Apart And A Part -

The urban renewal, socio-spatial practices, and interpretations, of a marginalized area

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The results of this thesis are ultimately tied to the openness and assistance of the residents in Tingbjerg and the staff at the Project Secretariat. During my many visits to Tingbjerg I have experienced enormous willingness and helpfulness in terms of interviews and/or information. I owe everyone involved many many thanks.

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Iain Silbiger

The front cover is a photo of the support columns located at the shopping plaza at the intersection of Ruten and Terrasserne in Tingbjerg.
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The realization that a country is not isolated from its neighbours, but is actually part of a complex world system that mediates connecting flows of people and cultures to new places has slowly gained acceptance and recognition within Denmark. Like all other nations, Denmark is a place where new and previous populations will live, meet and interact. Nowhere can this multiplicity of diverse people and actions be seen more clearly than in Copenhagen, the largest and most ethnically varied city in Denmark.

Copenhagen as an urban centre, and as a social and physical space, is an important node for many of the plans and initiatives designed to tackle some of the complex issues that arise out of being a modern city. While a city can be a place of creativity, interconnectedness, and abundance it can simultaneously be a hub of neglect, isolation, and scarcity. As the struggles facing Copenhagen have changed in conjunction with the altering compositions of the areas within its boundaries, so too has it been necessary to consider new solutions to confront issues such as exclusion and inequality. Of great concern is the fact that certain locations are plagued by these problems to a much higher degree than others, even though there sometimes is not a great physical distance between the areas. Thus, in an effort to confront and minimize the disparity between the negative and positive attributes that the city can offer, there has been greater and greater investment in urban renewal initiatives for certain marginalized areas.

The fact that marginalized areas have different attributes and needs than other parts of the city plays a large role in the way that modern urban regeneration is conceptualized and implemented. Specific urban zones have become the physical and social units that are the focus for urban renewal, which seeks to counteract the multiplicity of issues that confront marginalized areas such as social and employment problems, criminality, traffic concerns, green issues, and the physical decay of buildings and environments. The buzzword being used at the present time in relation to structuring new urban development is “holistically-orientated” planning; something which seeks to treat a collection of problems within one large-scale project, and attempts to integrate marginalized areas with the rest of the city. Furthermore, there is an understanding that each locality is unique, and that this necessitates having a form of urban renewal that is tailored to fit each specific place.

One such example of a marginalized area in the process of large-scale and holistically orientated urban renewal is Tingbjerg; a district located eight kilometres northwest from the centre of Copenhagen. In an attempt to confront issues of high unemployment, criminality and various social problems Tingbjerg has been in the process of urban regeneration since 2001,
and the area has recently begun its latest phase of urban renewal named ‘Open City’, which will steer the area’s development into 2012. Aside from experiencing a physical redevelopment of buildings and parks, the area is undergoing urban renewal that attempts to find jobs for unemployed residents, expand after school and cultural activities for children and youth, and create greater cohesion and networks amongst the residents of Tingbjerg. Additionally, work is being done towards bettering the image of Tingbjerg so that it can attract new residents to the area.

Yet, as intoned above, urban renewal will often draw heavily from certain goals and assumptions that are based upon thinking of marginalized areas as both a geographically bounded place, and as a form of community. Moreover, it generally thought that within these frameworks of place and community it is possible to locate both the problems and the solutions. Yet, simultaneously, there is increasing awareness concerning the fact that residents have and need relationships with various other places and people, and that the urban environment provides vast and accessible opportunities that are interconnected with modern flexibility and mobility.

The newest phase of urban renewal in Tingbjerg is an attempt to take into account much of the above discussion. ‘Open City’ is a concerted effort to realize the interrelations that residents of Tingbjerg have or might need. But this provokes a series of questions concerning Tingbjerg and its urban renewal: Is this elasticity of networks and connections actually a daily reality for the residents of this marginalized area? How are residents connected to one another versus people and places in other parts of the city? Do the urban renewal initiatives being implemented actually match the needs of the residents? And how are the concepts of identity and community also under construction and redevelopment? This thesis is an attempt to analyse and uncover many of the implications and answers to these significant questions.
Problem Definition

On the basis of these introductory ideas and concepts my main problem definition is:

How does the planning for urban renewal match with the socio-spatial practices and interpretations of residents living in marginalized areas?

This problem definition is based upon three elements that are relevant for understanding marginalized areas. The first element is urban renewal that, as described above, is a powerful tool in shaping the physical and social attributes of marginalized areas through a series of projects, activities and plans. The second element is the socio-spatial practices of the residents. The concept of socio-spatial practice refers to the way that residents have a social practice (in terms of their relations with others) and a spatial practice (in terms of the actual areas and locations that they use). However, social practice and spatial practice are significantly intertwined and attached to one another. Hence the term socio-spatial practice. The final element of the problem definition is the interpretations of the residents. This refers to the way that residents understand, describe, and perceive the areas that they interact with. All these factors will be looked at and explained in greater detail throughout the course of this thesis.
Thesis Design

There are three main components that individually and collectively have a role in shaping the content and configuration of this thesis. The overall structure is thus:

- Component One: 'Conditions For Analysis'
- Component Two: 'Analysis'
- Component Three: 'Thesis Results'

The first component 'Conditions For Analysis' includes, other than the preceding 'Introduction' and 'Problem Definition', three remaining chapters which are; 'Presentation Of Case', 'Methodology' and 'Theoretical Framework'. The composition of each of these chapters will be looked at in greater detail below.

'Presentation Of Case' begins with an introduction to the area of Tingbjerg in terms of certain historical, geographic and demographic information. This is then followed by a brief look at some of the keys points and issues concerning urban renewal in Denmark. Finally, the prior two parts of the chapter are put together in an overview of the urban renewal projects that have been, and still are, underway in Tingbjerg.

