are they accessible to the public, the public may also have a reason to enter (i.e. to pass through a block). In my observations, there appeared to be a lack of everyday use of ungated pasajes, in both low-income and middle-income buildings. This assessment rests on the absence of signs of use: e.g. no people, plants, street furniture, or personal items in the central space. Further, I found that the gate
To understand the formation of a sense of security in space I have looked to the literature on gated communities, which are almost entirely the domain of wealthy or upper-middle-income people. However, the analyses of these communities provide interesting similarities to the cases of cités just described, pointing to a possible mechanistic process in which gated spaces play a role. Setha Low (2003) in her ethnography of gated communities in the US describes the “freedom” that residents feel by being behind gates (p. 8). These “communities”—tracts of land with houses or residential buildings surrounded by a gate or wall and usually guarded—are often homogenous, especially in terms of level of income. Residents generally know all their neighbors “by sight” (Low 2003:8) but, even when they don’t, they feel comfort in the fact that only a certain “kind” of people are allowed to live there (i.e. people like them). Residents feel protected from “unknown others”, while simultaneously perpetuating openness and friendliness with their neighbors (Low 2003:11). Children are allowed to play outside without their parents’ worry—although their fears of crime are disproportionately high. One of the themes that Low develops is that residents feel both “safe” and “secure” in that they perceive a lowered possibility of physical harm and a sense of protection that lowers worry. The spatial differentiation that is implemented for fear of the “outside”, has an affect on residents behavior and practices. Low reported that, aside from letting their children play outside without watching them, adults also used the outdoor spaces within the gates of the community, sometimes with little attention to what was going on around them. Their sense of security was heightened by the gate, reportedly allowing them to act in ways that they did not in their previous neighborhoods.80

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was not an original feature of many cités but something that was added later, I imagine, precisely for security.

80 Simmel wrote: doors create linkages; because a door can be opened, its closure provides greater isolation than a wall (1997a:172). He reminds us that isolation and freedom are connected by virtue of the border between them. Space is a factor only when some space is excluded (Simmel 1997b).
Another type of gated community, this time located in central cities, is what has been called the urban “citadel” (Friedmann and Wolff 1982), where privilege is concentrated and physically defended, often with private security and economic homogeneity (Smithsimon 2009:3). Smithsimon (2009) in his work about Battery Park City in New York finds that the physical design of the complex encourages residents to defend the exclusivity of the “citadel” (p. 2), where it fosters and reproduces exclusive attitudes. Residents understand “community” through a “space-based definition”, making “spatial exclusivity a fundamental feature of their community” (Smithsimon 2009:2). That is, “community” is defined by its social and physical inaccessibility (Smithsimon 2009:19). In his case, he notes that uses of the collective spaces within the complex drew the residents together (Smithsimon 2009:20). In these two analyses we see how a gated space can produce a sense of security that leads to use of collective spaces (due to their ability to exclude physically), and how use of collective spaces within a bound and “defended” area can lead to a sense of community—indeed, one where community is defined by the space itself. The ability to exclude is what brings the residents together.81

How might this process look in the cités we have seen? The gated entrances to the cités provide the material bound needed to start the process. The demarcation between public and private space creates opportunities for everyday practices and leisure activities that increase the use of patio space, moving it from a transitional space to a dwelling space. The interviews of middle-income cité dwellers let us know that in their cases, this is primarily due to feelings of security in the patio. This may be instructive for understanding the case of the low-income cité as well. The repeated and prolonged use of the patio within the enclosed space leads to a reported sense of community. But this last step requires a little more explanation about how we get from use of space to a sense of community. It seems that this too is partially attributable to the gate. In addition to material division,  

81 Many studies on gated communities focus on preexisting social bifurcations where the gate simply “materializes” the divide. Low and Smithsimon were selected here for their studies on how the physical space and material bound contribute to social outcomes.
gates also provide symbolic separation in the form of identity distinction, including when “insiders” and “outsiders” within a geographical area are demographically similar (Smithsimon 2009:23). For example, when some in a neighborhood have fallen on hard times, gates help to maintain the status of those not suffering (Low 2003:21). The physical designs of buildings can also be a source of status distinction, as we saw in the last chapter with the palacios of Santiago’s historical elites. Here, distinction appears to manifest through spoken signifiers and, in the middle-income cités, the visible space.

First, middle-income residents refer to their cité as “pasaje” or “comunidad” and have a “resistance” to saying “cité” (Dannemann et al. 2005:212). The authors comment this could be because the word has a negative connotation or because of a “real lack of knowledge about its signification”: “It seems they are confused between the old conventillos and cités, associating the first to extreme poverty, overcrowding, and poor living conditions” (Dannemann et al. 2005:212) and understanding the two words as synonymous. As addressed in the previous chapter, the spatial similarities between urban collective housing types allowed the terms to be conflated in common speech. But, as indicated here, there is another thing happening. Since the word “conventillo”, from the outset, was synonymous with “slum”, “cité” evoked a superior material condition. This meant that as “cité” was applied to lower quality buildings, it also started to evoke “slum” and residents of well-built cités began to refer to their buildings by other names. This mode of distinction through naming happens as middle-income residents call their buildings “pasajes” or “comunidades.”

Second, in the middle-income cités there is another source of distinction in the visibility of the space. As noted, the low-income cité is cut off from the

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82 While the buildings are not redefined in this case, we witness here that “pasaje” can no longer be trusted to communicate “passage” through a space. Also, it has come to signify higher status. This is evident in Santiago as cités with architectural or historical importance use “pasaje” in their names although they form a dead-end. For example, in Barrio Brasil, a plaque near the entrance to a cité tells us that “in this pasaje lived the poet Vicente Huidobro”.

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street with low visibility into the patio from the gate. The middle-income cités have higher external visibility from the public street into the patio. How the patio is maintained helps to distinguish these residents from others in the neighborhood. In one of the cités a woman says (happily) that the cité is known in the neighborhood as the “pasaje of the cuicos” [cuico is a pejorative term for the Chilean upper class]. The authors relate that this is due to the visible upkeep of the building, where neighbors take care to keep houses painted and the space maintained and clean, “a thing that, it seems, doesn’t happen in the nearby cités” (Dannemann et al. 2005:212). The gate restricts the entrance of non-resident bodies but not their eyes. This is a kind of material bound that both excludes outsiders (physically) and draws insiders together in its exclusivity. Here the term “boundary work” takes a literal meaning, where lines are drawn physically as well as symbolically between groups as a mechanism for identity distinction (see, Small 2004:103 for the historical development of the concept; also, Bourdieu 1984). The sense of community that is reported by the middle-income cité dwellers is likely affected not just by their interactions in space, but by the group identity fostered by the space.

On Private Collective Spaces

In this section I want to wrap up the basics of what we have discussed within the context of collective spaces in residential buildings. In terms of assessing the role of the building: if the enclosed space didn’t exist, would these

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83 A sense of community has positive and negative attributes: insiders feel stability and comfort while reinforcing perceptions that those outside the community are outsiders (i.e. marginalized) (Low 2003:65). In cités, this may function in two ways that allow this dynamic to work for both exclusivity and exclusion in terms of public and private spaces. Cité residents become a community of insiders by excluding the public, but the public streets are also a place of community for urban dwellers where the poor often become outsiders and are pushed into exclusion, e.g., inside conventillos and cités. Materially, turning a building inward to promote “community spirit” also turns residents away from the city as a “total community” (Gutman 2010:170).
practices occur? In our case of the cité (or conventillo) some of these daily activities would likely still happen somewhere (for example laundry, pet walking, kids playing) and these may occur in cramped spaces inside or in the street or other public spaces as is often the case for poor urban residents. But in other instances it is questionable if the residents would be able to maintain certain practices that the patio space allows, such as store their belongings. As noted above about low-income residents of contemporary social housing buildings, some of them had to get rid of the majority of their belongings when they moved in due to lack of space. Another practice that is not obvious where it would occur is the hosting of guests—that is, the volunteers in this case that came to tutor the students. In small, overburdened rooms like those that some new Latin American immigrants live in, this might be close to impossible. In this case, the collective space at the center of the building seemed to have an effect on students being able to be tutored at their homes.

In the comparison cases from the prior study, again, there seems to be a mix of practices that would continue to occur in other spaces and those that may not occur at all. Kids would still play and pets would still need walking. Although, unlike the first case, it is not clear these would occur in the streets or other public spaces of the city. One of the cités has interior patios in each individual house, making it possible for kids to “play outside” there. If the central patio was not gated, the kids might not go into the public spaces at all. This is also true of the adults. Without the gated enclosure, it is questionable whether they would occupy space outside their homes for leisure activities. It was noted earlier that in my observations, cités or pasajes without gates generally had no plants, street furniture, or personal items in the central space, causing me to wonder if the spaces were used for dwelling. In addition, depending on the resources of the residents, instead of using public spaces for activities it is plausible they would occupy other private spaces within the city, given the highly segregated urban environment of Santiago.

The building contributes to patterns of use as a material bound that creates an opportunity for certain practices. As a bound that separates the public from the private, middle-income residents experience a sense of security that
may also help to explain use in the case of low-income residents (given that low-income residents in other housing types do not utilize public space based on need alone). The use of the patio, coupled with modes of distinction, is likely what gives rise to the sense of community that is reported by some residents and propagated by preservationists. Unlike earlier explanations that seem to claim that it is the patio design that breeds community—because everyone is in constant “interaction” (Dannemann et al. 2005:216-17)—the observations here suggest that without a mechanism to ensure repeated dwelling, the patios will either go unused or may not lead to the anticipated sense of community. This takes the emphasis off the patio as a transit space and focuses on its actual use as a dwelling space. While earlier explanations relied on transit as the propellant for interaction (visual or verbal), they have not considered the differences between transitional spaces and dwelling spaces. In an apartment building, this would be the difference between a hallway and a lobby. Some research in Santiago has noted that residents of cités interact with and know their neighbors more than residents of apartment towers in the same neighborhood, and suggested that it is because towers have hallways—which don’t promote interaction (Garcia 2004:101-3). But lobbies are the equivalent to patios, not hallways. In residential towers, the actions of traversing and dwelling may seem to be broken into two spaces: hallways and lobbies, but lobbies are used for both, as are patios in cités. In apartment buildings in Manhattan, for example, “welcoming” lobbies are used for dwelling as residents wait for guests or vice versa, and people make pleasantries with neighbors, while other lobbies convey a sense to “keep it moving” and are used largely only for transit (Bearman 2005:25-27).

What contributes to a space being used for traversing or dwelling can be dependent on many things. I have made the argument that the locked gate, which forms an enclosure, contributes to repeated dwelling activities in this case. Pinch (2010), utilizing Goffman’s work on front and back stage (1959), has argued that material constraints on a setting matter for how

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84 A similar dynamic is seen in non-residential lobbies, for example, in entrance halls at day-care centers where, seemingly for transit, mothers repeatedly interact in the space, leading to increased trust (Small 2009:115).
public/private behavior and interactions are able to occur. In Goffman’s case, the door that separates work staff in the kitchen from guests in the public area of the hotel, cuts off both access and visibility, allowing for distinct practices to occur “back stage” in the privatized space shared by employees. He notes that the door remains closed precisely to maintain this divide. The back stage activity that Goffman describes would not occur without the closed door. In the residential case we have examined, there is a similar dynamic where leisure and everyday activities occur in the shared interior space, with the constraint of a closed gate.

