

THESIS FOR THE DEGREE OF LICENTIATE OF PHILOSOPHY

Valuation practices, value conflicts and coordination in urban development

The case of active frontages design in urban regeneration

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ABSTRACT

This thesis contributes to an ongoing discussion between the classic field of urban studies and the emerging field of valuation studies, the latter being devoted to the study of valuation as a social practice (Helgesson and Muniesa, 2013).

The thesis is oriented around the questions of: *How* valuation practices in urban development can be conceptualized; *Why* certain articulations of value gain legitimacy rather than others, and; *How* friction between values are expressed and resolved.

The questions are explored through an ethnographically inspired case study on the development of active frontages in the area of Masthuggskajen in Gothenburg, Sweden. The case is presented in two papers. The first paper develops a framework by Metzger and Wiberg (2017) to study the framing of urban qualities and values in inter-organizational urban regeneration, whilst the second paper builds on the work of Stark (2009) and Fariás (2015) to explore the mundane practices and strategies employed to coordinate value conflicts in urban-codesign.

The thesis illustrates how valuation practices in urban development can be construed as an omnipresent practice where human actors and artifacts collectively articulate the value of urban space. The thesis also highlights the role that mundane strategies and practices of coordination play in framing certain accounts of value as legitimate rather than others. Finally, the thesis portrays value conflicts as an omnipresent phenomenon, the resolution of which happens through various mundane strategies and practices of coordination.

Keywords: Valuation practices, value conflicts, coordination, valuation studies, urban studies, urban co-design, inter-organisational collaboration, active frontages

List of appended papers

Paper 1. Molnar (2022) The framing of urban values and qualities in inter-organizational settings: the case of ground floor planning in Gothenburg, Sweden

I collected the data (partly with the help of two interns) and carried out the analyses and writing. I submitted the paper to *Urban Studies* in June 2020. It came back with major revisions in September 2020. I resubmitted it in June 2021. It then came back with minor revisions in October 2021 after which I resubmitted it in January 2022. It was accepted for publication in March 2022 and published in May 2022.

Parts of this paper were presented as a conference paper entitled: Valuation studies meets urban studies: A fruitful marriage? (Ernits and Molnar, 2017). It was presented at the Third Nordic STS conference.

Paper 2. Molnar and Palmås (2021) Dissonance and diplomacy: Coordination of Conflicting Values in Urban Co-design

This paper was co-designed with my main supervisor Karl Palmås. The paper is based on the same set of data as Paper 1. I collected the data (partly with the help of two interns) and carried out the analysis. I am the joint author of the paper with Karl Palmås, who especially contributed with his writing and expertise on co-design and Actor-Network Theory literature. He also edited the paper together with me.

The first version of the paper (Molnar and Palmås, 2020) was a peer-reviewed conference paper with the title Peace piece: Dissonance and the stabilizing of local innovations in urban design. It was presented at the EASST / 4S annual conference. The paper was then rewritten and submitted to *CoDesign* journal in the autumn of 2020. It came back with revisions during the winter of the same year. After revisions, it was resubmitted in February 2021. The paper was accepted in July 2021 and subsequently published as open access in August 2021.

Acknowledgments

The process of writing this licentiate thesis has been fun, interesting, and meaningful. At times, it has also been a stressful, lonesome, and immensely slow process. Lucky then, that I have had so many good people around to support me. First and foremost, I would like to express deep appreciation to my main supervisor Karl Palmås: thanks, Karl! Thanks for being interested, supportive, and, not the least, fun to work with! And a big thanks for being patient with my susceptibility to the so-called “planning fallacy”. I would also like to thank my co-supervisor from RISE Kristina Mjörnell: thanks! You are a big reason why I became a PhD-candidate to begin with: you motivated me early on and helped me acquire the necessary funding. Even though I know that my PhD thesis is not within your main field of expertise, you have always shown lots of interest in what I do, carried out thorough readings of various versions of my texts, tried to help me keep on track, and contributed with a necessary outside perspective to the nerdy work that this thesis, after all, represents. And, big thanks to my co-supervisor from Chalmers Karl de Fine Licht: thank you Little-Karl! It is possible that I would never have gotten into research if it were not for all our stimulating and fun discussions on everything from social anthropology to politics, economics, and philosophy. Our joint book circle Föreningen för ett Filosofiskt Fikaliv (Society for a Philosophical Coffeshop Life) has for over 10 years provided me with a forum for stimulating discussions (and beer and vegetarian meatloaf!). This has especially been needed at times when work has become too much about administration and meetings, and too little about learning and trying to contribute to a better world.

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A big thanks to my family and friends. Love you all! Thanks mum and dad for having showed me that becoming a PhD candidate is a path possible to travel, and that you have done this without ever having put any pressure on me. And thanks for always having believed in me and supported me in whatever choices I have made in my life. I am sure that the feelings of self-worth and self-respect that this has given me has made writing this licentiate that much easier. Thanks to my “new” family, especially to Julia for having answered all my stupid questions over the years. Of course, thank you Imre for being who you are, for making me laugh and constantly making me explore and develop my inner-child. Also, thanks for helping me experience the city from a newish perspective: that of a child! Thanks also all you cuddly toys at home: Nose, Floffe, Fanto, Kramig and Baby-Yoda. Finally, thank you Emilia. Thanks for having chosen to spend your life with me, for always taking care of me, supporting me and protecting me from being all too consumed by work.

To sum up: writing this thesis surely has not been a one-person job. The opposite in fact: my efforts should just be seen as one node in a larger value network.

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“Decisions about urban policy, or the allocation of resources, or where to move, or how to build something, *must* use norms about good and bad. Short-range or long-range, broad or selfish, implicit or explicit, values are an inevitable ingredient of decision. Without some sense of the better, any action is perverse.

When values lie unexamined, they are dangerous.”

Lynch (1981)

1. Introduction

This chapter provides a problem formulation and motivation for my thesis, as well as its aim and scope. Furthermore, the chapter describes the site and phenomenon of study, as well as outlines the overall structure of the thesis.

1.1 The problem of value in urban development

Today, much time, money, blood, sweat, and tears are invested in the planning and design of our cities and communities. But how do the actors that make these investments know that the practices they engage in and the decisions that they make will be of value? How do they, in an extended sense, know that they are getting "bang for their bucks"? What complicates matters is that urban development processes tend to be immensely complex and uncertain. One reason is that they tend to be made up of a myriad of actors, artifacts and actions grounded in different notions of what value is and how it can be achieved.

Looking outside of academia, multiple debates are going on with regards to what urban designs and city formations it is that generate value (Hansson and Stark, 2017, Marcus, 2018). There are also ongoing epistemological and methodological debates on how those involved in the development of our cities can go about to find out whether they are doing the right thing: if their actions are of enough value. For example, during the last years, we've seen many (Swedish) urban development initiatives focused on subject matters such as "green values" (Jensfelt, 2019), "existing values" (White arkitekter, 2019), "Social Value-Creating Assessments" (Tyréns, 2018), "Value-Creating Architecture" (Månsson, 2017), "Value-Creating Urban Design" (Utopia arkitekter, 2015), and "Value-Creating Urban Development" (Evidens and Spacescape, 2016). In urban development practice, we've also seen a surge in popularity of certification programs, measurement tools and auditing schemes, by some attributed to wider New Public Management trends (Cäker and Åkesson, 2019). To counteract these developments, some advocate a renewed role for trust and personal judgment in urban development (Wiberg, 2018). Thus, looking at urban development practice, there are different possible routes and approaches advocated for understanding and evaluating the worth of urban development initiatives.

Within academia, there are also a range of perspectives interested in the role of values in urban development. Some examples are perspectives looking into: the moral values of

planning professionals (Pineda Pinto, 2020, Hellström, 2008), values embedded in urban power discourses (McArthur and Robin, 2019, Flyvbjerg, 1998), tensions between use- and exchange value in the urban political economy (Harvey, 1978, Molotch, 1976), values ingrained in field-related social positions (Hillier and Rooksby, 2002) or the institutionalization of values (Servillo and Van Den Broeck, 2012) .

During the last years, we've also seen a rise in the number of studies focusing on valuation as a socio-material practice, as defined within the emerging field of valuation studies (Helgesson and Muniesa, 2013). Yet, as I shall discuss in the next chapter, the number of studies relating to this perspective in urban studies are still few (Metzger and Wiberg, 2017), although rising in number (some recent examples are Lindblad, 2020, Styhre et al., 2022, Baker and Fick, 2022, Sezneva and Halauniova, 2021, Robin, 2018).

To summarize, there is still much to be done in terms of understanding the practices of valuation of urban development, how it is that some forms of value gain legitimacy in such processes and how value conflicts arise and are resolved.

1.2 Aim and research questions

This thesis aims to contribute to an increased understanding of the practices through which different forms of value get articulated in urban development projects. It means to do this by focusing on three problematics as captured by the following research questions:

1. How can valuation practices in urban development be conceptualized?
2. Why is it that, in specific settings, some articulations of value gain legitimacy rather than others?
3. How is friction around the value of specific urban designs expressed and how is it resolved?

The research questions are pursued in two papers (see Figure 1) and further explored in the Discussion section of this thesis. To help in pursuing these research questions I will draw upon ideas from valuation studies and cross-pollinate them with a selection of concepts and theories derived from urban studies. This way I hope I will be able to provide new conceptual tools to researchers in urban studies who are not necessarily familiar with valuation studies. By trialing and developing further existing theoretical concepts in a largely new empirical

field (urban development) I also hope to be able to contribute to the wider research agenda of a comparative study on valuation practices as it has been envisioned by, amongst others, Michèle Lamont (2012).

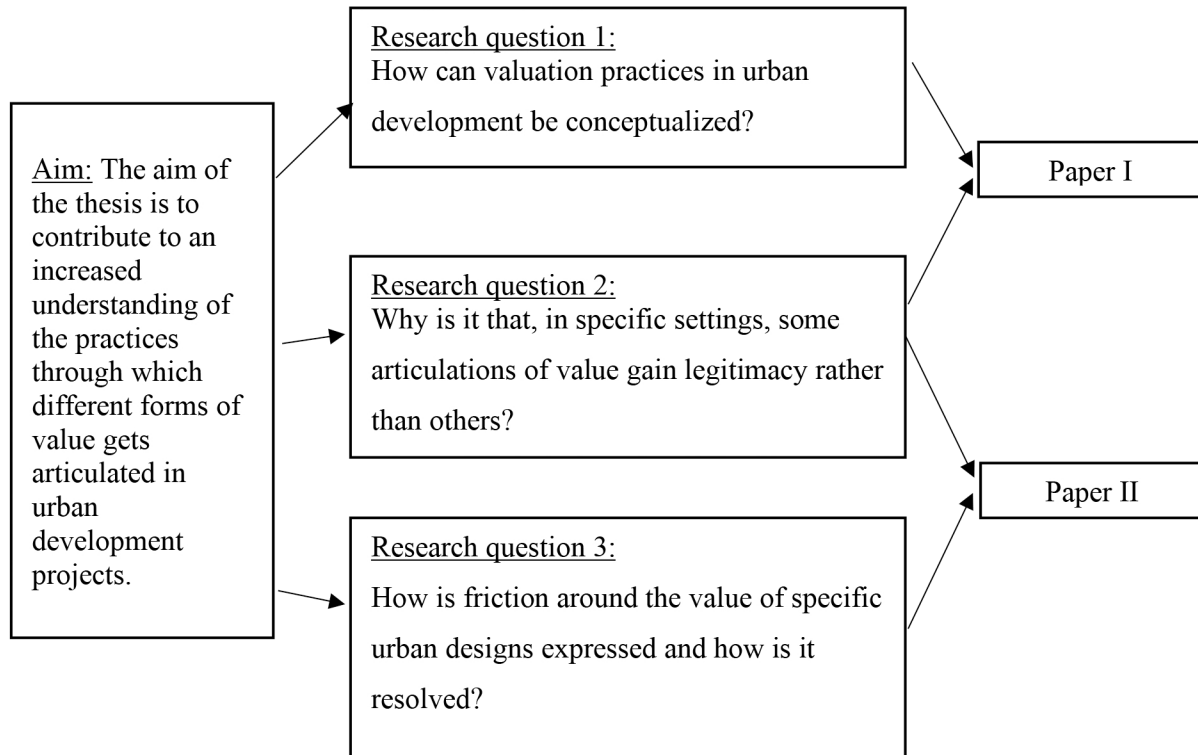


Figure 1 The primary relationships between the research questions and the papers

1.3 The phenomenon: active frontages design

My exploration of how valuation is performed in urban development projects is carried out in relation to a specific type of urban design, namely the so-called active frontage (Heffernan et. al., 2014). The notion of active frontage, and similar notions such as active ground floors or interactive facades, typically refers to a ground floor of a building that features non-domestic uses such as restaurants, bars, cafés, and shops. Furthermore, the notion typically requires the ground floor to feature plenty of human activity which is visible through frequent entrances and large and transparent windows (Kickert, 2016).

With the advent of new urbanism and other urban design ideals advocating a return to pre-modernist ways of designing cities (Olsson et al., 2016), active frontages have during recent decades become a much sought-after quality of many cities. According to Heffernan et. al. (2014), the active frontage has been advocated by some of the most central urban design

thinkers of the last decades, such as Jane Jacobs, Jan Gehl, Christopher Alexander, and Bill Hillier. For them, active ground floors were an indispensable quality of well-functioning cities. It was a generator of urban value, leading to more vibrant, interesting, walkable, safe, and economically sound cities and areas. More recently, the creation of active frontages has become an explicit planning strategy in many cities throughout the world (Heffernan et al., 2014). This includes Sweden, where active frontages are advocated by everything from researchers (Linn, 2018), to municipalities (Malmö Stad, 2022), architecture firms (Strategisk Arkitektur, 2019), interest groups (Fastighetsägarna Stockholm, 2021) and specialized consultants devoted to the issue (Popup Agency, 2022).

1.4 The site: Masthuggskajen in Gothenburg, Sweden

The case of ground floor design which I explore in this thesis takes place within the wider regeneration of the district of Masthuggskajen in Sweden's second-largest city, Gothenburg. The process of regenerating the old harbor area of Masthuggskajen into a dense and mixed-use city district has included an attempt from the side of a public-private partnership to create and maintain mixed-use ground floor facilities with varying rent levels in existing buildings, as well as in those awaiting construction. To large parts, the initial municipal vision of Masthuggskajen was modeled on the adjacent district of Linnéstaden, especially the Långgatorna quarters, with their orthogonal and architecturally diverse streetscape and mix of functions, uses, and rent levels. Thus, the regeneration of Masthuggskajen constituted an attempt at generating urban design values that many other recent developments in Gothenburg had not managed to live up to. As none of the parties had previously done something similar, the process was, to paraphrase March (1991 in Stark, 2009), not only one of exploiting existing skills and expertise, but also one of exploring new ways of developing and designing cities and their' ground floors.

I conducted participant observation in relation to the regeneration scheme, as well as interviews and document studies. This constitutes a way of trying to account for the first ten years of the Masthuggskajen development (2008-2018), from the early development of a visionary document to the adoption of a legally binding land-use plan. Consequently, the case does not include the periods of building permit applications and construction work. In fact, these are, at the time of writing, still ongoing.

The findings of the case study are presented in two papers, one setting theories of valuation in dialogue with those of framing in urban studies, and one exploring the coordination of value dissonances as an instance of urban co-design. The empirical study is however merely used as a case of how valuation within urban development projects can be understood.

1.5 Thesis outline

This thesis strives to contribute to the ongoing discussion between the fields of Valuation Studies and Urban Studies. Therefore, the next chapter will provide an overview of some of the current discussions and areas of focus in the respective field (chapter 2). After that comes the methods and methodology section (chapter 3), which aims to describe and examine the procedures of data collection and analysis that I have employed. After this follows a summary of my two papers (chapter 4) and a more detailed discussion of the three research questions (chapter 5). The last chapter of the thesis not only includes some overall conclusions, but also some possible routes for future research.

2. Previous research

This thesis explores the meeting between the fields of valuation studies and urban studies. This chapter will first introduce valuation studies, seen through the lens of 10 key themes. It will then outline several key perspectives within the field of urban studies.

2.1 Valuation studies

To begin with, this section will provide a background to valuation studies as well as give some examples of how the field has been drawn upon in the study of urban development. The section will then introduce several themes that are commonly discussed within valuation studies. I relate to each of these themes in at least one, in several cases both, of my papers.

Background to the field

Valuation Studies (Helgesson and Muniesa, 2013) is a newly proclaimed inter-disciplinary field that engages in empirical studies on the practices and processes through which “worth is attributed to persons, goods, and performances” (Waibel et al., 2021). Firstly, this process is viewed as being socio-material, meaning that it involves both human beings and artifacts (Kjellberg et al., 2013). Secondly, the process of valuation is typically seen as involving a plurality of incommensurable forms of value, such as environmental value, monetary value,

moral value, aesthetic value, and cultural-historical value (Lamont, 2012). Thirdly, valuation is viewed as a spatially and temporarily situated phenomenon (Waibel et al., 2021). Fourthly, valuation is seen as influenced by wider social factors outside the individual situation, such as institutionalized rules and relations (Waibel et al., 2021).