Other arguments have been made for why people dwell. Whyte (2009) wrote in his studies of NY public plazas, “[p]eople tend to sit most where there are places to sit” (p. 110). That is, people will dwell where it is possible to do so—including on ledges, steps, benches, and furniture actually made for sitting. Given the specifics of this case, we know that in the middle-income cité the gate preceded the installation of benches. It seems the residents made the space more comfortable for dwelling in order to use it (not the other way around). This goes back to the idea that existence of a space will not necessarily propagate use. Organized activities were another factor we saw in the middle-income cités. Their use of the space was centered around holidays and scheduled events. In buildings where there is private, collective space to interact, people may use it instead of the public spaces of the neighborhood, but it is more likely if there is something “going on” there. Whyte wrote in the 1960s that he was "puzzled" at residential developments that he visited—in both middle-income and "public" housing—because designated "play areas" were unused by children, who found other places to play (Whyte 2002:260). Instead, he says, children want to be where the action is and end up playing in streets and alleys, often to the dismay of their parents. A counter example existed in the Lavanburg Homes, built on the Lower East Side of New York in 1927, where a playground was built on the roof to keep kids from playing in the street. What kept this space in use were the organized activity groups continually invented by residents to gather the children there. Kids from the surrounding neighborhood ended up attending their activities, although they weren’t residents of the building (Goldfeld 1937:20). This example offers a case where private collective space is not used as a means of exclusivity, but instead as a resource. Much like the case
of the low-income cité described herein, the private collective space was an alternative to public spaces that could be seen as detrimental. It also shows that the membrane can be bidirectional, where non-residents also enter the building to take part in the resource.\textsuperscript{85}

**Building Meaning**

In this chapter we have seen that there is both a need and an opportunity that leads to use of the patio in residential cités. The opportunity is created not by the existence of the spaces per se, but by their level of enclosure. That is, the building with a gate may produce an opportunity not available in the same spatial design with no gate. Use helps to give the patios in both cases a lively vibe. This use also helps to shape understandings of the patio and the building type at the macro level. The use of patios in cités has given rise to a narrative of “community” that is associated to the spatial design of the buildings. Heritage preservationists have touted association to community as a reason some cités should be protected. One architect involved in the preservation movement writes that cités need heritage status to “preserve and protect the traditional life of solidarity and community spirit between neighbors that the spatial concept of the cité promotes”, where it produces “coexistence at human scale” (Adrián Araneda 2015:10-11). Although the link is drawn directly between the form of the building and a sense of community, it is use of the space that has led to this dynamic. The common understanding of the patios as community oriented, both by residents and in the public culture, has contributed to the protection of some cités as heritage buildings, increasing their “cultural value.”

Here we see that what happens in individual buildings emerges as impressions of the building type. That is, a new meaning of the building type “cités”, discussed in the last chapter, is brought about through use of individual buildings. As the material aspect of buildings helps constitute

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\textsuperscript{85} In another example, in Brooklyn, rooftops sometimes served as private collective spaces for tenants to escape overcrowded conditions and allowed organized activity (pigeon flying) and communities to develop (Jerolmack 2013:222).
aspects of the social, the buildings gain new meanings, showing the back and forth between materiality and meaning. The new impressions of the type then affect other city-level processes like heritage preservation, which in turn affects individual buildings through recuperation. Here we see how the macro and micro levels are traversed in both directions by following the buildings, as well as the continual constitution of buildings and society. “Community” discourse and the role of buildings in valuation are addressed in the next chapter as we look at neighborhood transformation and another redefinition of cités.
IV: Reuse and Neighborhood Transformation

Urban Neighborhood Change

This chapter, more than the others, shows a coproduction process. I examine a case of neighborhood change where a once residential area is converting to mostly commercial. The change is visible in the landscape through houses that are reused as retail spaces. It has been argued that the neighborhood change comes as a change in building use (e.g. Schlack and Turnbull 2015:362). I would like to argue that, as it relates to preexisting buildings, neighborhood change does not come from a change in use alone, but from changes in use coupled with maintenance of function. That is to say, buildings under new use do not “become” a new type. Houses under commercial use are not commercial buildings. This is possible due to maintenance of residential facades and interiors that communicate the buildings’ intended function, captured in the material form. On the flipside of this, as new commercial uses occur, houses are transformed into cités. Once for single-family use, old houses with interior patios take on the visual and spatial patterning of collective housing buildings from a past era. This occurs through divisions of houses into miniature “arcade”-style shopping buildings where doors to stores open upon the patios. While this contributes to the visual aspect, patios have become home to quaint cafes where once privately occupied space is now opened for collective use.

I use my own observations and photos from 2014 to 2016 to relate the neighborhood context, visual similarities and differences between urban forms, and variance in building conversions. I give a brief history of buildings in the neighborhood along with social and economic changes in the area over time, but particularly in the last few years. Analysis of a guidebook released by formal interest organizations in the neighborhood is used to show how preexisting buildings become part of a narrative of the value of the past, where residential facades are valued over commercial facades to maintain the past character of the neighborhood landscape. The presentation of houses as “commercial cités” in the neighborhood arises through accounts in newspapers, tourist blogs, and real estate ads—as well
as my own conversations with the denizens of Santiago—and yet, historically the converted buildings were not cités. The transformation is observed through spatial similarities in urban forms of the newly converted buildings, patterns of collective use in once-closed patios, and naming of the new arcades.

In a neighborhood undergoing massive changes in its cultural identity, property values, and users, the material landscape of the neighborhood has not been altered much. Old, one-story houses are reused as commercial buildings, but maintain their residential character. Interspersed with houses still under residential use it is sometimes difficult to tell from afar what is commercial and what is residential. A cultivated new identity relies on a conceptualization of material and cultural “heritage”, where the past of a place should be “saved”, and also on the concept of “barrio”, where place is defined through a community spirit that harkens back to tradition and neighborhood life. Emphasis on the past results in what I have called here a “narrative of nostalgia”, where material forms and physical spaces are included to conjure emotion and, ultimately, value. As part of the process, patios are reused and revamped and yet retain their private, residential character. As a result, houses are redefined as commercially converted cités. This changes the definition of “cité” in the present, by incorporating new material forms, while reconstructing the past of the original houses. Neighborhood and buildings are constituted simultaneously in an area now known as “Barrio Italia”.

Barrio Italia has become the “Design District” of Santiago. This designation came when in 2012 the National Council for Culture and the Arts (CNCA) named the area the first (and currently only) “neighborhood of design” in Santiago, using as a base the requisites put forth by UNESCO when they name “cities of design” (CNCA 2012:11). This is hinged on “creative industries” where producers and sellers are located in one location. Four years prior, the Barrio Italia Corporation was formed as an alliance of commercial tenants in the area who began the “Barrio Italia Project” (CNCA 2012:11). According to the Corporation, they have tried to “make valuable and disseminate the cultural heritage of the neighborhood and promote its sustainable development” (CNCA 2012:13). According to the Regional
Government, the Corporation “is dedicated primarily to the development of joint marketing activities, creating a corporate image, organizing events and creating alliances with retail companies to open new marketing channels to expand the territorial brand” (GORE 2012:315). Between 2011 and 2015, according to developers in the area, the property values increased 300%, “from 444 dollars [USD] per square meter to at least 1390 dollars a square meter” (Neftarius 2015). This is not due to new constructions but reuse of preexisting buildings. A prior study in the area noted commercial license registers from 2009-2012 showed that of the 48 properties newly registered for commercial use (home to 100 new businesses), only 8% changed from one commercial use to another while 92% were previously not commercial properties (Schlack and Turnbull 2015: 354-355 & 365), showing the reuse of residences for commercial endeavors.

While reuse of buildings in Santiago is not new, large-scale reuse in entire districts is unprecedented. In the 1990s the Ministry of Housing created a subsidy to promote the regrowth of Central Santiago, which led to the demolition of old, low-scale buildings for new, high-rise residential towers (Contreras 2011; Greene 2007; Inzulza-Contardo 2012; Jobet et al. 2015). This was the dominant model for neighborhood change until recently when in some areas, old buildings started being reused rather than demolished (see, Schlack and Turnbull 2009, 2011, 2015). Barrio Italia showcases one of the densest clusters of this type of change. Since roughly 2009, the neighborhood began to shift from “formerly mostly private homes, and the occasional workshop” (Smith 2014) to “a new creativity zone in Chile’s capital” (Neftarius 2015).86

Neighborhood change is one of the most studied processes in urban sociology, and how change occurs has been the subject of large debate. Early models, in 1920s Chicago, saw change as an “ecological” process, result of competition, where land values fluctuated based on “dominant” groups (Park 1936), and “invasion and succession” (McKenzie 1924) was a

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86 According to Google trends, searches for the phrase “Barrio Italia” first gained popularity in mid-2008 and have steadily risen in popularity since early 2011, indicating the timeline of new interest in the area.
continual process that accounted for city expansion (Burgess 1925). This model has received much criticism over time in its acceptance of economic processes as natural. In the last decades, in addition to newer economic models, explanations of change have incorporated cultural aspects of places (e.g., Ley 2003; Lloyd 2010; Zukin 1989, 1995, 2010, 2011). While “refurbished” buildings are sometimes seen as a “cue” that neighborhood changes are occurring (Bernt and Holm 2005:111), only a few studies explore the roles of reused buildings in the process (see Guggenheim 2010:162). The classic example is Zukin’s (1989) investigation of *Loft Living*. In the 1970s, in the lower Manhattan neighborhood now known as SoHo, industrial buildings called “lofts” were converted to residential use (Zukin 1989). These buildings were first occupied by artists, where the material spaces of the buildings allowed arts production through their size, along with large windows that let in light (Zukin 1989:2; also, Molotch 2011:72). Artists’ reuse of the buildings increased their value and ultimately the value of the place. In this case, buildings play a material role in the process of change. Buildings can also play a role through meaning. In Brooklyn in the 1960s, for example, old residential buildings became valuable “brownstones” when higher income residents moved in to the area and reclaimed the histories of the buildings (Osman 2011). While there was restoration and maintenance of the material structures, neighborhood change was rooted in discourse and a reimagining of the past; the creation of symbolic value for the buildings contributed to the invention of the “place”. “Brownstone Brooklyn” became a popular place to live although the physical areas that composed it—whose nickname was taken from the name of the building type—sometimes included no brownstones (Osman 2011:19). These examples represent the traditional understanding of buildings as either usable or symbolic (or both). I will address an alternative where the visible, material characteristics of form play a role in change that affects both the neighborhood and the buildings. In the following sections I explain how preexisting buildings help construct Barrio Italia and how Barrio Italia changes preexisting buildings into cités.
Barrio Italia

Barrio Italia lies on the eastern edge of present-day Central Santiago. The urbanization process discussed in chapter 2 pushed the city out of its limits, where it continued to expand over time. What in the early 1900s was the entire city is now just its central municipality. On its exterior border, Barrio Italia is located largely in the commune of Providencia, but juts over into the commune of Ñuñoa to the south. Starting in the late 1800s, the western and southeastern parts of present-day Barrio Italia became the locations of two *poblaciones obreras* (Palmer 1984:42). *Poblaciones obreras*, if you recall from earlier, were planned housing communities on land that was not yet urbanized. They took the same basic form as urban worker housing of the time, with rows of attached houses, paired and facing each other. The difference on the outskirts of the city was that these could be built at length—not constrained by the grid—and the areas between the rows were the precursors for what would become the streets in the new districts. These were wider than the pedestrian paths of urban cités or pasajes and were meant for through traffic. Italia Avenue, where much of the commercial change is located, was the bound of a población. Many of the houses currently under reuse date back to this era of collective housing.

The poblaciones in Barrio Italia were some of the first marketed as “middle class” (Recabarren 2008) and advertised for people to leave the city and buy in Providencia where there was more space. An 1896 ad noted it was “just 16 blocks” from the Plaza de Armas (the most central point in the city), with trees on wide streets, and a train coming soon (Recabarren 2008:148). The streets remained unpaved however, as was usually the case in poblaciones.

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87 There are varying definitions by different groups about the bounds of the neighborhood. For this study, I am interested in the area as defined by its new identity, which relies on commercialization and locations of “heritage sites” for its bounds. The main locus of new stores in the area runs along the avenues of Italia, Condell, and Girardi, and extends east to Salvador. The area is framed by Bilbao to the north and Sucre to south, but tapers down to Irarrázaval.
The resulting dust blowing around was mended when boys “from the conventillos” watered the streets to help support themselves and their parents by doing odd jobs. A magazine in 1917 depicted the scene, “there they are, from 2 to 6 in the afternoon, on Italia Avenue [and] Seminario Avenue, in Providencia…”, where they can earn two pesos a day (“Los Niños Que Se Ganan La Vida” 1917:44). The example makes the point that conventillos were located outside the neighborhood, as the población was socio-economically homogenous (see also De Ramón 1985). The area was home to several “medium-sized” factories (Schlack and Turnbull 2015:353), but primarily residential with local businesses that served the neighborhood.