Even though valuation studies is a broad field with fuzzy boundaries, the characteristics described in the previous paragraph tend to set it apart from other traditions interested in value and values in the social sciences (Beckert and Aspers, 2011). One example is research within the social sciences that explores personal, social, or cultural values in the form of relatively stable internalized subjective preferences carried by individuals, professions, cultural groups, organizations etcetera (e.g. Johansson, 2009, Campbell, 2002, Hellström, 2008, Spates, 1983). Another example is research, often carried out within economics and similar fields, based on statistical analyses of the monetary costs and benefits (economic value) of goods, services, markets etcetera (Louis Gerhardus et al., 2022, Dalmas et al., 2015). Yet another example is research within psychology and other behavioral sciences that uses controlled laboratory experiments as a way of exploring how individuals articulate value judgments (Kahneman, 2017).

Empirical research in the vein of valuation studies is not in any way new. However, during the last decade or so there have been attempts from the side of some researchers to collect research in this vein under a common umbrella, commonly referred to as valuation studies (Helgesson and Muniesa, 2013). Yet, the field has also been awarded other epithets such as the sociology of valuation and evaluation (Lamont, 2012), pragmatic studies of valuation practices (Martinus Hauge, 2017), and social studies of valuation (Stark, 2020a). Since 2013, there is also a special journal devoted to the field. The journal has appropriately been named Valuation Studies (Valuation Studies, 2020). Furthermore, several journal special issues (Cefai et al., 2015), research overviews (Lamont, 2012, Krüger and Reinhart, 2017, Barnett, 2014) and edited volumes and anthologies (Stark, 2020b, Kornberger, 2015, Beckert and Aspers, 2011, Antal, 2015, Geiger et al., 2014, Dussauge et al., 2015a, Cloutier et al., 2017, Alexius and Tamm Hallström, 2014) have also been published on the topic matter during the last decade.

Despite its inter-disciplinarity, valuation studies have closer relations to some disciplines and theoretical perspectives than others (Lamont, 2012, Helgesson and Muniesa, 2013, Kjellberg

et al., 2013). Firstly, some studies draw inspiration from certain strands of economic sociology and accounting with their focus on the practical making of economic value in markets (e.g. Geiger et al., 2014, Callon, 1998, Alexius and Tamm Hallström, 2014, Zelizer, 1979). Secondly, there are those studies that relate to the work of Bourdieu (1993) and followers on the judgment of taste in, for example, arts, film, and music. Thirdly, numerous researchers draw inspiration from social studies of measurement, quantification, calculation, and auditing in fields such as organization studies (e.g. Espeland and Sauder, 2007, Strathern, 2000, Friedland and Alford, 1991, West and Davis, 2011, Espeland and Stevens, 2008) and science and technology studies (e.g. Latour, 1993, Mallard et al., 2009). Fourthly, numerous researchers in valuation studies draw from the work of Boltanski & Thévenot and followers on practices of justification and orders of worth in public disputes (e.g. Boltanski and Thévenot, 2006, Wagner, 1999).

So, the field of valuation studies indeed encompasses a broad and heterogeneous body of research. Some would probably argue that it is far too heterogeneous and broad to be called a “field” at all. At the same time, as Martinus Hauge (2017) argued a few years ago, the field of valuation studies seems to be slowly developing its own language and set of conceptual tools and canonical studies.

Conceptual resources from valuation studies have been deployed to study a broad range of subject matters. Some examples are: the valuation of knowledge in the production of evidence-based guidelines in health care (Van Loon and Bal, 2014), assessments of the social and environmental value of businesses in impact investing (Barman, 2015), media rankings of law schools (Espeland and Sauder, 2007), online consumer restaurant reviews (Mellet et al., 2014), the valuation practices of policy entrepreneurs (Maor, 2017), the role of valuation in organizational strategy (Kornberger, 2017), the evaluative logics of employees in new media projects (Girard and Stark, 2002), the modes of valuation used in lean whiteboard management in hospitals (Martinus Hauge, 2016) and aesthetic valuations in the world of baroque music, rock and rap (Hennion, 1997).

Valuation studies and urban development

There is also a growing body of studies that have urban development as their subject matter, even though they are still relatively few. In this section, I will provide an overview of some of these.

Luna Glucksberg (2014) has provided one of the few texts on urban development published in the *Valuation Studies* journal. More specifically, Glucksberg's paper deals with valuation in neighborhood regeneration. In it, she studies a process of neighborhood regeneration that happened in London a few years ago. She examines the activities and means by which the city authorities evaluated the area, both in the present and in its planned future version. Amongst others, Glucksberg shows how the practices of the city authorities largely came to *devalue* the present area in terms of its physical characteristics and population. Furthermore, the author shows how these acts of devaluation provided the authorities with the necessary legitimacy to regenerate the area. In practice, they also functioned as a means of increasing the area's status and economic value.

Holden and Scerri (2015) have written a paper presenting an approach to the study of disputes in urban planning. The authors do this by employing Boltanski and Thévenot's (2006) theoretical framework on justification and dispute resolution in the public sphere. Holden and Scerri argue that this approach can provide a somewhat more practiced-based and nuanced view of how the outcomes of public disputes are shaped in urban development compared to other approaches commonly used in planning studies, namely those of governmentality, communicative action, and American pragmatism. The authors carry out their argument with the help of a case study of waterfront redevelopment in downtown Vancouver, Canada. They show how the involved actors throughout the redevelopment scheme repeatedly shifted between, and combined, different positions and preferences regarding what a "good" development outcome would be. Naturally, repeated disputes arose. In these disputed situations, the actors could be seen *justifying* and/or *critiquing* each other's positions and preferences. They were thus, in the words of Boltanski and Thévenot, subjected to *tests of worth*, drawing from various incommensurable ideas of the *common good* (also called 'orders of worth'), each related to specific higher-order principles of value, such as green value, civic value and market value. On several occasions, the actors managed to resolve these disputes, for example by establishing local agreements or generating compromises between different principles of value (Some other examples of studies using this framework on urban development are: Eranti, 2017, Fuller, 2012b, Holden et al., 2015, Albertsen and Diken, 2001, Blok and Meilvang, 2015, Laage-Thomsen and Blok, 2020, Conley and Jensen, 2016, Centemeri, 2017).

Other works of research have drawn from valuation studies to understand the workings of the real estate sector. Rydin (2016), for example, has written a paper on how sustainability concerns lately have managed to penetrate London's commercial property sector. Rydin draws from the new economic sociology of, amongst others Callon (2007), to analyze various ways in which the *object of exchange*, namely 'sustainable property', is constructed by market professionals and devices. With inspiration from the valuation studies approach of Stark (2009), Rydin also analyzes the role that different *modalities of valuation* and *calculative tools and practices* (for example BREEAM and GRESB), have played in stabilizing certain definitions of sustainable property over others, and thus also shaped market activities such as investment decisions, asset management, and purchases and sales. Rydin also argues that the employment of some modalities of valuation rather than others is part of the explanation of why sustainability concerns have to a larger extent penetrated the prime commercial property market in London than the non-prime market (examples of other studies looking into property markets are: Robin, 2018, Christophers, 2014).

Then there are works of research that have employed valuation studies to explore various domains of professional practice related to spatial planning and design. Farías (2015), for example, has conducted multiple case studies on the day-to-day work of architecture firms, arguing that "architectural design is a process deeply imbued in valuation practices" (p. 272). More specifically, Farías focuses on three types of practices that architects engage in daily, namely review meetings, artefact production, and casual engagements in open-office environments. The author analyses various ways in which values are articulated as part of these practices. Farías also discusses how architecture projects are subjected to constant shifts in project conditions and restraints. Such shifts are brought about as a result of the co-existence of multiple types of participants (e.g., architects, specialists, clients) with differing goals and beliefs and by multiple types of artifacts, what Farías with inspiration from Hennion (1997) and Ewenstein and Whyte (2009), calls *project mediators*, meaning objects such as sketches, plans, cardboard, and polystyrene models and 3D animation. Furthermore, shifts in conditions and restraints are sometimes intertwined with clashes between incommensurable evaluative principles (called *evaluative dissonances*, after Stark (2009)) and/or clashes between diverging epistemic positions and knowledge perspectives, something which Farías dubs *epistemic dissonances*. Last but not least, Farías discusses how uncertainties and dissonances in the work of architects generate so-called *anti-valuation moments*, that is, moments when participants "restrain from assessing or giving value" (p. 278). Instead, in such

situations, the architect is forced to take a step back and *re-evaluate* his or her designs in a, sometimes “almost accidental” (p. 278), process of “exploration and exploitation of different epistemic positions and knowledge perspectives” (p. 278) that might lead to the creation of better design solutions (for additional studies looking into valuation amongst spatial planning professionals see Kreiner, 2020, Kornberger et al., 2011, Styhre, 2013a).

One last example is studies zooming in on the role of single devices and practices in the valuation of areas and territories. In one such study, set in Bordeaux, France, Lindblad (2020) focuses on a specific evaluation practice, namely a procedure for sustainability assessment of construction projects. Lindblad follows a group of city officials and developers as they apply the procedure to a local neighborhood construction project during a full-day workshop. With the help of a concept pair of Vatin (2013), Lindblad analyzes various ways in which the workshop participants assess (*evaluate*) and attribute (*valorizes*) the sustainability values of a range of spatial processes and phenomena, such as waste management, car parking, and greenery. Lindblad also examines various moments of conflicting valuations, for example with regards to whether the lawns in the area should be mowed or left uncut, depicted as a conflict between aesthetic and biodiversity values.

Throughout the rest of this section, I will discuss several key themes in valuation studies in a little more detail.

Theme 1: Valuation

The large collection of studies that have recently been collected under the banner of valuation studies are said to have in common a focus on valuation as a socio-material practice or process. But what does this mean more concretely? Naturally, as would be expected from such a broad field, the number of definitions and views of what 'valuation' is are many. John Dewey, the work of whom provides inspiration for many scholars in valuation studies, defined valuation as an “activity of rating, an act that involves comparison” (Dewey, 1939, p. 195). As can be seen, Dewey’s short and simple definition emphasizes valuation as something that involves comparing entities as to determine their relative importance and value. Liliana et al. (2014) on the other hand, provides a longer and perhaps more multifaceted definition of valuation as “any social practice where the value or values of something are established, assessed, negotiated, provoked, maintained, constructed and/or contested”.

One thing that these definitions have in common is the emphasis on valuation as something that happens or is carried out, that is a practice, process or activity (Helgesson and Muniesa, 2013; Lamont, 2012; Kjellberg et al., 2013). In the words of Dewey (1939) valuation studies researchers tends to relate to valuation both in terms of value as a *noun* (things are values or objects have value) and value as a *verb* (an activity through which entities are valued). This means that value is not approached as a characteristic that is solely intrinsic to an object. Nor is it dealt with simply as "a function of subjective preference or utility" (Kornberger, 2017). Rather, value is seen as the outcome of a process where both the person doing the valuing, as well as various contextual characteristics, including those of the object that is being evaluated, matters for the result (Helgesson and Muniesa, 2013). In other words, this perspective puts focus on *explaining* how particular articulations of value arise in practice, rather than focusing on value(s) as something that can *explain* why certain events happen (Martinus Hauge, 2017).

The practice of valuation can take many forms. Some valuation practices can, for example, be (more or less) *formalized and institutionalized* (Kjellberg et al, 2013; Martinus Hauge, 2017). These make use of rules, routines, tools etcetera made for the purpose of valuation. Examples of such practices that takes place in urban development projects are plan evaluations, audits, architectural competitions, design reviews, city ratings, economic calculations, cost-benefit appraisals, sustainability assessments, affordability appraisals and risk assessments.

In comparison, valuation practices can also be more *informal and mundane*. These are not based on explicitly agreed upon rules, routines and instruments. Often they are, to quote Heuts and Mol (2013), "embedded in activities that have other names /.../". Farías (2015), for example, in his previously mentioned study of architectural practice, analyzes how architects direct praise or critique towards their' colleagues' designs whilst engaging in informal and casual discussions in coffee rooms or open office landscapes. These instances of valuation are not based on any standard operating procedures. Instead, the actors play them out by heart. However, they must always, at least sub-consciously, base their judgments on personal and/or institutionalized taken-for-granted, such as rules, categorizes and values.

Theme 2: Evaluation and valorization

Valuation Studies scholars commonly think in terms of two interlinked faces (Vatin, 2013) of valuation. Firstly, valuation can refer to the process through which the value of some already existing entity is *assessed* or *appreciated*. It is, to quote Heuts and Mol (2013), "the activity of

classifying things as either valuable or not". Following Vatin (2013), some authors use the word *evaluation* to describe this process (Lamont, 2012). Secondly, valuation can also be understood as "the activity of making things (more) valuable" (Heuts and Mol, 2013). This can involve someone justifying the value of some entity to others (Lamont, 2012) or adapting or improving an entity as a means of generating value (Heuts and Mol, 2013, Kjellberg et al., 2013). Thus, this aspect of valuation is tightly linked to issues of performativity (Heuts and Mol, 2013). This face of valuation is often described as *valorization* (Heuts and Mol, 2013, Haywood et al., 2014, Lamont, 2012). If we once again relate to the work of Farias (2015), the word evaluation would describe the moment when an architect tries to make sense of the value of an existing building, for example its beauty (aesthetic value). In comparison, the word valorization would describe instances where the architect actively attempts to increase the buildings' value, for example by suggesting possible renovations to its façade as a way of making it more beautiful.

Theme 3. Qualities and qualification

Another theme in valuation studies is that of qualification, meaning the process through which some entity is awarded certain qualities (characteristics) (Callon et al., 2002). Callon et al. (2002) discuss how, for some product to become a tradable and highly valued good on the market, it must go through a process of qualification in which "a constellation of characteristics, stabilized at least for a while /.../ are attached to the product" (p. 199). Similarly, referring to Boltanski & Thévenots' work on justification in public disputes, Michel Lamont (2012) discusses how the justification (or critique) of some entity's value demands of it to be qualified as a certain type of entity compared to other entities. It is only in this way that the entity can be awarded higher (or lower) value than other competing entities.

For Lamont (2012), qualification is just one out of several sub-processes of valuation. Other such sub-processes are *categorization* meaning "determining in what group the entity (e.g. object or person) under consideration belongs", *commensuration* (making things comparable according to a common standard), *hierarchization* (locating objects in different categories in hierarchies in relation to each other) and *legitimization* (making the value of some entity become recognized, stabilized and institutionalized).

Theme 4. Valuation devices

Another reoccurring theme in valuation studies is the role that artefacts play in articulating value. In valuation studies, a variety of terms are used to describe this, such as, devices (Kjellberg et al., 2013, Baka, 2015, Rietz, 2015, Zuiderent-Jerak and Van Egmond, 2015), technologies (Lamont, 2012, Stark, 2009), non-human supports (Lamont, 2012), tools (Stark, 2009), value meeters (Forsemalm et al., 2012) or instruments (Helgesson and Muniesa, 2013, Kjellberg et al., 2013).

Martinus Hauge (2016) argues that almost any entity can be used to evaluate things, and thus become, what she calls, a *valuation device*. Furthermore, Martinus Hauge contends that the material form, knowledge positions, categorizations, scripts etcetera of valuation devices generate *affordances* (constraints and possibilities) affecting how valuations are carried out. Consequently, and with inspiration from Karpik (2010), we can see that devices help actors overcome *uncertainty* by instilling them with confidence, thus increasing the credibility of the situation at hand. This is, for example, the role that *judgment devices*, such as assignments and indicators, play in Styhre's (2013a) paper on how employees of a regional planning agency go about assessing the value of cultural actors and activities in the region. This is also the role that Baka (2015) attributes to "valuing devices" such as user-generated content (UGC) websites (e.g. TripAdvisor) in his study on placemaking in the tourism industry.

According to Stark (2009), one important function of artefacts is to help people perceive things that cannot be perceived by the naked eye. This function becomes evident when we think about situations when instruments carry out valuations with limited involvement from humans, so called *automated valuations* (Kjellberg et al, 2013). Kjellberg et al. (2013) exemplifies with "healthcare settings, where complex technical systems control resource allocations and implicitly or explicitly ascribe monetary values to treatments, lives and sometimes even body parts." (p. 23) Similarly, Baka (2015), discusses the high degrees of automaticity embedded in the mathematical formulas and algorithms of user-generated content (UGC) websites in the tourism sector (see Mellet et al. (2014) for a similar argument on the role of algorithms in online restaurant reviews).

Devices also help *prioritize*, *legitimize* and *stabilize* certain perspectives on value, whilst simultaneously devaluing or hiding other perspectives (Kjellberg et al., 2013). As Stark

(2009) says, “tools count” (p. 119) referring both to the ability of some tools to provide *counts* (numerical representations) of the world, and to the fact that tools sometimes count, in the sense that they *matter* (makes a difference) to the world. The latter is an example of the *performativity* of valuations, referring to the fact that efforts to represent the value of something, at times also come to shape it (Heuts and Mol, 2013, Christophers, 2014). The ability for tools to shape the world is, for example, something that Metzger (2018) writes about in a text on the role of ecosystem services assessments in contemporary spatial and environmental planning (also see Ifflander and Soneryd’s (2014) quite similar account related to environmental impact assessment). Another example is the aforementioned text by Farías (2015) on the role of *project mediators* (3D simulations, models, plans, sketches, renderings etcetera) in architecture. Farías argues that project mediators do not merely “provide simple materializations or representations of already existing mental or ideal forms”. Rather, during a project’s lifetime, project mediators give body to an architectural design in a variety of ways. In the case of architectural plans, for example, “the scale, the projection technique and the medium in which they are drawn” are important for what the architects sees (and does not see). Plans printed on paper, for example, allows the architect to zoom out and see wider patterns, whilst plans looked at through computers lets the architect focus on details, such as individual doors and screws. As different epistemic positions become embedded in tools, they over time become part of the architect studio’s “distributed cognitive ecology”, which come to influence how its employees (as well as their’ clients and partners) understand and evaluate architecture.