From the late 1950s until the last decade, the area experienced economic decline. In the 1950s, middle-income families started to leave the area. In the 1960s and 70s a number of car garages and mechanic workshops moved in, along with small manufacturers of textiles and furniture (Schlack and Turnbull 2009:3), as well as warehouses. In some cases, residences were demolished to make way for these new businesses (Schlack and Turnbull 2009:4). Also in the 1970s, the first antiques dealers and furniture restorers setup shop and became a staple reason for non-residents to go to the area. By the mid 2000s, new retailers, entrepreneurs, designers, artisans, and artists were visible in the landscape, reusing houses as galleries, studios, and retail shops. The majority of stores relate to specific preferences: a barrage of furniture, lighting fixtures, home decoration, gourmet and local food, exhibition spaces and art for sale, new and used clothing, and stores selling small items for specialty gifts. In addition, it is full of new restaurants and cafés. Along with new businesses, many of the old businesses remain. On Caupolicán Street, established antiques dealers and furniture restorers have become the popular image of the area. Their small locales are pressed to all sides with old furniture and objects needing repair. Narrow walkways allow operators to walk inside and access things. For two blocks along this street, the northern sidewalk is used as their outdoor workshop.
I was first introduced to Barrio Italia in 2012 while living in Santiago. I have kept a casual eye on the neighborhood over the years but systematic observations between 2014 and 2016 left me with an overarching impression: it is a neighborhood that is rapidly changing, while also staying the same. Walking down Italia Avenue, I am awed by the continual arrival of new boutiques and eateries. At the same time, I am impressed by the streetscape that looks basically the same year after year. This is because most changes are happening inside. The poblaciones mentioned above were built with a particular form. Facades touch at the sides, creating rows of houses that line the streets. Also, as was characteristic of industrial-era houses built for the middle class, many have interior patios. The recent commercial conversions alter the buildings as little as possible, maintaining the original residential facades and interiors. In some new conversions, interior patios are reused as cafes, while the interiors of the houses are
subdivided for stores. It creates a dynamic where the cafe is in the center of a shopping gallery (averaging 7 stores per building) and the stores open upon the patio. One online travel magazine describes it like this: “There are many galleries of shops that are like mini-worlds of design: step through just one door from the street, and it opens up into a dozen shops hidden inside” (Barnes 2016). Another travel blog that refers to the shopping arcades says: “The buildings that line the streets are made of brick, and many of the entries to what look like single family homes give way to a series of shops, each one in the footprint of what were formerly individual rooms…with black and white or other colorful tiles extending straight down a hallway to the back of the house, where many of the homes end in a little outdoor patio, occupied by restaurants, cafes, ice cream shops or informal restaurants” (Smith 2014).

Café and boutiques, patio of reused house, Barrio Italia
Photo: Author 2014
In 2012 the New York Times published a short article in its travel section about Barrio Italia. In a brief history of the neighborhood, noting the shift to economic decline it states, “Furniture workshops and shops selling antiques soon occupied the emptied warehouses set amid rows of abandoned residences called cités… In recent years, designers and artists have been transforming cités into eclectic galleries” (de la Cruz 2012). Note here that the author is referring to the individual houses as cités, not the entire complex of the población. This reflects a common local assertion that some of the commercial galleries in Barrio Italia were cités. However, according to my research, commercial galleries converted from residences were formerly private houses. So why do people think they were cités? Recall the basic urban form of a cité that we have discussed up to this point. Whether we use the architectural definition provided in the introduction, or the use of the word that developed over time to be synonymous with “conventillo”, the urban form is the same. They utilize the interior of the block with a collective-use patio that does not allow passage, but results in an enclosed space. Under either definition, there are visual similarities between cités and the new commercial arcades in Barrio Italia. The subdivision of once-single-family houses into multi-store galleries recreates the spatial setup of cités, with stores around the perimeter rather than dwellings. Because the new owners retain the facades and interiors intact, the narrow entranceways that lead to the interior patio maintain the divide between the public and private space (discussed in chapter 3). This leads to patterns of use that help shape the understanding that these were collective housing buildings now under reuse. Two converted buildings in the neighborhood have also used “cité” in the new building names, solidifying the link.

88 At the time of this writing, I have record of 24 arcades in the neighborhood, with two converted from non-residential building types. See the appendix for details of my investigation into housing types in the area.
Cité Italia, private house turned commercial arcade. Boutiques organized around central patio recreate the spatial setup of cités. Restaurant in patio opens the once-private space for collective dwelling at café tables. Name “Cité Italia” redefines the building as a cité.
Image: Daniel Lazo 2016 [recreation from public permit data]

Putting up a Front / Maintaining a Facade

Conversion of houses in the neighborhood is not new. Many commercial establishments located in the area before the current changes began were houses also. Based on my observations, there is a difference between old conversions and new conversions. The old conversions “become” commercial spaces. Visually, an onlooker can see that it is retail. In her book on the commercialization of Santiago, historian Dussaillant Christie (2011:73-74) discusses how retail spaces looked, elsewhere in Santiago, earlier in the 20th century: storefront windows display to the street, welcoming customers in. Glass doors are installed in facades and, when open, the public street in front becomes an extension of the store. This has been called elsewhere “shop architecture” and distinguished from “market architecture”. On the historical differences between the two, Markus (1993) writes that markets were, from the outset, controlled spaces. The inside had
high visibility with an open design, but the interior was not visible from the outside. Shop architecture, arising in the 17th century, was different in that buyers entered directly from the public street into a shop, and the counter was the only divider between public and private space (p. 306). Shop architecture is what we are used to seeing on contemporary urban streets. Market architecture is the traditional interior galleria, the precursor to both urban shopping arcades and malls. Older businesses in Barrio Italia converted houses to shop architecture. The newly arriving businesses instead maintain the original facades of the houses, keeping visibility low between inside and outside.\footnote{This is not a total dichotomy. Some new conversions have created display windows in the façade, but they generally still have a narrow door (rather than commercial doors), thereby retaining the feel of the original house on the inside.} In some cases, this results in small commercial arcades with multiple stores inside, in others the entire house is occupied by one business. The photos below demonstrate this divide in the two types of residential to commercial conversions.
Traditional Conversions in Barrio Italia

Furniture store, Bilbao Avenue, Barrio Italia
Photo: Author 2015

Hair salon, followed by convenience stores, Barrio Italia
Photo: Author 2016
New Conversions in Barrio Italia

Commercially used building between two residences
Photo: Author 2016

Commercial gallery (left) and residence (right)
Photo: Author 2016
One argument for why shopping arcades are emerging is that they extend both the selling space and the rental space in the buildings by continuing the frontage into the interior of the block. This is in opposition to using a house for a single store that opens to the street. Building owners can rent space to commercial tenants if the buildings are divided rather than if used for one store only (Schlack and Turnbull 2015:367). The creation of “market architecture” is the result of “market forces”. This leaves the question of why the facades are maintained. First, maintaining the façade is not necessary to increase store frontage. It could easily happen that the façade is opened with galleries down the sides of the interior space, increasing the visibility into the building. This is what one new retail space has done that was not converted from a house but from a car garage, which does not have much of a façade to maintain (the front is already open in a space where cars needed to fit). Second, houses that convert to commercial use for one store keep the facades too. This neither increases frontage nor improves visibility of products. Third, if there is an interest in selling what’s inside, opening the façade for easier visibility and more welcoming access would seem to make sense. By being inviting, for example by leaving the doors open, entrances can induce people inside (a store) (Whyte 2009:178). Instead, the new businesses disallow a view of the stores inside in many cases. Further, sometimes there is no sign, making it difficult to decipher a residence from a store. The point of façade maintenance then appears to be to preserve the residential aesthetic of the houses. Visually it maintains its original function as housing. How the buildings are then viewed differs between conversions. Putting up a commercial front goes against the “identity” of the neighborhood but corresponds to the building’s new use. Maintaining a residential façade goes with traditional neighborhood identity and flashes its original function as it contrasts to new use.

90 Signage is another distinction between old businesses and new businesses. The houses that visually “become” commercial spaces often put giant signs above the door to state the name of the business. The new conversions put a small sign near the door listing the locales inside, or on a chalkboard placed on the sidewalk. Without being close, it is not possible to read what they say.
Narrative of Nostalgia

This section relies on data from analysis of a 2012 guidebook written by members of the Barrio Italia Corporation in conjunction with the National Council for Culture and the Arts (CNCA), along with observation, to tell the story of the new Barrio Italia. The guidebook, released to advertise the area with its title of District of Design, portrays the neighborhood as a “barrio”, where tradition is present in the everyday experience and visual landscape of the place and comes together in a harmonic community with the newcomers to the area. It puts emphasis on “heritage”, both material and cultural (which I use here to mean non-material culture), using photos of unchanged buildings in the neighborhood, facades intact, along with language about the importance of the past. Within the guidebook there are advertisements for the new businesses in the area (written by the businesses themselves), along with a section on “patrimony” (heritage) that displays the old businesses in the neighborhood (but is not written by them). Herein, I emphasize how the neighborhood is portrayed in words and photos, according to the authors, along with characterizations of the old businesses used to meet this narrative.91

The first thing to note about the 129-page guidebook is its cover. Behind the new Barrio Italia logo, centered on the page, is the façade of an old house. It is a tight shot showing only brick to one side and a partial wooden door to the other, with a glimpse of the tiled sidewalk in front. A guide that is for the “design district” does not show design, designers, products, commercial spaces, production spaces, or even newly “designed” architecture. Instead, it displays the “residential heritage” of the neighborhood. When we turn the page, followed by a map of “sites” in the area (these are the ones advertised within the book) and the title page, we come to a two-page spread of a photo of a house, plugged in between the houses to either side of it. The houses are characteristic of the area: one story, wooden door, small windows on the

91 While not presented here, the 46 ads from new stores represent about a 50/50 mix of content that relies on nostalgia/tradition and uniqueness/exclusivity. Advertisements from 17 food establishments back up the “narrative of nostalgia” and add language of “home”.
front, facades touching at the sides. Again, the houses are residential, not commercial conversions. In this photo, there is also a man riding a bike on the sidewalk, leaving the frame to the left. After this, the guidebook begins. These two photos set the tone for what is to follow, focused on tradition and the past.92

In the introduction to the guidebook they write, “The Barrio phenomenon is part of our recent past and is present in the very constitution of everyday life in urban space. It is important to not only protect the assets and concrete value of a given space, but also the immaterial, the historical essence that lurks in every crack and corner. Within this set of features, the relationship and interaction generated between residents and visitors is essential for the establishment of a barrio as such” (CNCA 2012:11). This is how they are constructing Barrio Italia.93 Tradition is emphasized and newcomers to the area are framed as carrying out the traditions of the neighborhood. Together they constitute “a place that charms with its neighborhood life” (CNCA 2012:back cover). Another national-level tour guide writes, “Barrio Italia is today an obligatory excursion for locals looking to fall in love with neighborhood life.” There together are “established residents, young people, antiques dealers, design and décor stores, restaurants, art galleries, and mechanic workshops, with surviving small, local stores that conserve the vibe of the neighborhood: corner stores, shoe repairs, bike shops, among others” (Subsecretaría de Prevención del Delito 2013:4). Observing the visual landscape of the neighborhood in conjunction with this narrative looks like this: the furniture repairers from the 1970s work down the block from contemporary furniture designers. A corner store and butcher shop from the 1940s and 50s are in tandem with locally produced gourmet foods.

92 I have not reproduced the cover image here because the book is copyrighted; however it is available for free online: http://www.cultura.gob.cl/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/guia-barrio-italia-2012.pdf.

93 The first appearance of this name is contested. Some sources say it originated in the 1930s with the name of the Avenue “Italia”, others say it is a product of marketing. In 2014 a person claimed he had trademarked the name and a legal dispute ensued over its use.
The car garages from previous decades operate next to a boutique called *Garage* (that is itself a former car garage). The factory that once housed hat makers now houses a “Makerspace” for technology and ideas. It seems the past and present are being brought closer together.

The conversion to a commercial neighborhood poses a problem though. The concept of “barrio” is reliant on it being “residential”. A prior study of the district reported one long-time resident conveying (against the changes in the area) that there is “no neighborhood without neighbors” (Schlack and Turnbull 2015:367). However, the area is low density. Most buildings are one story and do not incorporate mixed use. This means the more commercial use that occurs, the less residential density there is. While residents’ voices are omitted from the narrative (unless they own a business in the neighborhood), residential facades are an ode to a residential past. The buildings may have commercial use, but they have not become “commercial buildings”. As one food establishment put it in their ad, “the choice of a house in Barrio Italia was decisive [to open their restaurant] in an area where neighborhood life is still preserved” (CNCA 2012:11). The emphasis on “house” is notable, where one third of the food ads referenced their locations in a reused house. The material maintenance of the residential facades on new conversions locks in the visual of a residential neighborhood, where intended function is built into form. This is out of line with traditional businesses in the neighborhood that operate in converted houses that look like commercial buildings. The narrative works to link these two groups through the concept of heritage.

One of the five sections of the guidebook is dedicated to the heritage of the neighborhood. On the first page of the section is a photo of the façade of a building. The photo is framed so we get only the façade and the sidewalk in front, positioned on a corner, the photo was taken from across the street. It is an old business in a reused house. There are double doors with glass windows from top to bottom. The windows are covered in stickers, posters, and ads, the sign above the door that displays the name of the café inside is large and readable at this distance, even though it is faded. A metal gate above the door waits to be drawn down at closing time. On the second-floor balcony above the door, a Chilean flag hangs. The relevant factor here is that
the patrimony in this case is the business. The photos that follow, attached to
descriptions of “heritage sites”, alternate between facades and interiors. Of
the nineteen heritage sites here, eleven are businesses. Of the remaining
eight, six are architecturally distinct buildings (e.g. church, embassy, theater)
that have been preserved, and two are plazas. There is a distinction made
between cultural heritage and material heritage. The major points are old
businesses (cultural heritage). Although these too are in old buildings, many
converted houses, these are not mentioned as heritage. Material heritage
(buildings) are those that maintain the original look of the buildings where
no major transformation has taken place (i.e. the original function is still
obvious as part of the form). In relation to how reused houses are valued, old
conversions can be called heritage because they preserve culture (traditional
businesses); new conversions can be called heritage because they preserve
the material (traditional buildings). This fits both the old and the new into
the same frame where both guard the past.

Emphasis on the past in the new neighborhood narrative arises as “barrio”,
“heritage”, and then explicitly as “nostalgia”. Throughout the descriptions in
the heritage section of the guidebook, the concept of nostalgia has a central
arc. They do not just recall the traditions of the past but make direct links
between material and experience. For example, in the page about the antique
dealers and restorers on Caupolicán Street they write:

“With more than 40 years in the area…the Antique Dealers and
Restorers have developed a Craft Tradition highly valued by the
neighbors and visitors to the neighborhood. Working on the
sidewalks, giving new life to furniture and antique objects, they
create a unique scene, many times accompanied by the musical
sounds of an old phonograph or record player. They are a
fundamental part of the Heritage and Identity of the Barrios
Caupolicán and Italia. ‘Between us we say that we are The
Caupolicán Station, where time has stopped’, says Hector Lamur
pointing at the roof overhang [above the workers’ locales] that looks
a little like an old train station. ‘It’s really nice to see entire families
that come to visit us frequently. The grandfather shows the grandson
the magazines or books that he used to read when he was young, the
music that he used to listen to. The women remember the dishware or the furniture that were in their family. They are objects with a very big emotional and historical charge and one feels happy being part of that’ relates Lamur with clear satisfaction after 35 years in this trade…It’s worth it to take a few minutes to walk around and fall in love with this magic corner of Santiago” (CNCA 2012:65).

Here, there is reference to heritage, barrio identity, and nostalgia and their relationship to objects and buildings. The saying that the worker mentions later became a formal slogan of the businesses with a sign out front that says “a romantic journey to the past…where time has stopped”, along with a picture of a train. The pun refers both to a nostalgic sentiment because the things they sell are old (time stopped) and that the building looks like an old train station where “time” (like a passenger) has stopped. This official slogan is blatant with reference to nostalgia and draws an explicit connection to the building. Interestingly, the building conjures a prior function that it never had. However, the visual character of looking like a train station (our prior knowledge of the link between form and function) allows the narrative to work. The story and the visual landscape work in tandem. In another example the nostalgic undertones are more subtle. They asked a former long-time resident of the neighborhood about the old theater building on the corner of Italia Avenue that closed sometime after the 1960s. She recounts how the theater started to decay, that less people went, and they started to play “Mexican B movies”, until finally the television won out (CNCA 2012:66). The author of the page closes by saying that this former resident “remembers how nice the theater was and how good it used to be to spend time there” (CNCA 2012:66). The building is linked to emotion and a final nail of sadness is tacked on by reiterating that the past was better than the present—with the unstated ending: but we still have the building to remind us. Unlike the example above, the building here becomes symbolic of the

94 From field notes July 24, 2015: I look up at the awning. It does resemble an old train or bus station. One of the workers notices my curiosity with the building and asks if I am looking for something. “Was this really a ‘station’?”, I ask. He laughs. “No, we just put that name up there” [referring to the name “Caupolicán Station”].
past rather than a material part of the process of narrative construction through its visible form.

The modern definition of nostalgia, first recorded in 1920 (Harper 2010) is “a sentimental longing or wistful affection for a period in the past” (“Nostalgia” 2016). Nostalgia in cities is not new. Camilo Sitte was among the first (or loudest) disgruntled urbanist who called for a return to “practical city building: to rid the modern system of blocks and regularly aligned houses; to save as much as possible of that which remains from ancient cities; and in our creation to approach more closely the ideal of the ancient models” ([1889] 1999:468). He wanted to “save” what had not yet been destroyed of ancient cities and viewed what existed before as better (worth more) and its disappearance as the death of cities. His understanding of cities is not related to sociality. It is based on a visual understanding of the city that relies on “memory” and the “charm” we have “formerly experienced”, where he longs to stop in and re-experience those places ([1889] 1999:467). Simmel (1997b) reiterates that place is something we know through the senses. This makes it memorable. We then link emotions and memories to place. Place holds meaning for this reason (Simmel 1997b:149). “Nostalgia as a historical emotion came of age during the time of Romanticism and is coeval with the birth of mass culture. In the mid-nineteenth century, nostalgia became institutionalized in national and provincial museums, heritage foundations, and urban memorials. The past was no longer unknown or unknowable. The past became ‘heritage’” (Boym 2007:13). Material forms are history embodied and present: objects infused with our nostalgia (Simmel 1965: 259 & 266).

In a study of Sydney, Australia, Shaw emphasizes the "…specific nostalgias [that] determine what does and does not constitute 'heritage'", noting that landscapes are formed by facades (2005:60). "Nostalgic yearnings" lurk behind the relationship between neighborhood change and heritage (Shaw 2005:60). Nostalgia is heavy in the themes of the guidebook as it relates to the preexisting buildings and businesses. It emphasizes their importance, linking value to the past. While tradition and barrio may be valued already, and the organizations are simply tapping into these values, stressing the emotional link to the past raises it to the level of needing to be “saved” in an
area where the buildings are not protected under heritage status and have not been historically valued in the culture of the city. This puts the newcomers in the role of savior by maintaining the cultural and material heritage in a neighborhood where they have been blamed for the changes already occurring. However, in this case, the discrepancy between the older conversions and the new ones shows that value is not in reuse, or even in saving the buildings per se, but in recalling the past of the place. Functions perform this role as culture built-in to material forms. The change to commercial buildings is obviated by maintenance of the residential facades. “The urban world puts a premium on visual recognition. We see the uniform which denotes the role of the functionaries, and are oblivious to the personal eccentricities hidden behind the uniform” (Wirth 1938). The uniform is the façade that displays the “role” of the wearer, independent of what’s inside.

**Patio Reuse**

Patio cafes reiterate connections to the past and, in addition, to “home”. In ads, cafes located in reused patios called themselves “cozy” and mentioned feelings of home and nostalgia. “[The café] can be found in an old restored house in attractive Barrio Italia. In this cozy place you will find delicious homemade offerings for breakfast and tea, lunch and dinner” (CNCA 2012:112). Or, “next to the Caupolicán Antique’s sellers, Survenir [café] is the ideal space to recall those delicious and succulent German-style, southern tea times [las onces]. Artisanal cured meats from family recipes, homemade bread, [local] jam, exquisite desserts…perfect to share in a cozy and nostalgic atmosphere that feels like home” (CNCA 2012:106). This last one emphasizes “home”, not only through advertisements but in the décor of the physical space. On a visit in October of 2015, I noted tablecloths with images of chickens on them, crocheted seat covers of rainbow colors in rings, and mismatched flea market fare like tin teacups with a pin and blue flower pattern on the side or ceramic teacups with various colors of polka dots. Hints of home decoration appear in various themes throughout the patio cafes. In another, a small, seemingly free-floating vintage chandelier hangs above the tables, strung by a metal bar that juts from the wall in the

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95 This refers to the culture of the south of Chile that is the theme of the café.
otherwise roofless space. Many others are lined with greenery. Flowering plants sit among the tables and chairs or crawl up trellised walls giving a secret garden feel. Original floor tiles remain in many patios, evoking the Mediterranean. The most casual patios have haphazard furniture positioned around the space: various chairs, wooden benches, sometimes a small couch, along with other facets of residential space, like framed artwork leaned against a wall or, in one case, a wrought iron and wood sewing machine table.

Patio cafes recapture a sense of home inside the converted houses. This happens not only through discourse or decoration. The facades that maintain the residential character of the neighborhood outside also work to give the interior spaces a residential feel. Façade maintenance preserves the disconnection from the street. The narrow entranceways of the original buildings lead down a short hall to the patio at the interior of the block, creating a cozy atmosphere away from traffic and from view. Tables, chairs, and other furniture in this environment give way to dwelling where, under commercial conditions, the patios become spaces of interaction. The new patterns of use recall collective housing buildings where neighbors utilized patios that put them in contact with each other and also cut them off from the street. The new arcades not only visually resemble cités but the patios move from private to collective use, recreating a space that has both a communal and exclusive ambiance.
Collective Use Patios

Photo: Author 2015
There has been a trend in Santiago in recent years of “public patios” where previously private space at the interiors of blocks is transformed into publicly accessible space under commercial use. Patio Bellavista, the most well-known example, acquired six lots to build an enormous public patio that maintains the facades of the prior buildings on the block’s perimeter giving way to the restaurants and bars on the inside (“Patio Bellavista Segunda Etapa” 2009). However, saving the facades in this case is a purely aesthetic endeavor. Because the patio takes up much of the block, there are various entrances, wide open, for public access. The spatial relationship is altered between the public and the private. The essence of a patio is in it being private space. Public patios like the one in Bellavista, projects largely aimed at tourism (Schlack and Turnbull 2011:37), effectively become
“plazas”. In Barrio Italia though (to my knowledge the only neighborhood where small reused patios exist), the privacy of residential patios is maintained.