Theme 5. Valuation and space

Another theme concerns the relationship between valuation and space. To begin with, some studies have analyzed the sites and spatial arrangements that valuation practices are part of. This is what Ernits and Molnar (2017) has referred to as *spaces of valuation*. One example of a study with such a focus is that of Beunza and Stark (2004) on the work of traders in the finance sector. Here the authors describe the trading room as a “specific locale” (p. 373), a “laboratory” of sorts, providing the traders with the necessary socio-spatial resources to conduct “experiments, by deploying an array of instruments to test the market” (p. 371). Beunza and Stark (2004) also discuss how the spatial distribution of computers, desks and teams in the open-office landscape functions as factors influencing how traders associate with each other and with the market, thus functioning as resources in a form of *situated* and

distributed cognition (see Farias, 2015, for a similar analysis on how the spatial arrangements of architects' offices influences the epistemic and evaluative work of architects).

Other studies focus their attention on situations where places and areas become the objects of valuation, in what could be called a form of *valuation of space* (Ernits and Molnar, 2017). One example of such a study is that of Reinert (2014) on the planning and management of reindeer pastoralism in Norway. The author's aim is to analyze and problematize the dominant metrics, criteria and valuation practices that are used by the Norwegian state to assess the sustainability of reindeer herding in the country. One problem, argues Reinert, is the model of space which current practices and devices draw from. More specifically, these draw from a "Cartesian model of space" (p. 171) in which space is viewed as an abstract, homogenous, persistent, predictable and clearly delineated entity. This model of space means that the evaluation of a particular reindeer herd's "sustainability" gets based on calculations of the number of "bodies relative to the total grazing capacity of a given territory" (p. 172). However, continues Reinert, most reindeer herders employ a traditional (and competing) "pastoral logic of space" (p. 155). According to this logic, reindeer herding happens in complex patchworks of interrelated, but not easily demarcated, terrains in the form of pasture grounds. Furthermore, these pasture grounds continuously morph depending on the season, climatic conditions, presence of predators and insects, etcetera. Thereby, evaluating the sustainability of a reindeer herd based on a Cartesian model of space misses the goal, the author argues.

Theme 6. Value plurality

One reoccurring theme in valuation studies is that of value plurality. This notion refers to the fact that multiple and incommensurable forms of value co-exist in many social settings. Examples of such forms of value are monetary value, environmental value, moral value, cultural-historical value and aesthetic value (Lamont, 2012, Helgesson and Muniesa, 2013, Kjellberg et al., 2013, Haywood et al., 2014). Consequently, much of the work in valuation studies focuses on examining the various value criteria that underly processes of valuation, as well as how different forms of value relate to each other. It is also worth noting that different authors employ different terms to study this phenomenon. Whilst some authors study registers of valuing (Heuts and Mol, 2013), others talk about regimes of valuation (Barman, 2015), or value logics (Girard and Stark, 2002).

One common take on value plurality is the theoretical framework on so-called *orders of worth*, as developed by Boltanski and Thévenot (2006) and colleagues. Based on empirical studies, this framework proposes that actors, when engaged in public disputes, evaluate the disparate positions and arguments that circulate in the dispute by relating to one or several notions of *common good* (sometimes called ‘orders of worth’ or ‘worlds of justification’). The originally conceived of orders of worth are: inspiration, domestic, fame, civic, market and industrial (Boltanski and Thévenot, 2006). However, over time Boltanski and Thévenot have proposed additional orders of worth, such as green or environmental worth (Holden et al., 2015) and project worth (Conley and Jensen, 2016). Furthermore, it is also important to understand that according to this framework, each of these orders of worth are related to different principles, relevant proofs, tests of worth, qualified objects and people etcetera. Thus, when understanding the arguments that actors bring forward in public disputes, it is important not only to understand what types of value are referred to, but also the objects, knowledge claims, practices, actors etcetera that they are dependent upon.

One scholar who has deployed this framework to understand urban development is Eranti (2017). In his study on land-use conflicts in Helsinki, Eranti analyses the different ways in which actors evaluate land-use plans. He shows that individual actors do not merely evaluate plans based on what is good in terms of their personal interests, such as whether they are pro-development (YIMBY) or anti-development (NIMBY). Instead, they also can be seen evaluating land-use plans based on what is good in terms of their familiar affinities, or, as described in the previous paragraph, wider notions of common good.

Whilst some scholarly work, such as that of Eranti, tends to take as its starting point the principles of value that are shared by actors, other authors put more focus on the principles of value that are specific for a particular type of actor. Girard and Stark (2002), for example, in a study on valuation practices in new-media companies, demonstrate how different *communities of practices* within a single company tend to draw from different logics of value. For example, whilst web designers as a community of practice tend to employ a ‘logic of design’, according to which perception, intuition, creativity, and interactivity, are of utmost importance, information architects as a community of practice relate to a ‘logic of information architecture’, according to which cognition, clarity, ease, usability etcetera are considered important. Similarly, the work of Farías (2015) on valuation in architectural offices demonstrates that architects as a *profession* tend to base their decisions on other criteria of

value than those of their colleagues belonging to other professions (such as light designers and structural engineers).

Finally, Styhre (2013b) argues that whilst some professions tend to lean heavily on their' intuition and practical know-how (*aesthetic-emotional judgment*), others are more inclined to carry out judgments based on economic criteria (*economic judgment*) or formal and standardized procedures for data collection and analyses (*perceptual-epistemological judgment*). The latter two forms of judgment are, for example, more aptly used to describe the judgments of economists and meteorologists respectively, whilst the first is more commonly practiced by architects (for additional work by Styhre on the practical judgment of architects, see his work on "the architect's gaze" (Styhre, 2011)). Having said this, I think it is important to note that the work of Styhre, as well as that of Girard and Stark and Farias discussed above, merely look at wider tendencies. These scholars explicitly acknowledges that different professions, teams and organizations also share principles and practices of valuation.

Theme 7. Evaluative landscapes and heterarchy

An additional theme within valuation studies has to do with how valuation practices relate to each other on a level that goes beyond the individual practice, such as the organizational, inter-organizational or institutional level. In fact, Martinus Hauge (2017) argues that whilst much of the early valuation studies literature tended to focus on single valuation practices and devices, lately more studies are "zooming out". Martinus Hauge refers to this as a "quantification" of the field.

One researcher that has zoomed out in this way is Brandtner (2017) in a paper on the role that external evaluations play in stimulating convergent behavior in organizational fields. Brandtner's core argument is that, since individual external evaluations tend to be superficial and open to manipulation and social influence, their' potential homogenizing influences are typically limited. Thus, to properly comprehend the potential influences that external evaluations can play on today's organizations, it is important to understand the role of wider *evaluative landscapes* defined as "the collectivity of evaluative practices including rankings, ratings, and awards in an organizational field" (p. 201).

A related concept is that of *heterarchy* as popularized by David Stark (2009). According to him, in the context of organizations, *heterarchy* (as opposed to hierarchy) is a "mode of

governance” that characterizes many project and network-based organizations today. In these, multiple performance criteria exist side-by-side without being hierarchically ordered in relation to each other. Furthermore, as explained by Styhre (2013b), even though glitches and inconsistencies also exist in traditional hierarchically governed bureaucracies, the analytical notion of heterarchy denotes arenas “that are designed to accommodate differences and heterogeneity” (p. 93). Styhre (2013b) exemplifies with the Regional Culture Agency of Western Sweden, which is characterized by bureaucratic structures, routines and mechanisms, at the same time as it transcends the classic linear chain of command, instead consisting of multiple centers where a diversity of incommensurable objectives and goals are accommodated for. Similarly, Grabher and Thiel (2014) argue that the project organization of the London Olympics 2012 leveraged heterarchical organizing principles, something which came to enhance its adaptability in a situation of extreme complexity and uncertainty.

Theme 8. Value conflicts

Naturally, in settings characterized by incommensurable principles and practices of valuation, friction is bound to arise. Therefore, it is not surprising that value conflict is a central theme in much valuation studies literature. Ashcraft (2001) once proposed the notion of *organized dissonance* to describe the existence of friction between competing objectives in organizations. Since then, many valuation studies scholars have continued to use the term when studying value conflicts in organizational life (Kreiner, 2020, Antal, 2015, Kuch and Morgan, 2015, Farías, 2015).

In music, the term “dissonance” refers to the sound that arises when dissimilar musical scales are played simultaneously. Hutter and Stark (2015) makes the case that dissonance is a term that is also suitable for describing value conflicts in organizational life. The reason is that, compared to words such as conflict, dispute and controversy, the term dissonance captures the fact that clashes between incommensurable principles of value at times can lead to disturbing effects, and at other times can be actively exploited as a means of generating *newness* (see also Hutter and Farías, 2017), such as organizational innovations (Stark, 2009) or new designs (Farias 2015). This mirrors the world of music, where dissonant sounds can be either disturbing or beautiful and interesting.

Theme 9. Coordination of value conflicts

The previous section illustrated how value conflicts can lead to different outcomes depending on the situation. This takes us into the question of how actors, in situations of value plurality and value conflict, manages to coordinate their actions. One family of concepts that is commonly employed in valuation studies to understand this is that having to do with *testing* and *experimentation* (Lamont, 2012). In situations of conflict and uncertainty, participants often put potential routes of action “to the test” (Marres and Stark, 2020) as a means of evaluating which of them are, pragmatically speaking, of value pursuing. As explained by Marres and Stark (2020) some tests and experiments come in the shape of formalized and standardized laboratory trials and field experiments typically carried out by scientists, engineers and other experts (see for example Pinch, 1993). In an urban development context these can be exemplified by phenomena such as urban testbeds (Lina and Dalia, 2020) and living laboratories (Palmås and Eriksson, 2016). However, Marres and Stark (2020) bring to our attention the fact that notions of testing and experimentation also can be employed to capture those mundane and informal activities in which people trial their thoughts and actions in relation to their surroundings. Schön (1984) has, for example, in several studies immersed himself into the mundane experiments that planners, architects and policymakers subject their plans and designs to as a way of testing their worth.

A related phenomenon is that of *demonstrations* (or “demos”). As noted by Lamont (2012), public demonstrations involve valuation processes in the sense that organizational actors arrange demos as a way of demonstrating the value of their products, designs or technical solutions to stakeholders. But demos do not only articulate value, but at times also helps reduce uncertainty, and thereby support coordination between actors. For example, in their study on the rebuilding of Lower Manhattan after 9/11, Stark and Paravel (2008) observes the role of demonstrations in offering *proofs* and *evidence* of the value of design proposals. Architects, for example, could be seen making use of PowerPoint presentations, drawings and animations, as a way of demonstrating that their designs would help “heal a wounded city” (p. 39).

Another common way in which valuation studies scholars have understood the coordination of value conflicts is with the help of Boltanski and Thévenot’s (2006) various *coordination strategies*. Stark (2009) for example, building upon the work of Boltanski and Thévenot (2006) and others, discusses several ways in which dissonance is coordinated in today’s

organizations. To begin with, we have situations when parties are in *agreement* with each other, meaning that they embrace a “shared understanding” of how the situation should be defined, including what overall principles of value are legitimate. In comparison, we have those situations in which actors believe that they are in agreement with each other, but there is, in fact, unarticulated friction. In such cases, joint action is made possible not through shared understandings but through shared *misunderstandings*. Such “coordination through misunderstanding” is made possible thanks to “the silent coordination of circulating boundary objects”, such as vague goal formulations or abstract concepts. One more way in which heterogeneous actors coordinate their work is through the settling of *compromises*. These arise in situations when actors do not, in fact, share the same understanding of the situation, partly fueled by them embracing incommensurable higher order principles of value. In such situations, coordination can be achieved if the participants establish compromises which pragmatically and creatively combine their disparate positions.

Then we have those situations when actors drop all attempts at trying to justify their positions based on higher order principles of value. *Private arrangements* are local agreements that are formed based on what benefits, and is of *personal* interest to, the parties involved in the dispute, rather than based on what is in the *public* interest. *Relativization*, is what happens when none of the actors have any real interest involved other than that work goes on. In such situations, coordination is achieved by the help of factors *relative* to the situation, such as what gets the job done or what an outside party (e.g., a client or a judicial expert) decides is the correct route to take. Finally, we have situations when work is allowed to go on, not thanks to the parties forming a joint solution to the situation, but because one of the parties manages to *dominate* the others through active attempts at enrolment and persuasion.

2.2 Urban Studies

Urban studies is a broad and multi-disciplinary body of research on cities and their development. To large parts it emerged in the 1960’s based on that cities and city life is a phenomenon worthy of study in itself (Harding and Blokland, 2014, Bowen et al., 2010).¹

¹ In their overview, Bowen et al. (2010) argues that the corpus and context of the field of Urban Studies is structured into the following subfields: (1) Urban governance, Politics and Administration; (2) Environmental studies; (3) Urban planning, Design and Architecture; (4) Housing and Neighborhood Development; (5) Urban Sociology; (6) Urban Economics, and (7) Urban Geography. However, one could possibly argue that since their paper was written, additional disciplines have gained prominence within Urban Studies, such as Science and Technology Studies (Fariás, 2010; Hommels, 2005)

However, Harding and Blokland (2014) states that “the field of urban studies ranges over a vast canvas that could never adequately be covered in a single book” (p. xiii). Accordingly, the myriad of ways in which valuation studies relates to urban studies cannot be covered within this single licentiate thesis neither. Therefore, I have chosen to focus my attention on a selection of perspectives in urban studies. Most of these are major perspectives typically featured in textbooks (Harding and Blokland, 2014), readers (Cuthbert, 2003a, LeGates and Stout, 2010) and summarizing papers (Storper and Scott, 2016) on urban studies and urban theory.² A small selection of the perspectives, however, are not featured here because they are major perspectives in urban studies (most notably those on framing and co-design), but because I relate to them in my papers.³ In the rest of this section, I will give some examples of how the urban studies has dealt with each of these perspectives.

Pluralism and Urban regime theory

One of the first major debates in urban studies was the so-called ‘community power debate’, centered around the question of who it is that has influence over the development of our cities and communities (Harding and Blokland, 2014). One of the major positions in this debate was *pluralism*, a perspective arguing that there is a plurality of policy arenas in society, each dominated by different sets of actors (Lukes, 2005/1974, Harding and Blokland, 2014). Thus, as Dahl (2005) famously argued in his studies on urban renewal in the US, there is no single power elite that is in power. Instead, in different policy arenas different actors struggle to turn their competing interests into reality.⁴ The actor that manages to pursue its interests most effectively wins, thus leading to a resolution of the dispute⁵.

This early pluralist position was eventually exchanged for one that is today termed “neo-pluralist” that came to put emphasize governments’ dependence on the business community (Lindblom, 1977). In urban studies, the most referred to neo-pluralist perspective is probably

² Given the focus of my two papers, I have chosen social scientific perspectives that emphasize the *processes* through which cities are developed, rather than those that place the *outcomes* of such processes, such as the built environment and urban morphology, center stage (see e.g., Kropf, 2017).

³ Note that there are also many major perspectives in urban studies that I have not included here simply due to limits in time and a need to prioritize. I am here talking about perspectives such as institutional theory (Van Den Broeck, et. al., 2013), communicative and collaborative planning theory (Healy, 1997; Innes and Booher, 2018), postcolonial urbanism (Robinson and Roy, 2015), planetary urbanism (Brenner and Smith, 2015), discourse theory (Fredriksson, 2014) and urban governance (Pierre, 2014).

⁴ According to Lukes (2005/1974), Dahl’s perspective views interests as equaled with *subjective* and *explicitly* stated *preferences*.

⁵ This way of seeing power as an *actuality* that is being *exercised* in the situation is sometimes referred to as the “first dimension” of power (Lukes, 2005/1974).

that of urban regime theory, popularized by authors such as Elkin (1987), Stone and Sanders (1987) and Fainstein and Fainstein (1983). In a pluralist vein, Urban Regime Theory holds that no single elite has power monopoly in city politics. Yet, since local governments dependent on local business actors (and to some extent the other way around) they tend be drawn into long-term and informal relationships with each other (so-called “regimes”) that makes it possible for them to turn at least some of their interests into reality (Davies, 2003, Elkin, 1987). Thus, even though a particular regime is built around actors with competing interests, stability is maintained through continuous informal negotiations between its members (Stone and Sanders, 1987). Furthermore, it is not seldom that counter-regimes are formed to fight the development schemes put in motion by the dominant regime, yet typically fails to do so due to the lack of power resources (Mossberger and Stoker, 2001). Finally, it is worth noting that even though urban regime theory has been accused of not being flexible enough to capture the heterogeneity of urban governance in cities around the world (Davies, 2003, Pierre, 2014), it is still used in countries such as Sweden, although often in a more flexible and open-ended fashion than that of its early proponents (two examples are Franzén et al., 2016, Zakhour and Metzger, 2018).

Elite theory and the Urban growth machine

The other side of the aforementioned ‘community power debate’ was elite theory in its different guises. The core of this perspective is the notion that there are certain ruling elites in business and government that dominate society (for two early examples, see Mills, 1956, Hunter, 1953). These elites pursue their interests not only by exercising power over decisions in situations of open dispute (as in pluralist theory)⁶, but also by keeping certain interests of the agenda altogether (as opposed to pluralist theory) (Bachrach and Baratz (1962)).⁷ Early lite theory from the 1960’s was eventually complemented by neo-elite theory, in urban studies often represented by the theory on the *urban growth machine* (also called the thesis on urban growth coalitions) as proposed by Logan and Molotch (1987). It states that there are typically land-based elites in cities that drive urban development by forming local coalitions. These coalitions are formed based on a shared interest of the actors in increasing exchange value (surplus value) by driving up land-values and rents (Molotch, 1976). Even though the members join coalitions based on personal interests of making a profit, the members tend to

⁶ According to Lukes (2005/1974), elite theory shares pluralism’s view of interests as *subjective* and *explicitly* stated *preferences*.

⁷ Lukes (2005/1974) states that this ability to influence “non-decision making” through “agenda-setting” is an example of power’s second dimension.

legitimate this interest by stating that entire society will benefit from increased economic growth (called the ideology of “value-free development”) (Logan and Molotch, 1987).

This theory holds that local business elites are typically in the driver seat of urban development. However, as local business elites of different areas compete over attracting investments to their area, each typically do their best to win support from other local actors, such as local government bodies and community groups. Such actors, however, also tend to have an interest in use-values such as social justice or aesthetics, something which ultimately makes urban development into a constant interaction and tension between use- and exchange value (Molotch, 1976, Vogel and Swanson, 1989). This can, for example, be exemplified by Yung and Chan (2016) study on heritage site development in Hong Kong in which, even though an overall growth machine ideology is embraced by local private and public sector actors, there is a constant tension between use values (profit) and exchange value (e.g. place identity and social inclusion).

Marxist urban political economy

Some of the earliest work in urban studies was of clearly Marxist origin (Holgersen, 2020, Harding and Blokland, 2014, Cuthbert, 2003b), such as those of Lefebvre (1970/2003), Castells (1977), Harvey (1973) and Massey (1984). Much of this work has focused on the role of the market in urban development as well as on the role that cities and investments in the built environment have in preserving capitalism (Harding and Blokland, 2014). One of Harvey’s central ideas is that capitalism can avoid over-accumulation and crisis by continuously moving capital between different types of investments (so-called “circuits of capital”), that offer diverse opportunities of extracting generating exchange value (profit) (Jessop, 2006). Industrial production, human capital (education), and science & technology are three such opportunities, whilst investments in cities and the built environment offers a fourth source of exchange value, argued Harvey (Jessop, 2006). This also means that when a specific location does not offer any more profitability, investments are shifted to new territories (nations, regions, cities, city-districts) offering what Harvey referred to as a “spatial fix”. Castells (1977), in comparison, focused on the role of cities in reproducing the labor force. They do this through the provisioning of public services such as education, public transport and housing, thus in a way subsidizing Capital (Castells, 1977).

Much of the work in this tradition have looked at the role that global market-based governance, often referred to as “neoliberalism” or “post-fordism”, plays in reproducing hierarchies within and between cities and regions (Harding and Blokland, 2014, Holden and Scerri, 2015, Fuller, 2012b). Peck (2017) and Brenner (2004), for example, have argued that neo-liberalism tends to support certain privileged cities and territories in their participation in global economic competition, but also force other less-privileged cities and territories to do so, even though it, in practice, involves the latter getting left behind. Other studies have looked at how these neo-liberal tendencies drive *gentrification* on a local (Smith, 1996, Thörn and Holgersson, 2016) and transnational (Hayes and Zaban, 2020) level. *Financialization*, meaning cities’ dependence on global finance capital (Peck, 2017) and *entrepreneurial urbanism*, are two other themes that have been awarded much attention from Marxist influenced researchers during the last decades (Harvey, 1989, Brenner, 2004, Peck, 2017). Franzén et al. (2016) describes entrepreneurial urbanism in terms of a focus among today’s cities on economic growth, creativity, place branding, place competition and public-private partnerships.

As argued by Metzger et al. (2017), traditional Marxist positions in planning research often put emphasis on how power shapes the convictions and desires of people. In line with this, the Marxist oriented perspective of Lukes (2005/1974) states that peoples’ real and objective interests in the capitalist economy easily becomes down-prioritized by various stated preferences, in other words, by subjective interests. Thereby, latent conflicts between the real objective interests of actors tend to be hidden from sight. Thus, this perspective implies that power can be exercised even though there is no observable conflict present and that this is done through the mobilization of consent⁸. This is also what makes people accept domination that goes against their own objective interest (Lukes, 2005/1974).⁹

Harding and Blokland (2014) argue that some ideas from the Marxist tradition can offer important insights into how the global market economy set boundaries for how cities can and cannot develop, including why it is that some territories grow, and others decline. On the

⁸ Lukes (2005/1974) refers to this as the third dimension of power as a complement to powers first and second dimension, as previously exemplified with pluralism and elite theory, respectively.

⁹ Lukes (2005/1974) states that various authors in this tradition have different ways of defining what an interest is (e.g., a stated preferences, wellbeing, welfare, freedom to act or human nature). The author himself states that finding out what the interest of some actor is therefore always involves a value statement and judgment from the researcher’s side.

other hand, Harding and Blokland (2014), as well as other authors (Metzger et al., 2017, Holden and Scerri, 2015, Fuller, 2012a), have critiqued the Marxist influenced perspectives for putting too much analytical priority on the role of abstract and generic structural forces, such as “capital”, “power relations” and “objective interests” in explaining urban change, thus not leaving enough room for agency and variation in how cities develop and look. In line with this, Harding and Blokland (2014) states that the Marxist urban political economy tradition tends to have a methodological structuralist perspective, meaning that it views social structure as the basic unit of explanation for phenomena, as opposed to the methodological individualist perspective of, say, pluralist and elite theories, that explains the structure and development of cities by referring to the actions of human actors.

Foucauldian post-structuralism

During the last twenty years or so, various perspectives building on the work of Michel Foucault have grown strong within Urban Studies. According to Metzger et al. (2017), the Foucauldian perspective involves a focus on how knowledge claims about the world (discourses) are related to power. Yet power according to this perspective is neither a resource that individuals are in possession of, nor something that they exercise over each other (Foucault, 1982). Instead, power is seen as being apersonal. This means that it is seen as an effect of the practical organization of relationships, artefacts and actions (Lukes, 2005/1974, Foucault, 1982), such as the books, building designs, brains, technologies etcetera involved in urban planning (Metzger et al., 2017).¹⁰

A classical examples of the use of Foucauldian ideas in urban studies is the in-depth empirical study of Flyvbjerg (1998) on regeneration in Aalborg, Denmark¹¹. Based on his study Flyvbjerg draws the conclusion that even though the redevelopment scheme was carried out under the auspices of rational, democratic and consensual deliberation and cooperation, it in fact from the beginning was embedded in centuries old, partly institutionalized and unequal power relations between politics, media and the business community. This meant that government bodies that claimed to represent the “public interest”, in practice (often behind the scenes) acted to protect certain special interests, not the least certain parts of the business community. This happened not only by the systematic control of decision making and

¹⁰ Lukes (2005/1974) characterized the Foucauldian view as an example of power’s fourth dimension.

¹¹ Lukes (2005/1974) argues that Flyvbjerg provides a better example of an empirically robust study using a Foucauldian perspective than Foucault did himself.

resource allocation, but through the control of discourse in the form of arguments, analysis, documentation, technical specifications etcetera. This way, open antagonisms could be actively avoided most of the time. As long as practices and discourses were in line with institutionalized power relations, the involved actors had an active interest in rational argument, in dialogue, in shared decision making, in staying informed, in producing knowledge etcetera. However, at those times when antagonisms did arise, power instead came to systematically distort rational deliberation, and replace it with rationalizations, deception, self-deception, ignorance, manipulation etcetera. as a means of furthering the interests of those in power. (Flyvbjerg, 1998)¹² It can also be noted that some researchers have critiqued Flyvbjerg's account for treating power as a mystical force that makes actors only embrace discourses that are in line with their interests, and to explain all situations when this is not the case as instances of manipulation (Holden and Scerri, 2015, Metzger et al., 2017).

Lately, Foucault's (1991) thinking on governmentality has come to play an especially important role in urban studies. Governmentality thinking focuses on the role that spread-out power relations play in allowing governments to govern at a distance, by shaping and normalizing certain actions and mentalities among citizens (Fuller, 2012b, Raco and Imrie, 2000, Rydin, 2007). As described by Fuller (2012b), the knowledge, expertise and managerial technologies used by the state, such as performance measurements, audits and calculative practices, play a central role in this governing. Raco and Imrie (2000) claim that in today's advanced liberalism, citizens are expected to take greater responsibility for self-regulating their own behavior as a means to become more active democratic agents (see also Rose and Miller, 2010). This is something which Foucault (1991) characterized as "government through the governed" (in Raco and Imrie, 2000).

So, the Foucauldian perspective has had an immensely important role in urban studies during the last decades. However, it has also received critique for linguistic determinism (Fairclough, 2005, in Fuller, 2012b), for carrying predetermined assumptions of what sources of political domination, pre-structured power relations and state programs and technologies it is that affects the outcomes of urban development processes (often with vague references to "neoliberalism") (see also Fuller, 2012b, Fuller, 2012a, Metzger et al., 2017, Holden and

¹² Lukes (2005/1974) has argued that Flyvbjerg provides a better example of an empirically robust Foucauldian study than Foucault ever did himself.

Scerri, 2015) and for not offering tools that can account for the gap between the relatively homogenous governing rationalities of the state that are sometimes observed by Foucauldian researchers and the plurality of practices and subjectivities (including those that are ungovernable) that make up cities and their development (Fuller, 2012b, Metzger et al., 2017, Lukes, 2005/1974).

The post-political condition

The post-politics thesis refers to the situation of political consensus that has grown stronger in different policy arenas since the 1990s, including that of urban planning (Palmås and von Busch, 2015, Thörn, 2008, Swyngedouw, 2007). A basic distinction of this perspective is that between the notions of ‘politics’ and ‘the political’, as advocated by amongst others Mouffe (2005). The term ‘politics’ describes the institutions, rules and practices of formal political life in its traditional sense. In comparison, the notion of ‘the political’ designates the actions through which social order and its associated social practices are generated, a situation that always involves excluding other possible social orders (Fredriksson, 2014). The proponents of this perspective in urban studies and elsewhere argue that politics of today feature too few genuinely political moments of open and respectful debate between actors with conflicting beliefs and interests (Swyngedouw, 2007, Thörn, 2008). It is on these “agonistic” situations, not on those of rational deliberation and consensus making, that a radically new take on democracy can be founded, so called “agonistic pluralism” as Mouffe (2005) called it. This so-called Post-Marxist perspective (Metzger et al., 2017, Mouffe, 1995) critiques an alleged tendency among traditional Marxist researchers of reducing all conflicts to struggles between the universal and objective interests of different economic classes. Instead, interests must always be understood as part certain discourses. Therefore, hegemony and oppression can come in many forms and must be fought in many battles between different kinds of interests (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985).

In urban studies, these ideas have, amongst others, been employed to the study of new governance arrangements in cities. Swyngedouw (2007) describes these arrangements as being characterized by the involvement of a range of stakeholders in city politics and development. At the same time, the post-political character of these arrangements means that they favor political-administrative and technocratic decision-making arrangements that take market-based solutions for granted (Swyngedouw, 2007). Here, Swyngedouw (2005) has argued that such governance innovations in reality tend to award power to ("empower") those

groups that can navigate them, such as certain state experts and economic elites, whilst disempowering others. Thus, even though post-political governance arrangements do stimulate discussion and debate between diverging social groups and interests, “the political” is typically lacking in them (Swyngedouw, 2007). Finally, authors such as Fuller (2012a) have problematized the post-political perspective for its assumed tendency to focus too much on the hegemonic role of neoliberalism, as well as on how governance arrangements cater for economic growth and the interests of economic elites. Consequently, Fuller (2012a) states that the post-political perspective needs being complemented with perspectives that allows a closer look exactly at what social practices and mechanisms it is that favors urban elites and legitimizes the post-political consensus.

Frame theory

Frame theory (or framing theory) is a broad body of theories that focuses on the situational mechanisms (frames) through which human attention is allocated (framed) (Goffman, 1986 (1974), Callon, 1998). Whilst some researchers view frame theory as a particular version of discourse analysis (Lindekilde, 2014), others locate the former in micro-sociological and social psychological traditions, rather than in the Foucauldian post-structuralist tradition of the latter (Uggla, 2018). Uggla (2018), for example, argues that whilst frame theory tends to focus on the cognitive and situational properties that organize human attention in specific settings, discourse theory is more interested in abstract meso-, or macro level discourses (ways of thinking and talking about the world) and their relationships to power.

In urban studies, the framing perspective has been employed in a range of different ways over several decades (McCann, 2003, Jones, 2019, Elliott et al., 2004, McArthur and Robin, 2019, Schön, 1984, Schön and Rein, 1994, Van den Broeck et al., 2013). To begin with, many urban studies researchers have been influenced by Goffman’s (1986 (1974)) canonical view of frames as the cognitive and practical properties of a situation that governs how participants experience and engage with the situation. Another way of putting it is that frames provide a “definition of the situation”, an answer to the question “What is it that’s going on here?” (Goffman, 1986 (1974)). According to Goffman’s view, most situations have “ready-made” frames that actors get to know through practical involvement in the situation. Every now and then however, there is a person that does not act ‘in line’ with the situation leading to a ‘frame break’. Normally, the other participants of such situations do their best of restoring the line of action, alternatively adapting their behavior to a new frame, as not to “lose face”. Fariás

(2010) has employed a Goffmanian view on frames in an ethnographic study of tourism busses in Berlin. He studies the practical arrangement of artefacts, actions, narratives, visuals etcetera and how these regulate the flow of attention among those individuals that takes the bus tour. Furthermore, Fariás also looks closer at situations when frames overflow (Callon, 1998), denoting instances when bus tourists do not act in line with what is expected of them by the bus touring company.

Other urban studies scholars have employed Benford and Snow's (2000) definition of frames as 'schemata of interpretation' that help people orient themselves in a situation. Benford and Snow famously stressed the existence of three types of frames in policy processes: *diagnostic frames* which diagnose the current situation including what problems exist and why, *prognostic frames* which bring forward strategies and tactics for solving the problem and *motivational frames* which articulate the urgency of solving the problem and motivate to get involved. Lau (2018) employed this perspective in a study on the evolution of a debate on rent regulation in Hong Kong. The author for example shows that whilst disparate actors largely converged in terms of diagnostic frames (e.g., that a crisis in the private rental market has been generated through a slow provision of public housing), there was more divergence in prognostic frames (e.g., different views on whether rent regulation is a solution or not).

Yet another example is the notion of technological frames as proposed by Bijker (1987 in Aibar and Bijker, 1997) in connection to the theoretical perspective of SCOT (Social Construction of Technology). In a paper on different theories that can account for obduracy in city building, Hommels (2005) defines a technological frame as specific way of thinking about a technology consisting of components such as goals, problem-definitions, artefacts, methods and testing procedures. Hommels argues that this theory on frames stresses that, throughout the development of a particular technological artefact or wider socio-technological system (such as a city), different 'social groups' typically embrace diverging technological frames supporting their perspectives and interests. Aibar and Bijker (1997) has, for example, used this perspective in their study on the controversies that arose around the so-called Cerdà Plan for extending Barcelona during the period of 1854 to 1860. Amongst others, the authors state that two primary and competing technological frames arose throughout the course of the events: an "architects' frame" and an "engineers' frame". Due to their being no single "dominating technological frame", the final city layout combined the hierarchic structure and

high building density from the architects' frame with the focus on easy traffic and mobility from the engineers' frame.

Urban co-design

Yet another perspective and field of inquiry is that of co-design. In their somewhat foundational paper on this subject matter, Sanders and Stappers (2008) define co-design as “the creativity of designers and people not trained in design working together in the design development process” (p. 6). Sanders and Stappers explain that a process of co-design involves all kinds of practices; from problem formulation to ideation and decision making. Furthermore, the authors argue that the increased focus on co-design that society has seen during recent last decades has meant a change in the “landscape of design”. This amongst others has meant a changed role for designers, design researchers, design educations and even “users” (whom are today also involved as co-designers of products and services) (Sanders and Stappers, 2008). The discussion on co-design is today carried out in relation to a variety of empirical fields, including urban studies. In this, researchers employ a range of different theoretical perspective to understand urban co-design.

One example of the study of co-design in urban development is a paper by Björgvinsson et al. (2012) on Malmö Living Lab, a milieu for open innovation in Malmö (Sweden) where constellations of diverse stakeholders jointly engage in defining and creating solutions to pressing social problems. As their analytical frame, the authors use, amongst others, Mouffe's (2000 in Björgvinsson et al, 2012) the previously discussed notion of agonistic democracy as well as DiSalvo's (2012 in Björgvinsson et al, 2012) conception of agonistic political design as that which problematizes, rather than supports, the existing political system. Based on several case studies from Malmö Living Lab the authors argue that such platforms can function as “agonistic public spaces” where different stakeholders can engage in joint co-creation processes built on open, tolerant discussions and debates, thereby playing an important democratic function in the development of cities. Yet, when establishing and maintaining the infrastructure for such arenas - “infrastructuring” as the authors, after Star and Ruhleder (1996), call it - one must be aware of the ever-present risk of them becoming structured by hegemonically dominating groups.