Performing the Past

The link between cités and houses in Barrio Italia arises through visual similarities in urban forms coupled with new patterns of use. However, the link has been solidified as two commercially reused buildings have opted for the word “cité” in their names. Recall the slogan from earlier about the train station. The building had not been a station but the look of the overhang on the building’s façade gave it a possible past as another building type. The name of the business then played on that possibility. Here, that same effect occurs as buildings that visually recall cités are given a name that upholds the prospect of an alternate past. While commercially converted cités are already believed to exist in Barrio Italia, the labeling of the arcades as cités transforms the houses. This not only applies to buildings named “cité”, but extends throughout the neighborhood as signs quell any doubt of cités in the area. The effect is that the once-single-family houses are redefined in the past as well as the present. In the past, they move from houses to collective housing buildings, while becoming commercial cités in the present. The photos below show the two converted buildings, Cité Italia and Cité Arte with their signs in front. The first brings all the lines of the narrative together. It is a formerly private house turned commercial arcade, with maintained façade, patio café, and cité in the name [floor plan shown earlier]. While the second has an interior patio café and has maintained the façade, it was not previously a residential building but a storage facility, seemingly a cue to the value “cités” have gained in the area as they feed back into the past. Not lost in the renaming of these buildings is the link between “cité”, “community”, and urban housing of another era.
“Cités” in Barrio Italia

Cité Italia, Commercial Arcade, Barrio Italia
Photo: Author 2016
Patio Cafe, Cité Italia, Barrio Italia
Photo: Author 2014

Cité Arte, Barrio Italia
Photo: Author 2014
The houses in reuse reference cités and call forth an association based on form. This association has allowed the buildings to effectively “become” cités in the process of neighborhood change. What in the beginning simply recalled another building type has been relabeled with a name that changes its definition. Another scenario might drive home the point on both “visual evidence” and “referencing”. In the summer of 2016 there was an art installation on the rooftop of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York called “Transitional Object” by artist Cornelia Parker. She had taken pieces from an old “Dutch” barn in upstate New York and recreated the barn on the roof—but it was just the façade, held up with scaffolding in the back. “…bloodred siding, wood floors, whitewashed posts, and corrugated steel roofing…Even in their transformed state, the materials retain evidence that the barn spent over a century as part of a farm…its [current] form references the rooftop architecture…visible across the city” (on-site curator’s note August 17, 2016). Here, the façade alone is enough to provide visual evidence of what the building “was”. However, the mention of “referencing” also tells us that it draws associations to other architecture. It is precisely the associations drawn between visually similar buildings that allow the houses in Barrio Italia to “reference” cités and provide visual evidence of what they “were”.

Reuse and Co-Transformation

Reuse of buildings in Barrio Italia helps to construct the new neighborhood identity as well as alter the identity of the buildings themselves. The maintenance of residential facades plays a role in the visual character of the neighborhood, valued as it’s linked to community and neighborhood life. Simultaneously, façade maintenance contributes to visual similarities between urban forms where, under reuse, the houses recall collective housing buildings. In both cases, there is a visual component that is important for how the process unfolds. Facades are visual evidence of intended functions, while reused patios visually reference cités. In this way, buildings can operate through their visual character, where meaning is part of the material form. The word “cité” also works to convey meaning as it is
applied to buildings that visually resemble them. It appears as if a conglomeration of cités is converting to commercial in this neighborhood, but instead, houses are converting to cités, thus expanding the definition of the building type cité once again to include new structures.

I have argued that function is embedded in material form as a kind of cultural meaning. However, it is the reuse of the buildings that draws attention to function. Architects have noted that interest is raised in reused buildings because the visual juxtaposition between old and new calls attention to the building itself (Bloszies 2012; also, Astorg Bollack 2013:11). This is something that Goffman (1974) told us too: when you change the “frame”, you call attention to it. While Goffman referred to invisible social frames, this applies to material frames too. We can easily ignore normalcy. By reusing a building—but not aligning the form with the new use—we call attention to intended function. The use is out of frame. The value in “changing the frame” to call attention to residential facades in this case is in nostalgia for a barrio that encompasses a residential past. The argument made by some real estate developers and others with interest in the neighborhood is that they are saving the heritage of the place and buildings are a part of this heritage. But as the photo below demonstrates, newer conversions in the neighborhood are changing again to keep only the façade, with new structures built inside, and a recreation of the patio. It is not reuse that is relevant in valuation of the neighborhood, nor is it saving the “buildings” as heritage. It is predicated on the facades and the patios. Original facades that can keep the residential feel of a past neighborhood and interior patios that shape cozy spaces of collective use.
Maison Italia, soon to be commercial arcade with patio café, Italia Avenue. Facade maintenance with gutted interior redesign marks a change in commercial conversions in the neighborhood.

Photo: Author 2016
Conclusion: towards a sociology of buildings

On the Social Roles of Buildings

My goal in this work has been to begin to outline a sociology of buildings. One thing that hopefully has come through in this analysis is the importance of the material aspect of buildings. In this chapter, I will conclude with brief thoughts for sociological theory on the role of buildings in social life as well as buildings as a research tool. We can start to investigate how buildings play roles in the social through their material forms and their meanings. The overarching case that this thesis has presented is one of change. As society changes so too do buildings. These changes are wrapped up in one another. Throughout the case, buildings play roles in social processes through physically constraining and creating opportunities and also through meanings connected to material form. Buildings contribute to society both through how they are used and how they are seen. In my view, this suggests that in addition to physical interaction, visual interaction is another important pathway for how buildings operate through their materiality.

Herein we have seen how an urban form is shaped by cultural context. The name given to the form is one with no predecessor in the society. The building type is inherently urban as it is defined by preexisting grid infrastructure—although this is not the case for other building types that arise at the same time. This is how the name and the form become linked. Moving forward in time, we then see that various building types converge on the name. How these buildings converge is through visual and spatial patterning of the forms. This tells us that buildings operate through both cultural understandings, which can be thought of as “functional types”, and visual and spatial understandings, which can be thought of as “formal types”. Buildings do not have to be symbolic, representational, or semiotic to operate through meaning. In this case, culture is built in from the beginning as knowledge about the purpose of certain forms. Simultaneously, what a building “is” is not fully reliant on its intended purpose/function. Interestingly, it is also not reliant on how it is currently used. It is dependent on how it looks. We saw how conventillos became cités and then houses under commercial reuse became cités. The spatial patterning of the urban
form allowed these interpretations and redefinitions to occur. That is to say that the material aspects of buildings play a role in how they are redefined. The outcomes of these redefinitions play out, in this case, in identity distinctions and neighborhood change. Urban residents trying to distinguish themselves start to call their buildings by other names. “Pasaje” comes to invoke higher status than “cité” once conventillos go by the name “cité”. However, the buildings cannot “be” pasajes because they do not allow passage (that is, the form does not allow a full redefinition). While the buildings are not redefined through renaming in that case, the words take on new cultural associations used to make social differentiations. In Barrio Italia, the redefined commercial cités feed into the neighborhood transformation process. The cultural biography of the “cité” lends itself to the idea of “barrio”. Cités are fixed in the past (no longer built), have associations to community formation, and are particularly urban. Although the houses in Barrio Italia were industrial era workers’ housing, just like cités, poblaciones do not lend themselves to the urban community narrative (they are inherently non-urban).96

Form and Function (And Use)

Form and function are often regarded as two opposing pieces of a building. The Neufert reference manual (or “architect’s bible”), first printed in 1936 and now almost 700 pages, is organized by “type” where types are determined by intended function. The specifications for forms are based on the “best” ways for a building to meet these functions. That is, forms can vary to meet the same function, however certain forms and functions are associated and normalized. We have come to know “functions” visually as they pertain to form. Even if a building is reused, its intended function may

96 My hunch is that the cultural association to “slums” plays out here as inherent urbanity, not poverty. Further, given that both types are “workers’ housing” an association to “workers” doesn’t seem relevant in this narrative (see appendix though). In addition, city-level associations to “heritage” do not appear to be valuable in this context. These “cités” are ordinary, not architecturally distinct; “heritage” in this case is that of the “place”, not individual buildings.
remain visually identifiable through form. In social research, function should be understood as a normalized meaning attached to material form. This is important not only for understanding how buildings come to be—where functionality cannot really account for form—but for understanding what they do. It isn’t just through proper “functioning” that outcomes come about. Outcomes can arise through use—which can be unrelated to a building’s intended function—or they can arise through visual interaction. The visual aspect is important because the form/function link has little to do with actual use in the case of buildings, but with cultural knowledge about “proper” use. In relation to the statements made above, operations work through pre-given cultural understandings rather than redefinition. This was what we saw with the facades in Barrio Italia that remain residential even under commercial reuse. The outcome of this cultural understanding feeds into the neighborhood change process. The outcomes of both misuse and reuse are worth exploring when they become normalized.  

**Form, Meaning, and Definition**

As outlined in the introduction, there is much literature about buildings and communication. It discusses what things mean, how they get their meanings, and how they communicate their meanings to us. Then there is literature about what this does in society. The latter has relied on the argument that objects remind us how to act as markers of culture and frames for interaction (e.g. Goffman 1971, 1974). Others have recently said that objects allow us to position ourselves in terms of how we interact with others or define ourselves (see Jerolmack and Tavory 2014). I have not yet encountered the argument that how the things look is important for what they do. However, in this case the visual similarities between urban forms play a role in how processes unfolded. This has to do with the separation of “meanings” and “definitions”. While “function” operated as a pre-given cultural meaning visible in form, visual similarity was not related to meaning of the buildings;

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97 Apart from buildings, it is clear that this method may not work for other objects, especially technologies, which are harder to “misuse” because of what the thing affords (Dant 2005).
Visual categorization is not a new idea. However, we are used to categorizing forms as subsets of functions. Functional types, since the industrial period, have become ingrained in our culture visually. Now we have entered a period where we are moving away from functional types again. Many new buildings incorporate multiple functions. An old (and familiar) example is the skyscraper, which is defined by form alone. We know it by how it looks, not what activities are intended to go on inside it. As buildings become less attached to single functions, formal types may become more relevant. This does not mean the idea of “type” will go away. It means we may understand forms and names linked in other ways than by function. Additionally, there is the concept of institutional types, which have always been multi-functional. A hospital, a prison, a boarding school—these buildings are spaces of living, of work, of dwelling/leisure activity. We call them by their institutional names: a prison building is largely inseparable from the institution of a prison. Yet, we still know the buildings visually, even though they are multi-functional. In the case of newer buildings made to incorporate multiple functions, there is the possibility that they will stabilize and standardize and we will know them by names—either because certain functional programs will always be linked in certain forms (as in the earlier case of institutions) or because forms will stabilize and be categorized together independent of function (as in skyscrapers). I don’t think building categories are going anywhere. I do think however, that how they are categorized will always depend on how they visually appear (not what they are supposed to do or how they are supposed to be used).

Names

The broader context of chapter 2 was to see how a word for a building type changes meaning as it crosses cultures. In this case, the word changes from a general concept to a specific urban form, but then expands to include variation on that form within the society. Following names helps us keep track of the objects we are studying and mirrors changes in buildings and
society. On one side, we see how a building type can change definitions through urban life. On the other, we see how an altered definition can feed into urban processes. To use a well-known example, in Sharon Zukin’s case study *Loft Living* (1989), where she explains the rise of the loft market in the SoHo neighborhood of Manhattan, she uses one definition of loft, from the dictionary, to start her analysis. She follows the type “loft”, with this definition in mind, and says that later, even in Paris they were advertising “les lofts” although Paris did not have this type of housing stock (Zukin 1989:1). This idea of what is a “real” loft and what is an imitation is tempting to follow. But what she is explaining is a change in the definition of the building type. Her study was written in the early 1980’s and she had a specific point in mind: describing how an industrial building becomes a commodity for residential living. But if asked today what a loft is, people would likely say it is a residential space with an open floor plan. The idea of what a “real” loft was (i.e. industrial) is long gone. Zukin’s data can be interpreted another way: when lofts become commodities, it does not mean that they no longer exist as material objects or “real” things. It means the word has changed to signify new objects. In her case, the process entailed a change in use that over time led to the buildings changing function. That is, initially, the artists’ reuse of the buildings was much like I described in the case of Barrio Italia. The new use was juxtaposed to the cultural understanding of the buildings (their function). But enough iterations of reuse changed the understanding of the building type—it scaled up to be a stabilized meaning, rather than only something related to the individual buildings that were being reused. The understanding of the form—particularly the interior form in the case of lofts—went from meaning “industrial” to meaning “residential”. This was the first expansion of the definition of “loft”. The second expansion occurred with new builds. This cemented the residential understanding of “loft”. However, the new builds maintained the visual similarities of the open floor plan and the name made the connection between the two. In the case of the market that Zukin explains, it is the maintenance of the word “loft” that sells the new forms. The term is recoupled with the new material structures, in a process where the visual similarities are purposefully remade for value.
Building Methods for Building Theory