In comparison, Palmås and von Busch (2015) draw from an ANT perspective in their case study of a participatory urban planning process in the city of Gothenburg, Sweden. Here, the

authors propose Actor-Network Theory (ANT) as an alternative way of understanding democratic deficits in urban co-design compared to perspectives on agonistic democracy and post-politics (Thörn, 2008 in Palmås and von Busch, 2015). Based on an ANT-perspective, the authors view urban co-design as a process of ‘translation’, that is, processes where the goals and interests of actors continuously are modified and see their meaning drift in relation to each other as to fit into a shared composite goal. The authors argue that this perspective does not explain the outcome of urban co-design processes by references to a wider post-political condition or to pre-defined conflicts between pre-defined groups. Instead, the explanation is based on more detailed and open-ended empirical studies into the practices and ‘protocols’ (the material formats for processing communication) that over time attach humans and non-humans to each other. In this case, this led the design proposals of the original visions to eventually become less radical and more in line with traditional urban designs thus becoming “disarmed by design” (p. 246).

Finally, a recent paper by Agid and Chin (2019) on the role of values in co-design processes can be mentioned. Inspired by amongst others feminist and anti-colonial thinking the authors discuss their personal experiences of working in co-design processes with teachers and students in urban environments in the United States. Drawing from these experiences, the authors emphasize the importance of viewing co-design as a process where value is constantly being co-created through relationships and negotiations between various actors. The authors think of these as situational and context-based processes where participants continuously try to reach resolutions or settlements to value conflicts by the means of negotiations. Thus, from such a perspective, it is important to understand actors involved in a specific context as they try to reach some form of resolution or settlement by the means of negotiation. Thus, a critical part of this work is to delve deep into questions of "what is valuable, to whom and to what end" (p. 75).

3. Methods and methodology

My normative impulse when asked to name my research approach is one of careful interest. Much like Martinus Hauge (2017) argues with inspiration from Dewey’s pragmatism, I believe that the researcher’s practical ability to navigate the complexities of real life and to do what works best given the tasks at hand are as important (or even more) as what labels we give to our research. Yet, I also realize the importance of naming and framing one’s research if one is to engage in academic discussions and progress as a researcher. In the following

chapter, I will try to make justice to my research process so far and put some names on it, even though I am aware that the largest part of the work I have done has, in practice, been left “out of frame”.

3.1 The practical set-up of the licentiate

This licentiate is the result of a collaborative set-up. As an Industrial PhD student, I am employed by a state-owned research institute located outside of academia called RISE (Research Institutes of Sweden). The same goes for one of my co-supervisors, whilst my second co-supervisor, as well as my main supervisor, are located at Chalmers University of Technology. RISE pays my salary and contributes with internal funding for parts of my PhD-studies. The actual studies, however, takes place at Chalmers University of Technology. Chalmers has also, through the so-called Center for Management of the Built Environment (CMB) and through Mistra Urban Futures, been part in co-financing and supporting my studies. For RISE, PhDs such as me function as a way of establishing bonds with academia and of keeping in touch with the latest research. However, other than this, none of the partners have shown any special interests in steering the direction of my PhD studies. It can also be noted that my PhD studies (which started in the year 2016) are carried out at a 50% pace (and during some periods less than that), whilst I use the rest of my time working in other research projects at RISE, mostly focusing on issues of social sustainability, planning and urban design.

This collaborative set-up has had both pros and cons. On the one hand it has generated an extremely shattered situation for me. I’ve constantly had to balance my course work and the writing of my PhD with the various demands brought upon me by RISE. Both in the form of a never-ending flow of deadlines from the handful of other research projects I’ve had to juggle with alongside my PhD. But also, in the form of a large array of other routines and actions that RISE’s task environment has demanded of me to perform daily, such as writing applications, answering questions from colleagues, taking part in internal working groups and weekly time-reporting and meetings with my unit. At the same time, I believe that working at RISE, which tends to be an organization more oriented towards societal problem solving than Chalmers is, has given me a form of practical sensibility. Here I’m thinking of the form of “phronesis” which Flyvbjerg et al. (2012), after Aristotle, talks about, which I probably would not have acquired had I been a traditional PhD candidate directly out of graduate school. I

hope, and believe, that this has helped me when wading through “the swampy lowlands” (Schön, 1991/1983) of urban development practice.

Another way of putting it is that my work has been characterized by a transdisciplinary sensibility. This can partly be explained by the fact that I have from the beginning of my PhD work been part of the research school of Mistra Urban Futures (2016-2019), a research platform the purpose of which has been to support transdisciplinary research aimed at solving urban sustainability challenges. Transdisciplinary co-production, as understood by MuRF, is an approach to research where the problem does not first and foremost grow out of the disciplinary (or inter-disciplinary) concerns of academia. Rather, it takes the concerns of actors outside of academia as its starting point and includes “both multiple disciplines and practice-based knowledge and expertise” (Polk, 2015) to contribute to solving these problems.

Similarly, my engagement with the empirical field on which I came to base the two papers that make up this thesis, Masthuggskajen, started-off with a real-world problem provided by actors outside of academia. Me and my colleagues at RISE had encounter a few public servants at the municipally owned real estate development company Älvstranden Utveckling AB (ÄUAB), which was concerned with whether the various regeneration projects that were taking place in Gothenburg’s so-called RiverCity, would be able to provide decent and just living conditions for people. This led us to apply for a joint research project, which also provided an opportunity for me to start my PhD studies (more about this below).

Thus, in the vein of transdisciplinary co-production, I entered my PhD studies fueled by a real-world concern, rather than by a specific theoretical-academic concern (my focus on Valuation Studies did not yet exist at this point). However, as I entered the field, I did not have any specific ideas on how to solve the problem or even what the actual problem was. This is also something that has separated my research from some classic participatory action research (Brydon-Miller et al., 2003), in which the researcher enters into the field with a particular social problem (and often solution) in view, typically taking sides with the less powerful groups in society and becoming their spokesperson. At the same time, my ambition of supporting participants of the Masthuggskajen regeneration scheme with knowledge has separated the process from certain kinds of critical research with the aim of critiquing existing practices and revealing the underlying interests and power positions of those in charge.

As the research project begun it turned out that my contacts at ÄUAB had a specific interest in studying the interests and values that drive social sustainability work in the RiverCity. They knew they wanted some sort of knowledge basis that could provide a stepping-stone for further discussions in their organization. After a period of joint deliberation, we settled on Masthuggskajen as a suitable case to study as we perceived it to be an ambitious project with regards to social sustainability. After a while, however, it became evident for me that it was an all too large task at hand to cover the Masthuggskajen scheme in its entirety within my quite small research project. Therefore, it was quite welcoming when an additional number of municipal employees got involved in the research project and suggested I could study the planning and design of active frontages in Masthuggskajen, with the argument that this process was quite unique from a Swedish point of view and needed to be documented. This provided a needed delimitation of the research task at hand.

Other than this, my collaborators at the municipality have had few detailed wants and ideas regarding how the study should be carried out. They have, however, helped me arrange interviews, given me access to meetings to observe and documents to analyze. They have also provided written and oral comments on various version of my results. But I have conducted the study (for a period with the help of two interns) and written up the results. This collaborative and transdisciplinary approach has been beneficial in several ways, not the least by giving me access to the field. Yet, there are of course methodological and ethical problems with an approach such as this, something which I will discuss further down in this chapter.

3.2 Research design

When talking about research design, one basic - and according to some, unfortunate (Latour, 2010) - distinction is that between qualitative and quantitative approaches. Given my ambition of understanding how the Masthuggskajen regeneration had developed over time, a qualitative approach came naturally to me from the beginning. My analyses almost exclusively make use of verbal, observational and visual data, rather than that of the numerical kind.

Having said this, I did for a period ponder the idea of employing a quantitative-qualitative approach (Latour, 2010), rather than a strictly qualitative one. Surveys for example, directed towards stakeholders in Masthuggskajen, would have been a possible way of exploring the frequency and distribution of actors, interests, practices, instruments etcetera. Similarly, with inspiration from the work of Prato and Stark (2013), I also for a while considered the

possibilities of me using network analysis to study how valuation is spread in the social networks of the Masthuggskajen scheme. Also, it would have been perfectly possible to deduce quantitative data from my interviews, participant observations and documents, as a way of generating statistical information about the case.

However, in a complex urban development project that is limited in size and does not represent a discrete statistical population, I do not believe that the exploration of quantitative data would have revealed that much of interest in terms of statistical distributions or causal relations. At the same time, such an approach would have required of me to sacrifice some of my qualitative data collection for reasons of time and resources.

Delving a little deeper into methodology books on qualitative research, it becomes clear that defining one's research design is no straightforward task, as there are many ways of naming and framing research designs. Merriam and Tisdell (2016), for example, make a distinction between six types of qualitative designs: 1) Basic qualitative research, 2) Phenomenology, 3) Ethnography, 4) Grounded theory, 5) Narrative inquiry and 6) Qualitative case studies. In comparison, Flick (2014) talks about the following five types of basic design in qualitative research: 1) Case studies, 2) Comparative studies, 3) Retrospective studies, 4) Snapshots and 5) Longitudinal studies. Each of these have different strength and weaknesses given the analytical focus, time perspective, level of detail etcetera that is required of one's research problem.

Drawing from the typologies above, I would argue that many of the characteristics that are typically awarded to case study design are also true for my study of the Masthuggskajen scheme. According to Merriam and Tisdell (2016), what typically characterizes case study design is that it entails the researcher producing relatively detailed and context dependent data of a (more or less) bounded system (in my case this system is the Masthuggskajen scheme). The choice of conducting a case study made sense to me, not only because my research problem required of me a somewhat detailed focus on the workings of the regeneration scheme, but also because it would allow for me to build the tacit and intuitive feel for the scheme that Flyvbjerg (2006) talks about. There are of course also problematic components of qualitative case studies, such as problems of how one is to define one's case, as well as what phenomena the case is "a case of" (Flick, 2014). Yet, these are problems that I've been aware

of and have done my best to counteract (more about this in my discussion on research quality below).

During the first couple of years of my licentiate I also carried around an idea of conducting a comparative case study (Flick, 2014). This would put my findings in Masthuggskajen in relation to another similar regeneration project in the Gothenburg area, namely that of the Forsåker area in the municipality of Mölndal (which was also a participant in the wider research project). In the line of a classical text on case studies by Eisenhardt (1989) a strength with comparing cases is that it can provide a more general understanding of the studied phenomena. A weakness of comparative case-studies is a difficulty in keeping the conditions that are not being compared constant, at least if one is after some kind of explanatory approach (Flick, 2014). It was, however, the risk of ending up producing two, all too shallow, case studies (Dyer and Wilkins, 1991) that in the end put a stop to my ambitions of conducting a comparative case study. Instead, I settled on conducting a single and qualitative case study. This case study can be said to be “a case of” how values are practically articulated in inter-organizational urban development.

Yet, as asserted by Merriam and Tisdell (2016), it is common that researchers combine different types of qualitative research designs. In my case, on top of settling for a single, and qualitative, case study design, my licentiate work has from the very beginning been indebted to ethnography. There are a number of reasons for this. To begin with, I have a background in social anthropology from my undergraduate studies, which have since then provided me with a natural leaning towards this research design. Valuation Studies scholar Aspers (2007) book on ethnographic methods had since long before my PhD project been an important methodological inspiration for me (interestingly enough, the book combines ethnography with another research design, namely that of phenomenology. More of this further down).

Furthermore, much of the Urban Studies literature that I was inspired by before my PhD-studies began, also had a leaning towards ethnography, such as Flyvbjerg's (1998) study on urban planning in Aalborg, Denmark, or STS (Science & Technology Studies) oriented literatures in Urban Studies. Also, pragmatically speaking, ethnography and other research designs that tend to be open-ended, inductively oriented and have the researcher more or less embedded in the field, also provided a suitable basis for engaging with Masthuggskajen, given that the research problem was for a long time not defined in all its details. Lastly, my leaning towards ethnography became segmented even further when I started exploring Valuation Studies as my

theoretical perspective of choice, as it also has a leaning towards in-depth case studies and ethnography.

However, ethnographic research is, traditionally speaking, thought of as that which, using participant observation as its main instrument, produces detailed and “thick” descriptions of specific cultural groups or settings (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016, Aspers, 2007). Given that I have not put participant observation at the center of my research and that the research paper format has not allow for me to “write up” a classical ethnography, perhaps it would be to take it too far to state that I’ve used an ethnographic research design. Yet, as has been discussed by plenty of researchers during the last decades, today many other techniques have been popularized for producing ethnographically inspired research (Mosse, 2006). Examples of such techniques are conducting research in several fields in parallel, yo-yo-ing back and forth between field and home and doing digital field work.

Yet, thinking of the fact that I was indeed for a period (in some sense) “part of” or “embedded in” the Masthuggskajen process and engaged in participant observation, I would not see it as all too far-fetched to claim that I’ve carried out, what Merriam and Tisdell (2016) calls, “an ethnographically inspired case study”. Furthermore, given its theoretical focus on the practical enactment of value(s) in urban planning, the study could even be called a “valuography”. This is a term recently proposed by Valuation Studies scholars Dussauge et al. (2015b) to indicate empirically oriented and “ethnographizing” research on practices of valuation.

3.3 Data collection

So far, I’ve discussed the general design of my licentiate project. However, even with this defined, there are a range of directions that one can take in terms of data collection, which is something I will discussed in this section.

Interviews

I conducted formal interviews with participants of the Masthuggskajen regeneration scheme. For this, I chose an interview format which Aspers (2007) refers to as ‘the thematically open interview’. I chose this method since I believed that it would give me an opportunity to explore the regeneration scheme in a little more open-ended an exploratory fashion than traditional, theory driven semi-structured interviews would do. Being a part of a wider ethnographic ‘empirical phenomenological’ research approach proposed by Aspers (2007),

the aim of the thematic open interview is to, in an open-ended way, explore how the respondent perceives and describes reality in his or her own words. This should be done whilst the interviewer tries to avoid imposing his or her own pre-conceived theories and concepts ('second order constructions') on the interviewee's narratives ('first order constructions'). In practice, the researcher does this by exploring a selection of themes derived from the research problem without having formulated any specific interviewee questions beforehand. However, this does not mean that the researcher seeks to build theories from the bottom up, as in grounded theory, only that the researcher attempts to, as one traditionally says in phenomenology, put his or her preunderstandings in "brackets" during the data collection.

In line with Aspers (2007) suggestion, I employed a so-called "A-scheme" during my interviews instead of an interview guide with pre-formulated interview questions (see Figure 2). An A-scheme is a visually oriented interviewing instrument in the form of a vertically or horizontally aligned page divided into several sections with boxes in each section. Each section represents a specific theme of the thematic open interview, whilst each box represents a sub-theme. Also, a few of the boxes are left blank (meaning that they have no predefined theme) to open-up for new themes to develop during the interview. There are also lines between the boxes which illustrates the pathways that the researcher anticipates that the interview will take. Throughout the interview, the interviewer jots down key words, observations of the setting or of non-verbal communication in the thematic boxes. The interviewer also draws additional arrows between the boxes as a way of emphasizing connections between themes. A point of this visual and open format is that it will make it easier for the interviewer to follow the arguments of the interviewee in real-time. This is also a function that, according to my experience, the A-scheme lives up to compared to a classic interview guide. In the end the themes revolved around the practices in which the respondent had been a part, how he or she evaluated plans, designs and policies, sources of friction and explanations of why the outcomes where the way they were. The first number of interviews zoomed in on three more general subject-matters: public space, active frontages and social housing. After a while, the interviews were delimited to only focus on active frontages and their relationship to public space.

In total, from early 2017 to late 2018 I conducted 23 interviews with individuals that where part of the Masthuggskajen's development. The interviewees were selected from an even

longer list of persons that were assembled by my contacts at ÄUAB. The criteria for selecting the interviewees initially had to do with me wanting to talk to those individuals that had the deepest and most lengthy experiences of working in Masthugskajen from each of the major partaking companies, municipal departments and consultancies. Furthermore, I first and foremost wanted to talk to individuals that had had worked operatively with the regeneration scheme, rather than decisions makers higher up in the hierarchies.

The latter sample criteria had to do with me, as far as possible, wanting the interviews to circulate around the inter-organizational events and activities that had made up regeneration scheme, what Czarniawska-Joerges (2004) refers to as the “logic of practice”. The alternative to this is a “logic of representation” where the respondent acts as a representative of his or her employer or a “logic of theory” where the respondent starts using the kinds of arguments and terminologies that he or she think that the researcher would like to hear. Another way in which I tried to come closer to a logic of practices was by encouraging the interviewees to recollect specific events and give detailed examples of happenings.