One thing the thesis has tried to do is rely on traditional sociological understandings to incorporate objects, rather than on the idea of assemblages as understood in Actor Network Theory. That is, for example, I maintain analytical levels of analysis. The thesis tries to move between micro, meso, and macro levels to show how buildings operate across these planes. One thing that develops is that meanings are scaled up to the macro level from interactions with individual buildings. Here we see hints of a process much like that suggested in analytical sociology (Hedstrom 2005; Hedstrom and Bearman 2009) where actions at the micro level add up to macro level outcomes. When enough people use patios in residential buildings over time, the buildings come to be associated with activities in the patio. The communities that form in individual buildings, over enough iterations, generate meaning for the building type at the macro level—it is culturally understood for its “community building” properties—a meaning that then applies to all of the buildings, independent of actions/outcomes that occur in any one. As I mentioned at the end of chapter 3, the macro level meanings that arise out of sustained use of individual buildings culminate in initiatives to recuperate or “save” some individual buildings (but not others). In this way, the analytical levels are scaled again in the other direction (showing how buildings operate between levels) and we start to see a process of inequality unfolding (where buildings play a role in the outcome). I did not have sufficient information to trace this pattern in this book. But available information is provocative for how buildings, and perhaps objects in general, operate in mechanistic processes. Regarding meaning making, for example, there may be room for buildings in cognitive theories as they relate to culture, such as belief formation or intersubjective categorizations (see e.g. Rydgren 2009:74-82; Zerubavel 1996). This would be important also for what I discussed in chapter 2 on the relationship between residential buildings and social classes. How we see certain housing types through their use by particular groups does not seem to be one sided. How we view individuals is relational to our understandings of the types of buildings they live in.
Another thing that arises from looking at buildings in terms of levels is how they operate in ensembles. In the neighborhood study, no buildings individually would be likely to produce value for the neighborhood. It is only through the collection of buildings in proximate space that they play a role in valuation. In this case the neighborhood and the buildings are co-producing each other and it seems that the localized, physical space makes a difference for how this occurs. However, it is clear that established definitions of the building type are contributing to the process in Barrio Italia for a visual interpretation to happen. Thus, visual interactions may be particularly important when we are discussing ensembles. Many buildings in a localized space are being simultaneously observed. They work as a collective to help bring about an outcome. This is a meso level operation that does not occur with individual buildings or the building type as a whole. Had few houses converted to commercial arcades, the belief in cités in the neighborhood likely would not have come about. At the same time, the redefinition of cités has not moved outside the neighborhood.

Variation in analytical levels, as well as contexts, is also helpful to build theory (Vaughan 1999, 2004, 2009, 2014). Moving between levels and contexts allows us to make connections that may not be seen otherwise in areas that are seemingly unrelated. In this case, the similarity between urban forms became apparent to me only by varying context, time, and level. The chapters of this book came together as a process where each revelation in the buildings’ history mattered for how I understood the contemporary analyses. Had I not understood the urban forms of housing buildings in Santiago as a whole, I may not have seen the connection to urban form in Barrio Italia. Initially, I understood this as a case of a building type with a fixed definition. That did not work for the analysis because it meant excluding many cases that people called cités. However, by recognizing the similarities in urban forms across residential types I could widen the analysis to include the “conventillo” in chapter 3 and the “commercial cités” in chapter 4. This was the basis for understanding the process of how definitional changes occurred over time in relation to visual similarities and patterns of use. While buildings started out with different names, they converged on the form that utilizes the interior of the block. This process was the same across cases. My explanation for how buildings operate entails the development of theory that
sees visual components of buildings as part of their material role in outcomes. This means buildings are not only either symbolic or subjective. Their forms matter for their cultural understandings. Generating a theory that works across cases is the goal of much sociology. Working with variance is what enables a researcher to do this. What Vaughan (1999, 2004, 2014) has called “analogical theorizing”, allows case comparisons across social forms (Simmel in Wolff 1950). However, there is room to include material forms as part of the theorizing process.

**Future Research**

What can we take away from the outcomes here? How do buildings play roles in the social elsewhere? Sociologists should start to consider buildings as material objects that play roles in urban life. If we treat buildings as materiality in the urban environment, we can start to observe their roles in well-studied processes. I think the key is to find questions central to sociology and introduce buildings as a factor in known processes. Purposefully, follow the buildings or the objects and look for what they are doing. Take a theory, say one on gentrification, and look for the buildings. This means to take the buildings’ perspective. For example, Guggenheim (2009) writes, “the longevity of buildings often means that after some time, buildings find themselves in completely different neighbourhoods [sic] from the time at which they were built. Even the cultural and monetary value of buildings is dependent on their environment. A building can be unchanged, but a changing environment, as in the case of gentrification for example, can completely alter the meaning and price of it” (p. 46). Following this, we could either look to see if the building is playing a role in how the neighborhood is gaining value or if the altered meaning plays a role in a process further down the line. Buildings and their environments help to constitute each other so the point in this case would not be to start by saying, “this is a case of gentrification” but by identifying the changes occurring and looking for the buildings in those changes. A building may work precisely by remaining unchanged as we saw earlier. The process needs to be traced while asking, every step of the way, what is the building doing here? I think we need to seek this out, not wait for it to jump out at us. If we change our
perspectives, to give voice to buildings it is not difficult to see how they help to shape our everyday.

In addition to the study of buildings in their own right, using buildings as tools, researchers can touch on many aspects of society. In the course of this research, there were other avenues open to me but many things ended up on the cutting room floor. Following buildings allowed me into aspects of networks, heritage, market groups, knowledge construction, work, and various other domains. With the historical data, for example, I could have studied knowledge construction processes. Following the building type through time, I saw stories about buildings repeated in academic accounts until the “facts” went unquestioned. Tracing citations sometimes led to no evidence for the claims in the original articles. This gave a glimpse of how history itself is constructed around objects. While this may work by following any historical object, there are things that buildings are particularly suited for. Heritage, for example, was a piece of this study that did not result in its own chapter. Following buildings through applications for heritage status, or tracing groups of buildings lumped together under certain classifications of architectures, allows a view of how the same objects are valued differently by different groups, which may also lead to understanding how the buildings themselves play roles in valuation. Buildings are also particularly suited for studying markets. As both marketplaces and market products, this can be observed from various angles. In the case of Barrio Italia (with data not presented herein), there was a case to be made that the buildings were also market producers. That is, they were products of the market, they constituted physical markets, and their aesthetics contributed to producing a market group interested in the place. Buildings could also easily explore “work” and new concepts about work environments (co-working spaces, e.g.). Reuse is linked to this also, tied to shifts in types of work. New work doesn’t require new buildings (and much new work prefers old buildings). Digital work for example will always require physical spaces. It’s just that those spaces can be spread out or coalescence many kinds of work in one place. Materiality never goes away.
Appendix

Methodology: Details, Ethics, and Concerns

First I expand on the methods for the overall study, followed by a breakdown for each chapter that elaborates the details and concerns for each respective method used. There are two things beneficial about the research design. First, following the object through time and context allows us to enter different sociological problems through the buildings as a kind of sampling. We are also exposed to the flip side: by following the object, we see not only its roles in society but how it changes. Second, by first showing how the building type came to be in this city, we are contextualizing the objects of analysis for the other two empirical chapters. In those chapters, we move down levels of analysis to the study of interactional spaces and neighborhoods. What we observe as interactions between people and buildings can be considered within the larger social context in Santiago. What is interesting about this case is that the objects are never physically reshaped. A benefit of choosing a building type that has a finite lifespan is that (1) we have the whole timeline accessible and (2) once constructed they remain in place. They are geographically and temporally fixed (in terms of materiality, not meaning). This is different than looking at buildings in terms of design processes over the long term. Design processes are often understood as object and user interact, and then the next version of an object is redesigned to continue to meet some intended purpose. The idea of reuse for an originally unintended purpose, or “adaptive reuse” as it is called in architecture, breaks the normal design process by changing the use of the object while keeping the form largely the same.

Historical analysis is particularly difficult because of the possibility of viewing things in accord with our present reality—that is, we tend to view the past as if things had to turn out the way they did. It is easy to only assess information that falls in line with a common theory and disregard the rest. There is a commonly told story about the history of cités and it treats “the facts” as given. In the process of trying to piece together the threads of how the cité came into existence in Santiago I had to fundamentally question, what is a cité? There were various ways I tried to solve this problem. First, I believed the common history of the cité and operationalized the definition in
relation to a building’s material form. But following this tactic forced me to
disregard most information I came across. For example, if cités had such
finite definitions, the case of Barrio Italia had to be excluded from the study.
But then, what to do about the fact that some people called those buildings
cités too? I took a more subjective tactic: maybe cités were anything that
anyone called a cite? This was also problematic because it disregarded
process. A building in barrio Italia could be a conventillo, a cite, or a house
depending on who I was talking to. Had I chalked it up to people having
different interpretations or understandings of what the buildings are, I would
not have recognized the multiple stabilized definitions of cités, nor would I
have been able to recognize how new definitions come about. Instead,
reading between the literatures from historians, architects, social scientists,
and housing policy experts, I tried to make patterns out of use of the word
“cite”. It was used chaotically for different things and it became clear that I
needed to include all collective housing from the period as part of the study
and that I couldn’t define a cite without also defining a conventillo, a
población, a hygienic conventillo, a house, etc. But these terms were also
used inconsistently. It was only through fighting with the typology and the
inconsistencies that I gained an understanding of cités that made sense.
Overall, I tried to maintain an openness about the project that allowed
it to change, to have alternatives in mind that were viable when information
didn’t fit together, or didn’t fit a theory, a hypothesis, a narrative, or
seemingly any kind of reality.\footnote{See, Swedberg (2014) on using typologies in the research process; Goertz
119) on objects and shifting ontologies.}

Built environment studies rely on visual material, either direct observation
or photos, maps, and plans, because form, composition, style, and nuanced
differences are best understood visually (see Harper 2012, esp. 61-68).
However, there are also ethical concerns when using visual material.
According to the International Visual Sociology Association Code of
Research Ethics and Guidelines (Papademas 2009), “Visual researchers may
conduct research in public places or use publicly-available information
about individuals (e.g. naturalistic observations in public places, analysis of

\footnote{See, Swedberg (2014) on using typologies in the research process; Goertz
119) on objects and shifting ontologies.}
public records, or archival research) without obtaining consent” (p. 255). All cases in this study utilized publicly available data and/or observations in public places. As noted in the chapter descriptions below, I have not reprinted visual material used for analysis where there were concerns of permissions or anonymity.

Chapter 2

The analysis relied on primary and secondary historical sources to understand how the cité was born. As I had trouble finding social science accounts about cités, I read historians of housing, economics, and geography, as well as histories of architecture in the central city. Initially, my reading followed a snowball of highly referenced authors but later sought out particular evidence to test theoretical “hunches” (Tavory and Timmermans 2014). These works included histories of commercialization and consumption, as well as urban planning. I also spent much time with historical city maps to trace the expansion of the grid over time and understand the localization of buildings in the residential housing typology during the period 1850-1930. I relied also on studies from the present to give me hints about the past, putting things together in piecemeal fashion. Given that the original buildings remain in many neighborhoods, I have walked the streets and observed/taken photos of most of the neighborhoods mentioned in the study. The narrative presented in this chapter is the analysis. Although I think a better option is to present information first and then discuss how you decided what information to include (a la Gould 1995 in his study of Insurgencies in Paris), I did not have time or space here to engage with each prior argument. This chapter could be a book on its own and in an effort to keep the overall theme about the multiple roles of buildings, I cut (1) prior explanations that related to economic, political, and religious factors except where relevant to my analysis and (2) presentations of information that led me to my final interpretations (such as discrepancies in accounts). Instead, the story I tell is the end product of the analysis of information.

My questions were interested in how the building type arrived to Chile and became what it is. This was a story of the upper class, not of the users. There has been a tendency in housing research to assume that if you study housing
for the poor, you must study it from their perspective. Similarly, mansions have only been studied from the perspective of elites. Here, the elite perspective is emphasized, first, because historical data is largely allied with this perspective. But, second, because I was interested in the forms and styles of the new buildings—that is, their designs—the focus is on architects and architecture. It was elites that brought the models and the architecture to Chile to build worker housing. Architects were part of the upper class in Chile at the time and it was the powerful, institutional families that made decisions about how and where the new housing buildings would be. This is also the reason I did not focus on construction per se. A focus on construction would have emphasized workers over elites, but would not have helped us understand how the new building type got its form, name, or stylistic particularities. In my case, workers are understood to be the end users of a product (rather than producers). Further, I did not come across plans or documentation for the construction of these buildings. Many cités have unknown builders and not much is known about origins of the majority of individual buildings, unless they can be attributed to famous architects.

For information that appeared repeatedly across historical accounts, I have usually not referenced an author in the analysis. Where authors are cited, it is for direct quotes, original analysis, or in cases when they were the first person to state some information that is then repeatedly referenced by later authors. I ran into problems with source materials where articles either did not properly cite sources or there was evident plagiarism. This recurred and only in some cases was I able to find the first source or independent confirmation. The problem with this is that what were understood to be “facts” were repeated endlessly without checks on validity. The narratives that are told about the origins of cités were often solidified in this manner of repetition. For example, Oscar Ortega (1985) is the key citation used for defining cités and their name origin. He has no supporting evidence or sources in his article to say where he came up with his idea; it is his hypothesis. However, it became “fact” and has contributed to the contemporary definition and understanding of cités. In other cases it was a bit like playing the game “telephone” where one person whispers something to the next, down the line, until the last person has heard something completely different than what was stated by the first. In general, a problem
with historical analysis is what to take as source material. Government documents, it turned out, were not good sources. What I originally thought was a retelling of housing policy for the last 100 years had to be scrapped as data when I realized it was framed to put a positive light on contemporary housing initiatives in opposition to earlier ones. A real problem in constructing the past is scarcity of information. There are unrecorded events and perspectives, unavailable documents, and histories that are already written that affect how we see the past (which defines the present interpretation). In my case, what was already written was often not in line with the evidence, or historical accounts did not match, and I had to try to understand these perspectives through their occupational frameworks. Historians, architects, government agencies, and social scientists all have their own agendas and ways of seeing the world, and this affected their written accounts.

Primary sources were retrieved from Chile’s National Library during stays in Santiago. Primary sources were consulted based on hunches from secondary source material. In the process tracing method I utilized, the idea is to map out a theorized mechanism for how a process unfolded. You then ask, if this were true, what evidence would it leave behind? (Beach and Pedersen 2013). Your hypotheses are then continually updated depending on whether or not evidence is found. The logic behind this type of analysis is abductive (attributed to Charles S. Peirce). Recently, sociologists have advocated abductive reasoning in research to develop new generalizable theory ⁹⁹ (Swedberg 2012, 2014; Tavory and Timmermans 2014; Timmermans and Tavory 2012; also, Lizardo 2014). “While we are pouring over our digest of the facts and are endeavoring to set them into order, it occurs to us that if we assume something to be true that we do not know to be true, these facts would arrange themselves luminously. That is abduction”

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⁹⁹ Within the context of chapter 2, process tracing is used to understand a specific outcome, not develop an overarching theory for how buildings come into existence. However, as suggested at the end of Chapter 2, generalizability may lie in how objects play roles in categorization processes. Overarchingly, the theory development for this study relies on the compilation of the empirical chapters.
(Peirce 1903:282-283, quoted in Tavory and Timmermans 2014:37-38). This was an iterative process that continually tried to make sense of new information, changing the analysis when things did not fit, and seeking out information to test hypotheses. For example, I had a hunch that the works of architect Ricardo Larraín Bravo, written in the early 1900s, might offer a clue to the naming of the type “cités”. I selected these works by Larraín Bravo due to his architectural training in France—being among the first cohort of Chileans to return from Paris to practice architecture—and his indelible mark on Santiago’s architecture at the time. To his credit are French-inspired public buildings, a cathedral, both state and philanthropically subsidized poblaciones, and some cités that are on the high end of the architectural scale. He seemed to me one of the key players involved in high and low, as well as public and private, production of buildings. The books revealed a push for particular new housing models as well as legislation for hygienic housing that detailed how subsidies worked in France. They were useful in understanding the transfer of ideas about architecture and housing from Europe, particularly France as well as analyzing the language used by architects at the time as they referred to collective housing. The dominant language is “worker housing”—with variants in Spanish and French—including a generic use of the word “cité”, which is what I was looking for.

At the end of this appendix I include a bibliography of primary and secondary sources as well as links to the online databases I used to find materials, such as photos, maps, and plans of poblaciones. Not all maps consulted are listed below; noted are those from historical collections rather than books. The website of Paris supplied information on locations of some Parisian cités. Although I have listed important primary and secondary sources consulted for this analysis, some of what I have learned about this building type, its history, and the various meanings attached to it has been absorbed through information and sources used for other chapters of the dissertation.
Chapter 3

In this chapter I used a collection of photos as a dataset for observing everyday practices in a space. I see this method, as a form of observation, superior to interviews or surveys for understanding the everyday uses of space by residents. First, in interviews or surveys people often do not report behavior accurately, making observation a better method for describing practices (see, Jerolmack and Khan 2014). Second, photos are better at detailing particularities of space than written observations because they “preserve sight” (Harper 2012:8). As a researcher, it is almost impossible to capture every detail in view through writing, even at multiple time points. A collection of photos allows one to repeatedly visit the space, noticing more details of spatial arrangements, ordering them in time, and allowing assumptions about practices and people to come to the forefront to be questioned within the set and in regard to other information about the case (See, Becker 1974). Lastly, photos can be checked or reanalyzed by other researchers if necessary, unlike written ethnographic observations.

The photos were publicly posted on a social media platform by the volunteer organization mentioned in the chapter. Qualitative researchers are increasingly using online information that allows access to the “everyday”, such as blogs, homepages, and discussion forums (see, Hookway 2008; Miller 2011; Snee 2010). These provide naturalistic observations that are otherwise hard to obtain. The choice of this particular set of photos rested on its public availability and its depiction of everyday use of the patio, which was the central interest of the chapter, and is hard to capture empirically. In October of 2015, I screen captured 45 photos from their first four months of visits to the cité. The organization continued to post photos of their visits through the end of the year, however, when I reanalyzed the photos in August 2016, I did not extend the dataset to include the other two months since I would not be able to compare it to my first impressions. Of course, photos need to be contextualized and the information gathered in the field in the other parts of the study shaped my analysis in this chapter.

This is a visual analysis, however, there are no visuals included for the reader, only a synthesis of descriptions of my photo analyses. This is to
maintain anonymity. Given that the photos were made public by the organization that worked in the building, gathering the observations entailed no interaction or collection of private information and should not require consent for observational analysis (Moreno et al. 2013:709). There is no login required to obtain access to the photos, which as of this writing are still available. However, the residents’ identities must still be protected. Therefore, I have not included the name or location of the building. I have also not included the name of the volunteer organization because it would be possible to detect the building I have described by knowing this information. Further, in the analysis, I have described only the space and not the people.100

Chapter 4

Field methods included participant observation (organized events, shopping, talking to people while they work, informal conversations, and unplanned activity in public spaces, namely sidewalks, streets, and stores/patios), analysis of maps, construction permit and floor plan data, marketing materials, and my own photos collected over time. What I present in the dissertation is a portion of the analysis, with some information synthesized and some omitted due to time and space restrictions, and also to keep the study directed at particular themes. I focused mainly on buildings and spatial relationships, which here were observed in connection with businesses and organizational rhetoric. Like all observational accounts, my descriptions are partial and based on my experiences. Since this chapter relies on various data and information outside of observation, I have not positioned myself in the text except to relate certain impressions. However, I want to stress that these descriptions remain my own and that others might have viewed the same situation differently.

100 In her description of using personal blog data for research, Snee (2010) notes the blurred line between “public” and “private” online. Information that is made publicly accessible does not require consent for use, however, it is often of a personal nature also. She changes identifiable details and notes the data are “personal but not private” (pp. 5-6; also, Hookway 2008:105).
I started casual observation of Barrio Italia in 2012 spending time in the neighborhood and taking photos. The photo taking sessions continued for periods in 2013 and 2014. I began systematic observation of the neighborhood between 2015 and 2016 spending two days or evenings a month participating in activities in the neighborhood, including (1) organized events, (2) taking the role of consumer through spending time in patios and sidewalk cafes, walking the streets, and window shopping, and (3) conversing with workers in retail or creative work spaces. Depending on the activity, I took notes during or directly after an event or period of time in the neighborhood. Photos were taken during activities as a means of documentation for presentation to the reader, if necessary. These observations were carried out from July 2015 to January 2016 and during May and June 2016. Time spent in the neighborhood varied days of the week and daytime and nighttime hours, and includes all seasons. I chose only a few days a month for these observations as some of my research questions were better answered with other sources of information. The observations were useful to understand how spaces were used, patterns of reuse of buildings, neighborhood context and changes, the different groups in the neighborhood, and if or how these varied over time.

My photos began as a means to document observations that I considered important to the analysis, as a supplement to help me remember what I had observed, and to document changes in the neighborhood, including buildings and businesses, new developments, and uses of commercial and public spaces. They reflect major changes in both old and new businesses: fancy signage introduced on traditional businesses, new retailers that come and go in under a year, and various changes in locations of new businesses within the same neighborhood. The photos also show a pattern of increased reuse of houses over the period and an increase in available properties that advertise for sale or rent only for commercial use—indicating that residential use is no longer an option for these houses. Over time, I began to take photos to systematically analyze similarities and differences between urban forms and facades across buildings and neighborhoods, seeking out variance to test hypotheses. Between 2014 and 2016, I took some 350 photos focused on analysis of visual similarities/patterns in facades, interiors, and street compositions. My photo observations were not limited to Barrio Italia. In the
larger context of the study, which was to determine both what was a cité and then changes in cités, I had to collect photos on industrial era collective housing buildings around the city for comparisons of urban form. Aside from Barrio Italia, I spent time in the Barrios of Yungay, Brasil, Franklin, República, Matta Sur, and Bellavista. From the ~200 photos taken in these neighborhoods, I compared early poblaciones and visible cités and pasajes, analyzing similarities and differences in individual houses, patios, gates, and noting locations. Because I did not have a map of exact locations of most cités, some of this was luck while walking the streets.

How I came to understand the housing types in the neighborhood is a convoluted story but perhaps worth telling in shortened version. Early on in the study, after I had heard about cités in Barrio Italia, I tried to find a “real” commercially reused cité in the neighborhood. I started to take photos of the commercial spaces that had the appearance of a cité from the inside. That is, if the central patio was elongated with doors opening into it. It was difficult to tell visually what might have been a house versus a collective housing building. I picked the most likely candidates and pulled their construction permits from the respective Municipalities.101 Four of the permits were chosen based on visual assessments and the other two were the buildings with “cité” in their names. Based on the information in their files, none had been built for collective use. Four of the six were converted single-family houses, while the other two were a former car garage and storage facility (this last one calling itself “Cité Arte”).102 Given what I had heard about cités in Barrio Italia, this seemed strange (at the time this represented more than a quarter of the galleries). I obtained urban plans of property lot divisions in the area for 1915 (when cités were already in full swing) and

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101 Municipalities of Providencia and Ñuñoa, Dirección de Obras Municipales, Oficina de Catastro y Archivo, Expediente de Construcciones o Edificios Existentes. A sample was necessary because permits are only available at the offices of the Municipalities and only three addresses may be obtained per day.