With a few exceptions, the interviews lasted between 1,5 and 2,5 hours and were recorded on my smart phone. In most cases informal conversations were also carried out before and after the interviews, typically lasting an extra 20-30 minutes. This means that I in each interview situation spent between 2,5-3,5 hours with the interviewee. Summaries of what the interviewee had said during the formal interview and the informal conversation, as well as reflections of the general “feel” of the situation, notes of non-verbal communication and the environmental surroundings were typically jotted down on my phone as soon as possible after the interview. As soon as possible the sound files were transferred to my computer and transcribed by me (or in a few cases by an intern). When transcribing the interviews, I employed several symbols for characterizing different aspects of the text (the symbol of “ “ would denote quotation whilst ‘ ‘ would denote paraphrase) (Aspers, 2007). The transcriptions were anonymized and kept on my computer as well as where backed-up on an external hard-drive.

Participant observation

An additional data collection method that I’ve used is participant observation. The major motive for conducting participant observation was that it allowed me to generate insights into actions, materials and environments circulating outside of the interview situation or

documents (Aspers, 2007). In other words, participant observation increases the researcher's ability to capture what is really going on in a particular type of situation, rather than what interviewees or documents claim to be going on. For me, this has been especially important given my ambition to research enactments of value in practice. According to Aspers (2007), another benefit of participant observation is that it provides an opportunity of making the research problem more relevant by letting the field "speak back" to you. This was important for me thinking of the transdisciplinary and collaborative nature of my research project.

As with my interviews, my participant observations were arranged in line with Aspers (2007) empirical phenomenological ethnographic approach. Also, in line with my interviews, the observations circulated around my will to, as far as possible, "bracket" my theories. As proposed by Aspers, my aim during observations was to provide an as detailed as possible account of the situation which I was observing. One reason for this is that it is typically difficult for the researcher to judge which events will eventually become relevant for one's research problem whilst in the middle of doing observations. During many of my observations I kept careful field notes, trying to, as far as possible, jot down my interpretations of what was going on, where, with whom, in what environment etcetera., On top of this, as suggested by Aspers (2007), I kept extra focus on issues having to do with the specific themes I was researching, namely those relating to valuations. Similar to what was done with my interview transcripts, I employed a number of conventions for taking fieldnotes (Aspers, 2007), for example made use of symbols when writing the field notes (e.g. letting the symbols < > denote first order constructions and the symbols // denote second order constructions).

As discussed by Aspers (2007), my field notes looked quite different depending on the properties of the situation that I was observing. In some instances, such as when I happened to bump into a person engaged in Masthuggskajen by accident, there was no room for me to keep any field notes on the spot. Instead, I tried to, as soon as I got the chance, jot down my observations and reflections on my phone or on my computer. In other situations, when I had planned the observations beforehand, I could keep more thorough and detailed notes, as well as also plan in more detail what I would look at or ask for.

In the end, I conducted approximately 50 hours of participant observations during the period of early 2017 and late 2018 in settings connected to the Masthuggskajen scheme, where present. In line with my research problem, I focused on situations where there were

individuals with different organizational backgrounds present, meaning that I attended few events that were internal to any single organization. On top of this, I also made use of observational data which I had previously collected during earlier projects that I had been in together with the City of Gothenburg. I am here talking about my own notes from meetings, workshops, seminars and similar when Masthuggskajen had been on the agenda. This was possible because I had, since starting my current employment, known that I would eventually become a PhD-student, and therefore got into the habit of always taking detailed notes. Thus, it was possible for me to search through my old notes and look for situations having to do with Masthuggskajen. It is important to note that I am here not referring to many hours of observations having to do with Masthuggskajen, but single snap-shots here and there of situations when the Masthuggskajen scheme had been brought up on the agenda, whilst the formal subject-matter had in fact been something else.

All in all, the observational data encompassed a broader range of settings and actors than those 23 that I interviewed did. Thus, the observations provided me with a broader and more varied type of data than the interviews did, allowing me to collect additional information as well as to confirm, or get alternative interpretations, of subject matters that were mentioned in interviews or documents.

It must be noted that the settings in which I conducted participant observation varied a bit. Firstly, I got the opportunity to observe many internal meetings, workshops, seminars, walkshops and email-conversations that were part of the formal Masthuggskajen scheme. In other words, they were clearly a part of “the field” that I was studying. During these I, most of the time, had the role of a pure ‘observer’, alternatively of a ‘participant observer’, rather than an ‘observing participant’ (Aspers, 2007), meaning that I didn’t do much to actively participate. Secondly, I collected field notes during meetings and conversations (over phone or email) with participants of the Masthuggskajen scheme where I was expected to be an active party, such as meetings where we discussed my research. In these, I became more of an observing participant. Thirdly, situations arose where I unintentionally got the opportunity to document events relating to Masthuggskajen even though the situations were not explicitly or exclusively aimed to fill this function. Here I’m thinking of various seminars and spontaneous meetings with people in corridors of the municipality or in the public spaces of Gothenburg in which Masthuggskajen became our joint focus of attention.

In general, I strove to complement and tidy my field notes on my computer as soon as possible after the observations had been conducted. As with my interviews, this included my reflections of the “feel” of the situation which I had been in, notes on the environment as well as my own interpretations of what had happened and why.

Document studies

I have also analyzed documents about the regeneration scheme produced by the municipality and Consortium organizations, that is, secondary data. This provided me with the necessary background information about the process. In line with Merriam and Tisdell (2016), document studies also provided me with an understanding of how the participants described the process without me intervening in the production of these accounts (compared to interviews and participant observations). As argued by Merriam and Tisdell (2016), a range of different kinds of documents can be used as data, each tending to have different characteristics.

One batch of documents where plans, designs, calculations, visions, instruments etcetera produced by the municipality, by members of the Masthuggskajen consortium and by consultants during the period of 2008-2018. Some of these where publicly available documents, whilst others were not. I selected some of these documents because I judged them to be central to getting an overall understanding of the Masthuggskajen scheme in its entirety, even if they only have minor (if any) content devoted to the issue of active frontages. I selected other documents because they in their entirety, or in large parts, were devoted to active frontages (and closely related issues such as facilities or retail).

Another batch of documents are meetings notes, protocols and PowerPoint-presentations produced by the municipality and consortium actors in relation to various meetings and workshops. These cover the period of 2015-2018. The largest part of them was produced as part of various activities relating to the active frontages group or work on the sustainability or quality programme. These documents have given me additional insights into what happened during meetings that the formal documents could not. Naturally, these documents only represent an exceedingly small part of all the meetings and similar activities arranged as part of the scheme and thus provide only a limited view, but still a view (more about research quality below).

In the end, I collected and analyzed 129 documents. About one hundred of these were from the period of 2008 to 2016 and the rest focused on the years 2017 and 2018.

3.4 Data analysis and writing

The first steps in the analysis process took place when my research problem and several schematic research questions were formulated. My contact persons at Älvstranden Utveckling had an interest in why certain sustainability goals rather than others become stabilized over time. Therefore, I started reading literature relating to issues of power, governance, goals and values in urban development. The interests of my contacts at Älvstranden, combined with my readings, influenced how I formulated the research problem. This came to define the overall themes based on which I subsequently came to collect and analyze my data. Consequently, and as proposed by Aspers (2007), the process of analysis took place in parallel to my collection of data and writing. As we shall see, it was also highly iterative and abductive, in the sense that my theoretical stances influenced data collection and vice versa.

After I, in dialogue with my contacts at Älvstranden Utveckling, had formulated a research problem and a set of schematic research questions, I started reading up on the Masthuggskajen scheme. I also continued the informal discussions with my contacts at Älvstranden Utveckling, as well as met with other researchers and municipal employees knowledgeable about the subject matter. For me, this was meant to function like something of a pre-study (Aspers, 2007), with the aim of making me more knowledgeable about the redevelopment scheme and different routes that my study could take. As the vastness of the scheme became apparent to me, I decided to break down the initial set of research questions into an even longer list of sub-questions. I then prioritized among these and settled for a shorter list of questions. Even though the literature I was reading at the time fed into the formulation of the questions, the latter did not explicitly refer to any theories, but rather were formulated in an “a-theoretical way”. Thus, in a sense, the process of formulating my sub-questions pushed me into breaking down and interpreting what I was learning about the Masthuggskajen scheme, thus playing a role in early analysis. The research questions subsequently also informed my choice of data collection methods.

After a period of data collection, it was time to start more of a formal analysis of my data. I settled for the approach that Aspers (2007) refers to as ‘static-dynamic analysis’. What is

meant by this is that I wanted to use my data to make comparisons based on different static themes (e.g., “goals” or “goal conflicts”). But I also wanted to capture the dynamics behind these themes, thus how they changed (or kept stable) over time.

Soon I created a coding scheme in Microsoft Word, with several types of codes that each defined how I was to break down and structure my material (Aspers, 2007). Whilst some of the codes were theoretical codes (see Aspers, 2007) clearly inspired by research literature, others were more of empirical codes based on what I saw and heard in the field. Yet, in line with Aspers’ (2007) “bracketing” approach, the codes did not explicitly refer to theoretical concepts, but were all based on words and meanings used by actors in the field. Thus, I employed a process of relatively “open coding”.

So, how did the actual coding process happen in detail? To begin with, I coded all the empirical material in the qualitative data analysis software NVivo. Then I coded the material again, this time by creating sub-codes, by dividing codes and by merging codes. After this I generated a range of tables that summarized the material based on the coding. I then I printed out the tables and highlighted my main themes with colored markers. Examples of themes were “goal conflict” and “economic value”. Based on these markings I created several one-page documents, each of which summarized the main arguments I wanted to make with respect to a specific theme. It is also important to mention that two interns at RISE helped me code a small selection of the material. They went through the same process as I did, even though they used Microsoft Word.

I then commenced the writing process based on the one-page documents (at this point the interns had finished their internship). The writing process happened in a few steps. First, I used the material to write a report in Swedish on active frontage-planning in Masthuggskajen which was to function as a formal delivery of my project. It was with this report that I explicitly started referring to some of the theories (especially those on framing and valuation) that had from early on been an inspiration for me but which I had upon until now not explicitly used in my analysis and data collection. For the first part of the report, I mainly drew from those parts of my coded material having to do with framing and valuation of active frontages. For the second part of the report, I drew more from those parts of the material having to do with coordination of value conflicts.

I then decided on writing two papers based on the report, one based on the first part of the report and one on the second part. Even though the report and the papers were based on the same coded material, they naturally differed quite a lot from each other. The report was my attempt to write for a non-academic audience with non-academic concerns, whilst still getting help from my theories. In comparison, when I wrote the academic papers, my main concern was to have my theories contribute to current discussions in academia. Thus, the papers afforded me to frame the regeneration scheme in more of a theoretical language.

3.5 Research quality

Research quality has to do with the trustworthiness of a particular piece of research: whether a piece of research (or the researcher for that matter) can be trusted (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). In line with this, Aspers (2007) argues that the scientific quality of a text can be judged based on the extent in which it contributes to developing sound theories, methods and knowledge claims about the world. To this, Aspers (2007) adds that one can also judge the quality of research based on the contributions that it makes to wider society. In the following section I will evaluate the quality of my research by using the classical criteria of trustworthiness of qualitative research once proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985 in Merriam and Tisdell, 2016).

Credibility

The criterion of credibility (alternatively ‘internal validity’) has to do with whether the claims one makes provides a trustworthy answer to one’s research questions (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). To begin with, the primary and secondary data which I have collected obviously only covers a small part the Masthuggskajen scheme (Aspers, 2007). Furthermore, there are naturally various biases embedded in the data that I have used. This is not possible to avoid. Yet, if I would have had the time and resources, I would indeed have preferred to make more interviews, conduct more observation, studied more documents etcetera. Having said this, one technique that I have used to increase the study’s credibility is that I have tried not to take empirical at face value. Instead, I have tried to stay agnostic towards my sources.

Another technique that I’ve used to increase the credibility of my research is to triangulate different types of methods and data (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). I’ve done this in a few ways. Firstly, I’ve used a variety of data collection methods (Marshall and Rossman, 2006). Secondly, I’ve employed different kinds of data: verbal as well as non-verbal (Flick, 2014).

Also, when carrying out data analyses and writing, I strove to compare data from different (types of) sources to see if they were pointing in the same directions or not. I also tried to think about alternative descriptions and explanations to what I was seeing in my material (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). Based on this, the tendencies of which I write in my two papers seem to be interpretations that are reasonable enough, even though they are far from the only interpretations one could have been made.

My sampling criteria and sampling procedure supports the credibility of my research. As a result of my initial research problem having to do with the general goals, values and interests circulating in the Masthuggskajen scheme, I initially collected data on a wide variety of people, sites, documents and artefacts. In line with Flick (2014) I, over time, narrowed down my sample criteria to better fit my changing research problem.

I also subjected my research to continuous so called ‘respondent validation’ (alternatively ‘member checks’) (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016, Flick, 2014, Marshall and Rossman, 2006). This means that I on repeated occasions received input on my results from individuals that worked with the Masthuggskajen scheme. I also, during several occasions, received input from employees of the City of Gothenburg that where not a direct part of Masthuggskajen’s project organization, but still knowledgeable about the scheme. This was done both through me giving formal presentations and through informal discussions during meetings, over the phone, over emails etcetera. The report was also reviewed by three individuals in total that where either a part of, or intricately connected to, the Masthuggskajen scheme.

Yet another technique that I have used to try to increase the credibility of my research is so-called researcher peer-review, something which has function as a way of testing the study’s theoretical and methodological soundness (Flick, 2014, Marshall and Rossman, 2006, Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). There are several different persons that have contributed to this: My three supervisors, two interns at RISE, a research assistant at RISE, participants at two conferences where I presented my studies, journal editors and reviewers as well as another researcher studying Masthuggskajen, but based on other research questions. The final Swedish report was also reviewed by a Swedish planning researcher based at KTH (Royal Institute of Technology) in Stockholm.

Naturally, being close to the field and having one's research scrutinized by others doesn't automatically make it trustworthy. It can also have the opposite effect if it leads the research to become all too tangled up in the interests of specific stakeholders and thereby losing his or her critical sensibility. I've tried to avoid this by not becoming all too close to any individual actors in Masthuggskajen. At a certain point in time, I decided to exit the field (Aspers, 2007) as a means to get some distance to my material.

Another issue having to do with closeness, which could potentially affect my study's credibility, is the fact that I participate in other research projects with the City of Gothenburg. This could in principle be problematic if it would keep me from scrutinizing the Masthuggskajen scheme enough. Of course, it is possible that my closeness to the municipality has, in practice, kept me from posing critique towards the redevelopment process without me being aware of it. On the other hand, the whole reason why my collaborators from the municipality wanted me to conduct this study from the beginning was that because they were themselves critical towards the scheme and wanted it scrutinized.

Transferability

The criterion of transferability (alternatively 'external validity') has to do with whether one can use a study's results to understand other contexts (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). In line with Flyvbjerg's (2006) argument, it has been difficult for me to tell the extent to which my results are valid for understanding other urban redevelopment contexts. Rather, this is a judgment that is best made by people familiar to that context. But one thing that perhaps reduces my study's transferability is that Masthuggskajen in some ways seems to be somewhat of an 'unusual case' (Flyvbjerg, 2006). At least the active frontages planning scheme seems unusual from both a Swedish and international point of view. In this regard, the case has perhaps not been that much of an 'appropriate case' (Flyvbjerg, 2006) when it comes to understanding other contexts. On the other hand, as Merriam and Tisdell (2016) argues, there are naturally things one can learn even from unusual cases, only perhaps different things.

At the same time there are factors that supports my study's transferability. Firstly, I have in both of my papers attempted to provide as rich and "thick" descriptions as possible as a way of making it easier for other people to judge whether there are things they can learn from the case and if so what (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). Secondly, as suggested by Merriam and

Tisdell (2016) I tried to achieve ‘maximum variation’ in the selection of my samples. Hopefully this has increased the applicability of my research in other contexts.

To summarize, even though one would never find any other redevelopment schemes that are detailed copies of the one in Masthuggskajen, there are likely that one could use specific arguments made in my papers as to understand other contexts.

Dependability

The criterion of dependability (alternatively ‘consistency’ or ‘reliability’) has to do with whether the research results are consistent with the collected data (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). This means that one would want an outsider to find the results reasonable, dependable and consistent. Naturally, in line with Merriam and Tisdell’s (2016) argument, my papers leave much to wish for in terms of accounting for the study’s dependability, something which has to do with the limited word count offered by the two journals. Luckily, this kappa has provided me with a little more room to discuss the study’s dependability.

One technique that I have used to try to increase the study’s dependability is through creating a so-called ‘audit trail’ (Lincoln and Guba, 1985 in Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). To begin with, I have recorded and transcribed my interviews and saved the transcripts on my computer. Likewise, I have saved all my field notes and research memos on my computer. I’ve also created an Excel sheet where I’ve continuously tried to document the different research questions, codes, definitions, theories etcetera and why I, in the end, settled for one or the other. Hopefully, this audit trail is something that increases the readers trust in the dependability of my study.

Confirmability

Finally, there is the quality criterion sometimes referred to as confirmability (similar to ‘objectivity’) (Marshall and Rossman, 2006). This can be defined in terms of the extent to which the research results can be confirmed or contradicted by other people. As I have already discussed, I’ve let other people scrutinize my study and tried to document my steps.