102 The former car garage does not have a patio/café. My visual assessment was out of curiosity for the elongated space with galleries to the sides.
The plans only included one of the two municipalities the neighborhood falls into and I used Google Maps Satellite View to supplement the data. In 1915, there were no subdivisions of lots that would suggest a cité. In 1964, there were eight. The Google data for 2015 showed six potential current cités, four of which aligned with the 1964 data. I walked the streets to check the locations. The six from Google Maps were cités and were still in residential use. I located the other four from 1964 and found one property filled in with buildings, one now a through street, and two large gated complexes of condos not from the industrial period. In any case, all were residential. It seemed there were cités in the neighborhood (constructed between 1915 and 1964) but none were commercial.

In accounts of the neighborhood’s past, I found indication of “conventillos” and initially thought this must mean converted single-family houses. However, current accounts of the neighborhood referred to “houses and cités”. Since I knew by then that “cité” and “conventillo” were used interchangeably, and that there were few cités in the neighborhood, it appeared that use of the word “cité” meant “conventillo” in this case. But then, it was strange that there were distinctions between “houses” and “cités” if “cité” referred to an overcrowded house. Later, after I started to understand the historical analysis that appears in chapter 2, it occurred to me that there were other definitions of cité that needed to be accounted for. The cités that I had investigated were those made of individual houses, but “dormitory style” new builds (“hygienic conventillos”) would not be easily

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discernable on plans of property lot divisions. It was there that I finally made the connection. The “cités/conventillos” referred to in earlier accounts were new builds, not converted houses. This made sense in conjunction with the economic history of the neighborhood. In line with all the information, a new visual assessment of the buildings led me to conclude that commercial conversions in the neighborhood were formerly private houses.

In addition to my own observations and collected data, for the narrative I recount in the chapter I analyzed the neighborhood guidebook created and distributed by the Barrio Italia Corporation—which is the association of commercial tenants in the neighborhood—in conjunction with the National Council for Culture and the Arts—whose goal is to promote the neighborhood. These organizations, along with individual business and property owners and municipal level government, are the leading voices in promoting the popular image of the neighborhood. As mentioned in the chapter, it is a concerted effort and their representation of the neighborhood helps to construct the new place identity. For this reason, I chose to analyze their book. The book is largely composed of advertisements for each business in the neighborhood (although not every businesses was included and businesses have turned over since 2012 when the book was released), as well as content written by the Organization about the neighborhood, its businesses, and locations. I used photos and written content from all pages of the guidebook to understand narrative representations. I looked for patterns in the content within each section of the guidebook (new stores, designers, food establishments, patrimony sites, cultural organizations), and overarching themes throughout the book. I coded by themes within the book (e.g., nostalgia, tradition, uniqueness, exclusivity) and those that emerged during the research process (e.g., residential versus commercial facades, naming for building types). When analyzing photos one has to be mindful of both what is depicted and what is left out. Things I considered in images were objects/people and their attributes, events, and visual motives (e.g., selling of merchandise versus experiential selling of place), along with the depictions themselves: composition, style, depth of view, angle, etc. (Pauwels 2011a:5, 2011b:578-679). The coding was iterative. First, when a new theme was identified I returned to the beginning of the section to look for the theme in other ads (Grady 2007) and second, I went back and forth
between observations in the physical space of the neighborhood and what was contained in the book to make sense of differences (Tavory and Timmermans 2014; Vaughan 2014).

I analyzed many sources of information for representations of the neighborhood. Initially, I wanted to develop the perspectives of various groups involved in Barrio Italia. I investigated what was being said about buildings by real estate interests, patrons, heritage groups, retailers, workers/entrepreneurs, and to a lesser extent residents. Not all of this information could be presented here. First, I did not have the space and second, the focus of the study was buildings and I wanted to keep them central to the analysis. I sought out accounts of buildings in narratives to find the relationships between the processes of change that occurred for both cités and Barrio Italia. The analysis I have presented here is one among possible others. For example, there is another narrative about the new creative workers in the neighborhood. They get built into the rhetoric of heritage through the idea of “work”. Cultural heritage of the prior neighborhood revolves around prior workers, and new designers are seen as carrying on the tradition of making tangible goods (that is, they are interpolated into the narrative as producers not sellers). Apart from the constructed narrative, I did not thoroughly investigate how these creative workers view their own positions in the neighborhood. Others often described them as “hipsters” and the neighborhood itself as “hipster”. Of course, this is not antithetical to the discourse on nostalgia. Part of the hipster aesthetic is the incorporation of objects from past eras (Greif et al. 2010). Further, a systematic analysis of social media photos from “place sharing“ platforms posted by neighborhood users shows representations of Barrio Italia quite similar to those presented in the guidebook I analyzed. For example, residential facades, empty streetscapes, vintage objects. This shows a possible link between the narrative of nostalgia that I have recounted and preferences of a market group.
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  - Archivo Visual de Santiago
    http://archivovisual.cl
  - Memoria Chilena
    www.memoriachilena.cl
    [Provides introductions to various aspects of Chilean History (e.g. neighborhoods, buildings, culture) written by experts and researchers in Chile]

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  - Santiago, 1906 (Biblioteca Nacional de Chile)
  - Plano De Santiago, 1910 (Biblioteca Nacional de Chile)
Sammanfattning


Los Roles Sociales de los Edificios
Crónica sobre Materialidad y Significación en los Sucesos Urbanos

Resumen

La presente tesis doctoral examina cómo una tipo de edificio -compuesto por formas materiales y significados culturales- adquiere su forma producto de una sociedad y a su vez contribuye a darle forma a ciertos aspectos de dicha
sociedad. Los edificios son teorizados como objetos que juegan roles constitutivos en lo social, pero también son herramientas metodológicas que permiten al investigador ingresar a varios contextos dentro de una determinada esfera social. Del seguimiento de un tipo de edificio, a través de la historia y distintos niveles analíticos en la ciudad de Santiago de Chile, emergen tres estudios empíricos. El primer estudio examina cómo una nueva tipo de edificio residencial surge en una ciudad donde factores sociales, culturales, económicos y políticos convergen en nuevas funciones sociales que necesitan de nuevas formas materiales. Los nuevos edificios no solamente concretizan categorías sociales, sino que las exacerban a través de distinciones visuales, geográficas y culturales. El segundo estudio analiza el uso de un espacio común privado al interior de un edificio para entender de qué manera éste contribuye a los patrones de uso que allí se desarrollan. La demarcación física entre los espacios comunes urbanos públicos y los privados, da la oportunidad para el surgimiento de prácticas sociales a distintos niveles de ingreso, que de otra manera no tendrían lugar. El tercer estudio confronta la transformación de un barrio urbano a través de la perspectiva del reuso de los edificios. A medida que el barrio adquiere una nueva identidad cultural, los edificios preexistentes son convertidos de uso residencial a comercial. El aspecto visual y espacial de los edificios reutilizados, más que el cambio de función por sí sólo, contribuye a la nueva narrativa del barrio y ayuda a acelerar el proceso.
Acknowledgments

This dissertation would not be what it is without the involvement of numerous individuals. The person that deserves the loudest acknowledgment in this process is my supervisor, Jens Rydgren. Over the years Jens has read many drafts—some of which were not ready for human consumption—and supported my work. He gave me trust and autonomy to write what I wanted and how I wanted and encouraged my voice. Without his support, this would be a very different product. Lotta Stern deserves similar acknowledgment. As my second supervisor she also read drafts, gave detailed written comments, and asked questions that helped to ground me when my theorizing was too far out in space. Lotta has also been indispensible on the bureaucratic side of this endeavor and tried to remind me that there is “life after the PhD”. Magnus Nermo, Head of the Sociology Department at SU, helped make my study of Santiago possible through the allowance of travel funds, without which I could not have kept up the trips between Scandinavia and South America. Thanks also to Lars Udehn for the same during his tenure, as well as providing feedback and encouragement on early theoretical meanderings.

Feedback on various versions of the project has made its way into the printed product. Magnus Haglunds provided detailed comments on the manuscript for my “final seminar”, and presented his understanding of the work so I could see it from a reader’s perspective. Richard Swedberg at Cornell read the work at the proposal stage and gave comments at my “halftime seminar”. Richard also provided comments, encouragement, and advice over the last few years on various pieces of my writing, and much of his advice I have tried to follow. Marta Martins at the Universidade do Porto, Portugal, presided over my first presentation of the project at a conference in Lisbon in 2014 and gave helpful suggestions in a follow-up email. Mikaela Sundberg has continually showed interest in the work, provided contacts, suggested reading, and given encouragement. Fredrick Uggla, as Director of the Institute of Latin American Studies at Stockholm University, offered his help by connecting me with researchers in Chile, as well as including me in events and seminars at the Institute. Chapter 2 benefited from the comments of the participants of one of the Institute’s
weekly research seminars, where I presented an early draft. Thanks to members of the SU Sociology Department who attended and commented at the aforementioned seminars. Appreciation also to Hernán Mondani and Andrea Monti who translated and corrected the Swedish and Spanish versions of the thesis summary that appear herein.

There are a number of people in Santiago to whom this project owes recognition. Tomás Ariztía, at the Universidad Diego Portales (UDP), invited me to visit the Department of Sociology for a semester in 2015 as part of the Program on Consumption and Markets. Tomás ensured I had a workspace at the University, as well as access to the library and Department events and seminars. I am grateful for both his hospitality and his advice on the project. In addition, I would like to thank the Department at UDP for allowing my stay and, in particular, the directors of the Instituto de Investigación en Ciencias Sociales (ICSO), Carolina Segovia and Maite de Cea, who allotted me a desk. Not only did ICSO provide me a workspace but also good company for the semester. The sharp insights of Isabel Serra Benítez at the Faculty of Architecture at UDP were fundamental to my thinking on urban forms. She shared with me slides from her courses on the history of urbanization in Santiago, which provided an entrance point to explore the historical analysis in Chapter 2. Jorge Hernández introduced me to the world of co-working spaces in Santiago and, in particular, in Barrio Italia. Our meetings at Stgo Makerspace shed light on “creative workers” in the neighborhood. Ricardo Tapia at the Instituto de la Vivienda (INVI) at the Universidad de Chile kindly provided literary and architectural references at an early phase. Mari Alvar Haro assisted me in gaining access to library collections, as well as the National Archives of Chile. Magdalena Gil Ureta, Hernán Madrid Pruzzo, and Valentina Abufhele generously gave me contact information for friends and acquaintances that had links to cités. Thank you to the friends, acquaintances, and strangers who answered a question, gave an opinion, or offered advice about all aspects of Santiago.

Part of the PhD process has little to do with writing a dissertation. There are various people that have contributed to this project in other ways. Maria Bagger-Sjöbäck has given me support over the last four years that began with helping me acclimate to Stockholm when I arrived and has continued
with kindness in answering my many questions. Thomas Nordgren, apart from answering lots of questions, has been a source of much-appreciated conversation breaks. I also owe acknowledgment to Saemi Grettisson, Anna Carin Haag, Katja Forsberg Bresciani, and Lina Bäckstrand for both showing me how things are done and making things happen.

Heartfelt appreciation to my fellow doctoral students, some that have already left, whom I will not list for fear of leaving someone out. I am grateful for the lunches, pub nights, seminars, meetings, feedback, advice, and most of all moral support. A particular acknowledgement goes to my workmates from the second floor—although we were later dispersed and diluted on the eighth floor—for showing me first hand how spaces in buildings shape network formation.

Although it seems ages ago now, Diane Vaughan, Peter Bearman, and Greg Eirich at Columbia gave me encouragement to apply for a PhD when I finished my master’s degree. Without their support I would not have started on the path to this dissertation. To those I left in New York when I decided to move abroad and start this adventure, I couldn't have made it through the free-floating feeling of the last few years without knowing I was also grounded there with you. Especially to Aiko, Claire, and Mike—if you can hear me across the Atlantic—thank you for being my rocks. To all who supported me, I am grateful.

And, finally, to the architect Daniel Lazo, who drew the floor plans that appear in chapters 1, 3, and 4 and assisted with the practicalities of photo formats, architectural and translation questions, construction permit access, and the occasional cité photograph—who deserves thanks not only for countless hours of listening to ideas, changes, complaints, crying, and rehashing the same thing over and over, but also for coolly handling the realities of me living and working on another continent for the better part of each of the last four years: lo logramos, beibi!
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