Furthermore, I have also tried to be open with my pre-understandings and biases. Even though I was knowledgeable about Gothenburg and the Masthugget area before embarking on my study, I at that time had no real knowledge about the actual redevelopment scheme nor its

participants. Furthermore, I have nothing really invested in the redevelopment scheme, nor in any of its participants or goals. It is true that I, from the start, wanted to contribute to practice, but more in terms of producing a good case study, than in terms of being an activist researcher.

3.6 Research ethics

By working on this thesis, I've come to realize that research ethics is a much more multidimensional issue than I initially thought it was. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) discuss several of these dimensions. A first dimension has to do with the extent to which the researcher conducts credible research and does not, for example, make up data or tweak it in a certain direction. A second dimension is related to the extent in which the researcher follows formal ethical procedures and guidelines, so-called 'procedural ethics'. A third dimension is related to 'situational' and 'relational' ethics. Here Merriam and Tisdell (2016) thinks of the ethical dilemmas that arise throughout the research process and that in many ways have to do with the researchers relationship to the study's stakeholders (human and non-human). I will now discuss these different dimensions in relation to the different steps of my research process.

The ethics of formulating a research problem

According to Patton (2015 in Merriam and Tisdell, 2016) there are ethical issues relating to how the purpose of a research project is defined and by whom. As I have previously discussed, I defined the overall purpose of my research project together with my contacts at the City of Gothenburg. This also involved us jointly coming to terms with how the research study would be conducted so that it would be of value to them.

Furthermore, the practice of problem formulation involved us agreeing how the collected data would be used. After a period of discussions, we agreed that the data would be used by me, not only in a popular report, but also in research papers that would possibly become part of my PhD-thesis. This is what Patton (2015 in Merriam and Tisdell, 2016) refers to as ethical questions relating to "data access and ownership".

The ethics of interviewing

Another practice that has an ethical dimension to it is that of interviewing (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). In my case, the ethical questions arose as early as when I started contacting

interviewees. In most cases, I reached out to them with an email asking them if they could consider participating in an interview. From an ethical perspective, this meant that the contacted persons were given the option to turn down the offer, or to not answer my emails or phone calls at all. On a few occasions, the latter happened. In those cases, I took care not to send too many follow-up emails (or messages on their answering machines), as a way of trying to respect their integrity and right not to answer my emails/calls. In some situations, it was I that sent out the email invitation and in other cases it was my contacts at the City of Gothenburg who did. The latter can be seen as problematic from an ethical point of view, as it can possibly have led certain individuals feeling that they had to accept the offer as a way of keeping on good terms with the City of Gothenburg.

When it comes to the actual interview situations, I informed the interviewees that they were guaranteed anonymity, that they had the right to not answer questions that they did not feel comfortable answering, as well as could end the interview whenever they wanted. I also asked the interviewees if they wanted to read the interview transcripts, as well as the final report when it was near getting finished, as to let them be in control over their words. Few of the interviewees in fact wanted to read the transcripts, or early versions of the report, for that matter. Nevertheless, in line with what Merriam and Tisdell (2016) says, many of the interviewees did in fact tell me that they had enjoyed the experience of being interviewed as it had helped them gain knowledge over their own processes. This can possibly be seen as positive from an ethical point of view.

As argued Merriam and Tisdell (2016), another ethical dimension has to do with whom the researcher decides to interview. As we've seen, I interviewed representatives of a variety of types of organizations, meaning that I let the voices of a variety of actors be heard. Yet, if we look at the final distribution of interviews, one can clearly see that most of the interviewees were in fact municipal actors. This can be explained by the fact that I had a hard time getting interviews with the property developers. Still, from an ethical point of view, it can be problematic that some actors to a lesser extent got to make their voices heard during interviews than others did. On the other hand, one could argue that given that the property developers are to a larger extent than the municipality driven by personal economic interests, the ethical problem might not negligible. Also, it can be seen as problematic that I have not included any citizens or non-profit organizations in the interviews, especially if one, as some

do (Flyvbjerg et al., 2012), argues that it is the social scientist's responsibility to let the voices of those with less power speak-out.

The ethics of participant observation

If we listen to Merriam and Tisdell (2016) we realize that the practice of participant observation also has ethical issues tied up with it. I tried to be sensitive of these issues throughout my observations. When I took part in meetings and other gatherings, I tried to inform the participants about who I was and what I was doing as a way of trying to live up to the principle of informed consent. Yet, having said this, I must be honest that this wasn't always easy. One reason is that during many formal meetings, there were typically individuals who arrived late and therefore missed out on me introducing myself. In some of these cases, I tried to make up for this by approaching these individuals afterwards. Another reason is that not all gatherings opened-up for the participants to introduce themselves.

Then there were those situations that became moments of data collection by accident, such as a seminar or meeting where Masthuggskajen suddenly became a part of the agenda and I started taking notes. This is in line with Merriam and Tisdell's (2016) declaration that situations sometimes do arise during participant observation when the principle of informed consent is not possible to live up to.

Yet one more ethical dilemma is related to issues of sampling and inclusion. As with my interviews, certain individuals, organizations and situations got more room than others. I've, for example, observed more meetings and email-conversations led by the municipality than by property developers. Perhaps the latter should have gotten a larger role, but once again, perhaps it makes sense from an ethical perspective to give the municipality's public interest more room than the private interests of the property developers.

Another ethical problem that relates to participant observation, as well as to interviewing, is that of how the researcher's presence affects the participants (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). In my case, I especially tried to not bring about any negative changes to those that I met in the field. This, of course, involved such trivial things as me trying to be a nice and decent person. Also, in some situations of participant observation (such as during seminars and large meetings), the probability of me causing damage to anyone on the spot does not seem to be very big, since I was there as more of an observing participant, than that of a participating

observer. Thus, in such situations, my presence did probably not have any major negative impacts.

The ethics of document studies

Merriam and Tisdell (2016) contend that there is an ethical dimension to document studies. The researcher's choice of documents and way of handling them has ethical implications. One issue has to do with anonymity. In my case, when it has come to sensitive and not publicly available documents, such as internal notes from meetings or unpublished manuscripts, I have been careful not to spread these if I have not received permission from those that have handed them to me.

Another issue has to do with how the choice of documents makes certain voices speak out rather than others. In my case, I have analyzed documents from the City of Gothenburg and the Masthuggskajen Consortium. I also tried to get a hold of more documents produced by individual property developers than I in the end did. However, the property developers were either reluctant to share documents with me or insisted that they would send me documents but never did, even after several reminders. Still, this once again indicates that the voices of individual property developers have been heard to a lesser extent than that of the other involved organizations.

The ethics of coding, analyzing and writing

As argued by Merriam and Tisdell (2016), the practices of coding, analyzing and writing also have ethical dimensions to them. One reason is that these practices require of the researcher to choose which themes and pieces of information should be included in the text and which should not. This was something that I tried to be aware of whilst analyzing and writing. This indeed became an issue for me when writing my papers, as this demanded of me to reduce the rich data into a limited number of core arguments that would also fit my theoretical perspectives. I tried to balance this the best I could but was fearful that I would contribute to the spread of an all too simplified picture of the regeneration scheme, that could negatively impact individuals in the field in one way or another.

Then we have the issue of whom has control over the writing process (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). As I have previously discussed, I offered several participants in the Masthuggskajen scheme, as well as a few outside actors, the opportunity to read the Swedish report before it

was published. Most of the comments that I got were minor, having to do with issues of language and style. When it comes to the two research papers I did not, however, apart from the journals' peer review processes, have anyone from the field read the papers. Instead, I sent them the papers after their publication. Thus, here I maintained full control, for good and bad.

Lastly, we have the issue of anonymity. As Merriam and Tisdell (2016) argues, it is often troublesome to maintain the anonymity of organizational actors or projects when conducting case studies on the local level. This is especially the case when looking at unusual or deviant cases. As I judged the Masthuggskajen scheme to be quite an unusual case, I decided not to keep it anonymous in my writings. However, I did my best to keep the identity of any individuals anonymous.

My morals as a researcher

Patton (2015 in Merriam and Tisdell, 2016) argues that the credibility and ethics of a research study is highly connected to the credibility and moral compass of the researcher. In the same way that academic rigor is dependent on rigorous thinking from the side of the researcher during all parts of the process, ethics is dependent on how the researcher deals with various ethical dilemmas that arise throughout the study process. Thus, declarations of biases, data trails and codes of conduct, such as those that I have offered in this text, can only cover a minor part of the actual research process that I have carried out (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). Therefore, it is up to the reader to trust (or not trust) the credibility of my study.

In this chapter, I have discussed some of the methodological steps and decisions that I have had to make throughout this study. In the introductory part of this chapter, I also accounted for the practical set-up of the study, including my interests and possible biases. I've tried to show that I have had no interests in portraying the Masthuggskajen case in one way or another. Hopefully, this has been enough to make you as a reader have trust in me having carried out this study in as credible and morally sound way as I've could.

4. Summary of appended papers

In this chapter I will summarize the two papers that are the basis for this thesis.

4.1 Paper 1. Molnar (2022) The framing of urban values and qualities in inter-organisational settings: The case of ground floor planning in Gothenburg, Sweden

This paper has been published in the journal Urban Studies. The starting point of the paper is the fact that even though studies of values and valuation have a long history within urban studies, there are few articles in the field which employ valuation studies. In a rare exception, Metzger and Wiberg (2017) combine the dual notion of valuation and valorisation, drawn from valuation studies scholar Vatin (2013), with theories on framing (Goffman, 1986 (1974)) and qualification (Callon et al., 2002) as social practices. The authors employ this framework to study an old slaughterhouse district in Stockholm, Sweden, focusing on how each of a handful of organisational actors in separate framed the qualities and values of the area.

My paper employs Metzger and Wiberg's (2017) theoretical framework, only to use it to explore the problem of how the framing of values and qualities in inter-organizational settings happen, rather than in the intra-organisational settings of the authors. Furthermore, my paper adds a systematic focus on how value plurality (Lamont, 2012) is played out in such settings, operationalized through the notion of value scales (Beckert and Aspers, 2011). The aim of my paper is to generate knowledge on the framing of urban values and qualities in inter-organisational settings making up wider urban development projects.

I pursue the aim by analyzing a case study of inter-organisational ground floor planning that happened in Masthuggskajen, in Gothenburg, Sweden, over a 10-year period. The case study shows how the Municipality, at the start of the process, framed active frontages as a quality of the future area, whilst local property owners to an extent devalued this quality. Over time, however, the active frontage as an urban quality came to be collectively valorised among the parties. However, the exact ways in which this urban quality was qualified and valorised varied over time.

The article demonstrates that, in inter-organisational settings, actors can be expected to shift between different modes of valuation depending on the situation. Also, the general modes of valuation can be expected to morph over time, for example by switching between different spatial and temporal levels. Furthermore, the paper demonstrates that a redevelopment scheme such as that in Masthuggskajen can be understood as an evaluative landscape (Brandtner,

2017) consisting of a range of valuation practices and value devices. Also, the paper shows how the notion of value plurality, here operationalized through the term value scales, allows one to extrapolate and compare different higher-order forms of value. This, what I choose to call evaluative agnosticism, strengthens the papers initial argument that a focus on value plurality can possibly keep the researcher from making a priori decisions on what values are important and which are not. At the same time, I also note that there might be a downside to this approach, namely the possible risk that the researcher loses sight of power dynamics present in urban development projects.

4.2 Paper 2. Molnar and Palmås (2021) Dissonance and diplomacy: coordination of conflicting values in urban co-design

This paper has been published in the journal CoDesign. The paper heeds a call by Whitham et al. (2019) in the same journal on the need to study valuation practices in co-design processes by drawing from valuation studies. By doing exactly this, it becomes possible for our paper to contribute with a somewhat different account of what it means for conflicts to arise and be resolved in urban co-design than those offered by the Actor-Network Theory infused case study of Palmås and von Busch (2015), as well as those focusing on conflicting frames (Schön, 1984) or agonism in design (Björgvinsson et al., 2012, DiSalvo, 2012).

The paper leverages the same empirical material as the first paper does, only to leave its chronological perspective. Furthermore, it construes the inter-organizational process described in the first paper as an instance of urban co-design. This process had private developers, municipal actors, consultants and stakeholders involved in trying to create mixed-use active frontages with a variety of rent-levels. Thus, with inspiration from Tonkiss (2013), the object of design is a complex and composite one, involving the creation of physical objects, policies, business models, organizations etcetera.

The paper analyzes the empirical material with the help of some conceptual handles from valuation studies scholars Stark (2009) and Farías (2015). These pursue, what has been called, a “realist” perspective on how “newness” (Hutter and Farías, 2017) develop in organizational life, according to which new and successful designs are not merely dependent on the generating of new ideas and decision alternatives, but also on an acceptable stabilizing of arrangements of people and artefacts (e.g. Agid and Chin, 2019). The valuation studies

infused perspective used in our paper focuses on conflict (dissonance) between principles and practices of valuation not necessarily tied to either interests or frames of individual types of actors. New design alternatives arise out of conflict, uncertainty and indeterminacy.

Yet, successful designs need stabilization, or what Stark talks about as actors pragmatically coordinating their work. With inspiration from amongst others, valuation studies scholars Boltanski and Thévenot (2006), Stark refers to several coordination strategies, such as 1) agreement, 2) compromise, 3) relativization, 4) realignment and persuasion, and 5) misunderstandings. Our paper makes use of these coordination strategies, describing co-design in urban planning as the coordination of dissonance. The paper analyses how, in Masthuggskajen, these coordination strategies were executed through various, what we chose to call, coordination practices.

So, what are the paper's empirical findings? Firstly, it identifies four major dissonances that circulated in the co-design process, namely around 1) physical design, 2) tenants and users, 3) economic and non-economic value, and 4) historical and future oriented value. Secondly, the paper identifies several coordination practices through which the co-design process in Masthuggskajen was coordinated, namely those of talking, of creating or introducing words and concepts, as well as of creating or introducing documents and tools. Other practices revolved around creating new organizations, seeking outside help and pushing unpleasant subject matters to the future.

And what about the paper's implications for future research on co-design in urban planning? To begin with, the valuation studies perspective that it employs does indeed shine new light on certain parts of urban co-design processes. It emphasizes co-design as form of mundane coordination of values conflicts. Conflicts between principles and practices of valuation that are not necessarily tied to the interests (Björgvinsson et al., 2012, Palmås and von Busch, 2015) or frames (Schön, 1984) of specific types of actors. Having said this, the paper has also shown how the valuation studies perspective risks obscuring other aspects of urban co-design processes, such as not seeing meta-values and taken-for-granted assumptions which sets limits of 'the political' thus playing a depoliticizing role in urban co-design.

5. Discussion

In the following chapter, I will present some possible answers to my research questions. I will also discuss some wider theoretical implications of these answers in relation to the various perspectives in urban studies that I discussed in the theory chapter, as well as in relation to my two papers.

5.1 How can valuation practices in urban development be conceptualized?

A first way of conceptualizing valuation practices in urban development is as a *sub-process of framing*. This was the route I chose to take in paper 1 (Molnar, 2022). In the sense it was used there, the concept of valuation captures those aspects of framing that has to do with attributing worth (or the opposite) to entities such as people, plans and places. This conceptualization implies that practices of framing can, at least analytically, be thought of as consisting of a descriptive component, and an evaluative one. My first paper chose to capture this descriptive aspect of framing through the concept of qualification, as Metzger and Wiberg (2017) also does. Having said this, one could perhaps question the need for thinking of ‘qualification’ and ‘valuation’ as sub-processes of ‘framing’. After all, Schön (1984) makes a similar distinction between descriptive and evaluative judgments merely by employing the concept of ‘normative frames’ as a particular type of frame. Having said this, I would argue that there is also a merit of using the triad of framing-qualification-valuation as it helps provide a nuanced view of the plurality of forms of value that can be articulated through framing practices.

A second way of conceptualizing valuation practices in urban development projects is as a *socio-material practice*. This is a view that is central to valuation studies. My first paper embraced this view by introducing the concept of value devices (Beckert and Aspers, 2011) to urban studies. This concept helps us see that any artefact that is employed in urban development can in principle be used to articulate value, thus becoming a value device. My second paper showed how participants in urban development projects, when they introduce or create artefacts, in practice contribute to articulating certain values rather than others. It must be noted that this focus on urban development as a socio-material practice is a view that it shares with some of the previously discussed perspectives in urban studies, such as SCOT (Social Construction of Technology) (Aibar and Bijker, 1997), Actor-Network Theory (Palmås and von Busch, 2015, Fariás and Bender, 2010) and some, more materially inclined versions of frame theory (Fariás, 2010, Metzger and Wiberg, 2017). However, the concept of

value device (or similar concepts typically employed in valuation studies) has a distinct identity in that it puts value center stage.

A third way of conceptualizing valuation practices in urban development is by looking closer at the kind of *object of valuation* (Helgesson and Muniesa, 2013) or *valuee* (Waibel et al., 2021) that is typically in focus in such processes. As Fariás (2015) argues, valuation is an omnipresent practice in any organisational field. Thus, any urban development project is bound to be made up of a myriad of different objects of valuation. However, I would argue that, in urban development projects, *urban space* is a central object of valuation, what me and my co-author have in a conference paper referred to as ‘spaces of valuation’ (Ernits and Molnar, 2017). Obviously, in my two papers, the space that is being valued is “the active frontage”.

A fourth way of conceptualizing valuation practices in urban development is as an *omnipresent* practice (Fariás, 2015). Paper 2 (Molnar and Palmås, 2021) identifies a range of mundane social practices that the participants of the co-design process were engaged in, such as talking, creating organizations, or introducing/producing artefacts. With inspiration from Heuts and Mol (2013) one can say that any of these practices had moments of valuation embedded in them. Paper 1 chose a different and more zoomed out route. It did not focus on valuation as it happened in relation to individual types of practices, but in relation to more general inter-organizational initiatives.

A fifth way of conceptualizing valuation in urban development is as a practice that is both about *assessing* the, somehow existing, value of places and about trying to *produce* value. This is what I did in paper 1, by employing Vatin’s (2013) distinction between evaluation and valorization. Paper 2 however, does not use this concept pair. However, it does show how the identified coordination practices, such as talk and artefact creation, sometimes involved strategic attempts at stabilizing certain notions of value, and at other times focused more on searching for answers to the question of ‘what is valuable?’.

A sixth way of conceptualizing valuation in urban development is as a process that can be both *inter-* and *intra-organizational*. This means that, whom the *valuator* (Waibel et al., 2021) is, can vary depending on the type of project organization. Both of my papers deal with valuation practices as they are collectively carried out by actors from different types of

organizations, whether we call them inter-organizational settings or situations of co-design. That is, in both papers, I studied teams, devices, practices etcetera which had members from different organizational backgrounds attached to them. Thus, boundary spanning networks becomes the ‘unit of valuation’ (Stark, 2009). However, in urban development projects, valuation also happens in settings that exclusively involve actors from a single organization. I am here thinking of settings such as the board rooms of individual real estate companies, or design briefs produced by individual architect firms. Such intra-organizational valuation is not something that I systematically analyzed in my papers. However, my empirical material does give many examples of it happening on the side of the inter-organizational settings.

A seventh way of conceptualizing valuation in urban development is as a practice that *happens on a collective level*. With this I mean that an act of valuation typically involves a collectivity of human agents and artefacts. In paper 1 I, for example, analyzed how valuations were carried out by collectivities such as the sustainability team or the active frontages team. In paper 2, I directed my attention towards valuation as it happened in coordination practices that assembled a collectivity of actors and objects. This is similar, but not identical, to how Metzger and Wiberg (2017) studied the valuations performed by collectivities such as ‘the city authorities’ and ‘the artists network’. This focus on valuation as a collective practice does not mean that it would not be possible to study the valuations of individuals. Indeed, in a field such as psychology, it is common to conduct such studies (Kahneman, 2021, Valdesolo and DeSteno, 2006).

5.2 Why is it that, in specific settings, some articulations of value gain legitimacy rather than others?

Urban development projects are always characterized by value plurality. In paper 2, we chose to refer to this as the presence of multiple criteria or principles of valuation (Fariás, 2015). In paper 1 on the other hand, I instead chose to talk about the existence of multiple valuation practices (Helgesson and Muniesa, 2013) and value scales (Beckert and Aspers, 2011). In the concluding section of the latter paper, I also discussed how a typical valuation studies approach would approach urban development projects with somewhat of an agnostic sensibility, something which I chose to call ‘evaluative agnosticism’. Yet, the existence of value plurality in urban development projects does not mean that all values are created equal. Every setting is doomed to have certain valuations come out on top: valuations that end up being deemed more worthy than others. In paper 1, I therefore coined the term ‘value

asymmetries' to capture this tendency. But how do value asymmetries arise? Why do some articulations of value gain legitimacy rather than others?

Existing research offers a variety of answers to the question of why some values become more important than others in urban development projects. To begin with, some framing perspectives, such as the previously discussed notion of technological frames employed by Aibar and Bijker (1997), view urban development projects as characterized by conflicts between diverging frames, each coupled to a specific type of actor (another example is Van den Broeck et al., 2013). In the end, some frames – and thereby the values which the frame contains – ends up dominating the other frame. According to an alternative model, frame conflicts can lead to frame synthesis (Schön and Rein, 1994). Here, those values that remain after the synthesis has been carried out, are those that gain legitimacy. If we continue with Actor-Network Theory, this perspective views urban development as a successive process of controversies, transformations and stabilization between the (temporarily stabilized) interests of different actors (Palmås and von Busch, 2015). This perspective might well end up as seeing dominant values as the outcome of processes of translation. In perspectives of agonistic democracy (Björgvinsson et al., 2012) on the other hand, certain values gain legitimacy based on what is achievable in a situation of peaceful agonism between actors with diverging interests. Finally, there are other perspectives that might explain value asymmetries in terms of the implicit taken-for-granted assumptions and meta-values of the dominant economic and (post-)political system, whether we call this new urban governance (Swyngedouw, 2005), or neoliberalism (Harvey, 1989).

My thesis can offer some alternative answers to the question of why some accounts of value gain legitimacy. One of these answers can be derived from paper 1. According to this paper, situated frames and their related framing practices influence what values are legitimate in a particular situation. As the reader might remember, paper 1 employs Goffman's (1986 (1974)) definition of frames as the cognitive and practical properties of a situation that governs what participants experience in the situation. Building on this definition, I would like to argue that throughout any urban development project, a variety of frames are continuously activated in the form of what Farías (2015) calls 'arrangements' of people and artefacts. Such frames do not only offer situational properties regulating the flow of attention in the moment, as Farías (2015) says. Such properties also regulate the *legitimate* flow of *valuation*, I would like to add.

Thus, according to paper 1, framings influence what forms of value and value scales become accessible to draw from in a particular setting. Such values and their related scales are embedded in the minds and bodies of the human participants, and in the objects that are present in the situation. These values become accessible when humans and objects are brought together in a particular arrangement (Fariás, 2015). This argument could possibly be enlightened by the cultural sociology of Swidler (1986). According to it, culture can be seen a form of “tool-kit” or “repertoire” of skills, habits, and styles that people draw from in specific situations to generate “strategies of action”. Thus, culture enables certain ways of engaging with the world and limits others. From this perspective, framings offer such toolkits, making certain forms of value and value scales accessible for actors to draw from rather than others. In paper 1 I, for example, showed how the framings enacted throughout the production of the specific documents, tended to articulate certain value scales, such as social mix and street-life activity. Other scales, such as those related to environmental value, tended to be left out of frame.

The perspective which I employed in paper 2 offers a somewhat different answer to the question of why some values gain legitimacy. According to it, value asymmetries are the practical outcome of *coordination practices*. In paper 2 I identified several coordination practices that have a role in coordinating value dissonances (Fariás, 2015). The practice of talking, to begin with, offers one mechanism through which some values gain legitimacy rather than others. The practice of introducing and/or creating artifacts, offer another such mechanism. The same types of mechanisms are put to play in the introduction and/or creation of words and concepts. Similarly, creating new organizations function as a way of stabilizing and, if successful, institutionalizing certain values. As I illustrated in paper 2, the practice of getting outside help can also function as a way of legitimizing certain values. The last of the identified practices, that of pushing difficult or unpleasant subject matters to the future, can function as a way of suspending the whole question of what values are the most legitimate. Thus, in the light of this model, there is not one single answer to why value asymmetries arise in urban development projects. It is instead the consequence of a long chain of valuations embedded in practices. As part of this, some value asymmetries continuously get reproduced through successful coordination, whilst others change or disappear.

But paper 2 also offers a second, complementary answer to this research question. According to it, value asymmetries are also the pragmatic outcomes of Stark’s (2009) *coordination*

strategies. In situations of *agreement*, the participants agree that some values are more important than others. According to a related strategy, namely that of *coordination-through-misunderstanding*, the participants have, on a superficial level, agreed on what values are of most importance. In situations when *compromises* are settled however, value hierarchies are crafted between different incommensurable value criteria. In yet other situations, certain values gain legitimacy because of *private arrangements* benefiting the personal "interests" of the involved parties. Then there are those settings where the parties do not actively care what criteria of value that gain legitimacy. In such situations of *relativization*, value asymmetries result from other factor relative to the situation, such as what gets the job done or what an outside party is seen as being of most value. Whilst in other situations, value asymmetries simply arise as a result *enrolment, persuasion and dominance*.

5.3 How is friction around the value of specific urban designs expressed and how is it resolved?

Much earlier research has focused on conflicts between the diverging interests of different types of actors. To begin with, some framing perspectives takes the diverging frames of different social or professional groups as their starting point (for example those of Hommels, 2005, Van den Broeck et al., 2013, Schön and Rein, 1994). Here, frame conflicts are resolved by means such as the stabilization of dominant frames (Aibar and Bijker, 1997), by frame switching (Schön, 1984) or by frame synthesis (Schön and Rein, 1994). In comparison, an Actor-Network Theory (Palmås and von Busch, 2015) approach easily ends up in analyzing the temporarily stabilized, albeit diverging goals and interests of different humans and non-humans. Conflicts are here resolved by means such as enrollment or the creation of composite designs. The agonistic perspective, on the other hand, puts focus on conflict between the interests of individuals belonging to different social and cultural groups. This perspective emphasizes conflict resolution through peaceful agonism (Björgvinsson et al., 2012). Also, there are those perspectives which are interested in underlying conflicts of interests embedded in the dominant political-economic system (Harvey, 1978, Molotch, 1976, Elkin, 1987, Flyvbjerg, 1998). Such disputes are typically characterized by underlying power imbalances embedded in the system. Thus, conflict resolution mainly happens on a superficial level and if it serves the interest of those in power.

I will begin with the perspective drawn upon in Paper 1. The paper focuses on conflicts between diverging framings of values and qualities. From this perspective, framings, as well

as friction between frames, are omnipresent in urban development. However, it is not necessarily the diverging frames of different types of social and cultural groups that come in conflict with each other, as in the framing perspectives previously discussed. Instead, a specific actor or object can frame a particular aspect of reality in different ways depending on the situation. Furthermore, such frame conflicts can, but does not have to, draw from incommensurable types of value and value scales. They can also aim at more active valorization or evaluations. Thus, it seems that this perspective would be able to offer a somewhat different and heterogenous perspective on how conflicts arise in urban development.

Paper 1 also has a few things to say about conflict resolution. Conflicts are handled by means such as frame extension, frame dominance or frame synthesis. To begin with, the paper gives several explicit examples of how the creation of plans or formations of groups led to frames being broadened or extended. This mirrors Benford and Snow's (2000) classical term 'frame extension'. The paper also features examples of when frames were basically forced upon other actors, reflecting the classical concept of a dominating frame (Aibar and Bijker, 1997). One example of this from Masthugskajen is how the production of a so-called quality program basically forced the involved actors to valorize children and young people as part of their framing practices. Finally, the empirical analysis features several examples of when compromises were established between conflictual frames. As described in the paper, the creation of the so-called strategic masterplan functioned as an explicit device for generating such compromises. Here, Schön and Rein's (1994) concept of frame synthesis could be employed to understand this.

The perspective which I engage with in Paper 2 gives a somewhat different answer to the question of how value conflicts arise and are resolved. The paper emphasizes conflicts between diverging valuation practices and criteria. Such evaluative dissonances (Stark, 2009) typically involve both humans and non-humans. They typically also draw from one or several incommensurable principles and criteria of value. As seen in Paper 2, a conflict around the valuation of a particular urban design can sometime arise due to the involved actors drawing from incommensurable value principles, such as those of economy and environmental efficiency. However, at other times, a conflict can arise out of different valuation practices that albeit draw from the same evaluative principle, such as that of economy. Farías (2015) has proposed the concept of epistemic dissonance as a means of highlighting this distinction.

Furthermore, from this perspective, conflicts can, but must not, arise between different types of actors with different interests. The interests of an actor are but one out of many factors that influence the forms and shapes that a particular conflict takes. Other factors are the value criteria, epistemic positions, devices and human participants that are present in the specific situation.

From the perspective taken in Paper 2, value conflicts are resolved through coordination strategies embedded in mundane coordination practices. Thereby, conflict resolution becomes an omnipresent aspect of urban development projects. As we have seen, Paper 2 identified several such coordination practices that are present in any typical urban development process. The concept of coordination strategies gives an even more nuanced view of the various ways in which coordination practices can resolve value conflicts. As shown in the paper, a practice such as a meeting (an example of the coordination practices called ‘talk’) where a design brief is reviewed, can help resolve a value conflict in different ways depending on the specific coordination strategies that are present in the situation, for example by the means of enrolment or by establishing local agreements.

5 Concluding remarks

5.1 Reviewing the argument

This licentiate thesis has had as its purpose to generate knowledge on the different ways in which value is accounted for in urban development processes. With this I wanted to contribute to the ongoing discussion between the fields of Urban Studies and Valuation Studies. This exploration has been informed by a case study of active frontages planning as part of the redevelopment of the Masthuggskajen area in the city of Gothenburg, Sweden. I use the redevelopment process as a case of how value is (or can be) articulated in urban development in general. I’ve pursued this by writing two papers.

With Paper 1, I wanted to contribute to a recent discussion by Metzger and Wiberg (2017) on the relationship between Valuation Studies and Urban Studies. In it, I demonstrated how organizational actors with diverging reasons for joining the redevelopment scheme, repeatedly shifted between a variety of practices, scales and devices of valuation. One implication of the paper is that the study of inter-organisational valuation lets the researcher study the plurality of ways in which actors with divergent goals evaluative different courses of action to keep the

process going. The paper also discusses how the value-agnostic approach of valuation studies involves the risk of making the research neglect power asymmetries.

As for Paper 2, here me and my co-author wanted to contribute to a recent call in the literature on co-design for more studies on the role of valuation and value conflicts. By drawing from the dual notions of ‘value dissonance’ and ‘epistemic dissonance’ of Fariás (2015), we develop a typology of different types of dissonances that urban co-design processes can possibly be imbued by. We also find that the coordination of dissonance in urban co-design can be understood as taking place through various mundane coordination practices in which Stark’s (2009) strategies for coordinating public disputes are embedded.

In the discussion section, I discussed how valuation practices in urban development can be seen as an omnipresent practice in which human agents and artifacts collectively value urban space. I also emphasize the role that mundane strategies and practices of coordination have in framing some valuations as legitimate and others not. Finally, I discuss how value conflicts can be seen as an omnipresent phenomenon, the resolution of which occurs through mundane strategies and practices of coordination.

5.2 Suggestions for future research: en route to a PhD

This licentiate has pointed to a range of research themes in between Valuation Studies and Urban Studies that could potentially be explored through further research studies. One way would be to carry out more “single device studies” (Martinus Hauge, 2017), that is, studies that zoom in on specific value devices used in urban development, such as tools for economic appraisal, traffic assessments or social impact assessments. Another route would be to conduct “single practice studies”, by which I mean studies that have valuation as it happens as part of single practices as its object of analysis, such as what Lindblad (2020) has done in a study of a tool for urban sustainability assessment. Yet one more option would be to explore the topography of valuation as it is carried out within specific organizational types, teams or professions, such as Styhre (2013a) has done with civil servants in regional planning.

On a more critical note, the ambition of this PhD-thesis to venture into the unknown terrain where the fields of Valuation Studies and Urban Studies meet, sometimes feel somewhat futile. The reasons being that especially the latter of the two fields is so heterogenous and vast (Harding and Blokland, 2014) that it becomes quite impossible to cover. With this as its

backdrop, it feels kind of logical to delimitate my ambitions somewhat in my future research. Given that I am an institute PhD there is one specific theme that I at the present-moment feel would be logical to explore further, namely the possible contributions of Valuation Studies to urban development *practice*. This would also be in line with a call in Valuation Studies for more interventionist and action-oriented research (Kjellberg et al., 2013). Here I can think of at least two possible themes worthy of further exploration.

One potential path to explore further for me could be if, and if so how, Valuation Studies could be of *help for researchers* engaged in interventionist or action-oriented research. In this case, one could possibly use conceptual handles from Valuation Studies and put these in dialogue with relevant methodological literature. One could, for example, inquire into whether concepts and theories from Valuation Studies could be combined with the “action research” (Brydon-Miller et al., 2003) tradition as a means of valorizing specific solutions or routes of action in collaboration with stakeholders. Possibly one could also, as a researcher, get inspiration from Valuation Studies in order to conduct research in the line of what Zuiderent-Jerak (2016) calls “situated intervention”. This would involve the researcher carrying out a form of “natural experiment” by, for example, introducing new valuation devices and practices to urban planning settings to see what the effects are. Yet another option for future studies could be for the researcher to critically examine existing valuations in specific settings, which Liliana et al. (2014) refers to as “the critique of valuation”. Finally, the practically minded Valuation Studies scholar could contribute to the creation and introduction of new valuation practices and tools in urban development settings.

Another path which I could potentially explore in future research would be if, and if so how, Valuation Studies could in any way *support urban development practitioners* in their work. Here I can see at least two possible routes. One could be to introduce research results, theories and concepts from Valuation Studies to non-researchers as a way of providing them with new lenses through which they could themselves scrutinize their practices. Another route could be to inquire into whether practitioners could use conceptual handles from Valuation Studies to construct new valuation devices or practices, or, for that matter, to try to find a home for, or institutionalize, such devices and practices.

All in all, these options pave the way for several routes for the research that I mean to carry out after this licentiate. Presently I am engaged in several research projects in which I

collaborate with practitioners to generate tools and practices of valuation. These could potentially provide the basis for several future papers, both more theoretical and of the more autoethnographic kind. Exactly which route this research will take, is something I will have to evaluate when the time is ready.

6 References

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