'Methodology' chapter describes some of the decisions that have been made regarding choices of case and informants. This is then followed by a description of the development, design and utilization of the various empirical tools employed in this thesis. Finally, there is an account for the reliability and validity of the empirical data produced.

'Theoretical Framework' delves into some of the important theorists and terms that provide the basis for understanding and researching the problem definition. The first part of the chapter looks into the concept of “space”, and seeks to unravel the ways that various understandings of the concept can be applied to Tingbjerg. The next part of the chapter investigates the term “place” and unveils why this concept is of great importance in terms of grasping some of the many issues at play in Tingbjerg. Finally, the concepts of “identity” and “community” are discussed based upon the re-conceptualizing of the previous terms.

The second component 'Analysis' is a single chapter that is comprised of 'Strategy for Analysis and Interpretation' and a three-pronged analysis; 'Analysis Part One – Representations Of Space', 'Analysis Part Two – Socio-Spatial Practices', and finally 'Analysis Part Three – Representational Space'. Recognizing the complexities of the theoretical concept that provides the foundation for the analysis, the first part of this chapter acts as an introduction. The actual analysis is presented in three parts, which reflects, not only the theoretical concept, but is also
a means of analysing the empirical material from the urban renewal project, the mapping of informants activity spaces, and the interviews themselves.

The final component ‘Thesis Results’ includes the remaining chapters of ‘Discussion’, ‘Conclusion’ and ‘Future Perspectives’. The chapter entitled ‘Discussion’ brings the three parts of the analysis together as a way of highlighting the diverse ways that certain issues agree and contradict one another. Importantly, various ideas and debates from the earlier theory chapter are merged with the discussion. The themes of this chapter consider various aspects of spaces and places, identity and community. The ‘Conclusion’ chapter readdresses the problem definition in light of the research, theory and analysis that has developed throughout the thesis. Finally, the ‘Future Perspectives’ chapter looks and some the possibilities, ideas and suggestions that are applicable to the plans for urban renewal in Tingbjerg, in light of the knowledge presented in this thesis.
Map Of Tingbjerg:
CHAPTER TWO: PRESENTATION OF CASE

This chapter will develop and describe the framework and setting that serves as the foundation of this thesis. There will be outlined some of the physical and social structures that are part of the area known as Tingbjerg-Utterslevhuse, along with other demographical information concerning the area. After this introduction to the area I will briefly describe some of the key concepts that are part of urban renewal in Denmark, both in terms of which forms it has taken in the past, and how that has led to the present day initiatives that are being implemented in marginalized areas. Lastly, this will be then coupled to the actual urban renewal situation in Tingbjerg in terms of the projects and plans that are currently underway. Overall, this chapter is intended to outline the factors that are involved when an area undertakes urban renewal. This involves sketching an image for what Tingbjerg looks like, and what type of urban renewal has been implemented and operationalized in the area, as this can aid in establishing the foundation by which the theoretical and analytical sections of this thesis need to be understood. In addition, this background information concerning urban renewal is necessary to provide a greater understanding of where the informants are located, and what type of processes and structures have played a role in their daily lives.

Historical, Geographic And Demographic Information

The area known as Tingbjerg-Utterslevhuse has a relatively short history. It is located eight kilometres northwest from the city centre, in the northern end of the municipality of Brønshøj-Husum. Tingbjerg-Utterslevhuse is comprised of two separate, yet neighbouring, sections as intoned by the hyphenated name. The original section, Tingbjerg, was planned, built and developed in several phases starting in 1950 and finishing in 1971. The section known as Utterslevhuse was established in 1996, 25 years after the last work had been done on Tingbjerg (Forudsætningsmateriale, 2003: 7). In order to abridge certain aspects of this thesis, Tingbjerg-Utterslevhuse will hereafter be referred to under the more simple and reader-friendly name, Tingbjerg, though both places are implied under this umbrella.

Tingbjerg has experienced many changes since the initial city plans half a century ago. The design of this “mini city” and its buildings was left in the hands of well-known Danish architect and urban planner, Steen Eiler Rasmussen, in 1950. He was inspired at the time by an English-style village concept and, due to the area’s physical isolation from neighbouring urban areas, sought to construct an independent city district containing all the necessary facilities:
"Medens man ved anden ny bebyggelse må stræbe efter at holde mest muligt areal frit til grønt område, må man ved dette areal, der er helt omgivet af det grønne søge at opnå så koncentreret beboelse, som bygdeloven tillader og som kravet til offentlige institutioner og pladser gør muligt, for at få et bysamfund, der er stort nok til at bære skoler og andre kulturelle institutioner, butikker, forlystelser etc. i et passende omfang, så at beboere i deres daglige tilværelse ikke behøver at søge til udenfor liggende kvartere.” (Forudsætningsmateriale, 2003: 5).

Thus, Tingbjerg was conceived as a way to marry the natural benefits of the surrounding countryside, whilst assuring that residents would not be forced to commute too far to have their daily needs met.

This focus upon integrating and taking advantage of the natural open spaces inside Tingbjerg can be seen in the number of parks and playgrounds that accompany each building, and the vertically low building style that characterizes both Tingbjerg and Utterslevhuse. The one exception is the single high-rise apartment block located along the main road. In terms of providing the necessary facilities, modern-day Tingbjerg is an area complete with Tingbjerg School, Tingbjerg Church, Tingbjerg Activity Centre (which includes a kindergarten and the Pensioner Club), a library and youth centre, a swimming pool, and gymnasium for sports.
Ruten, the main road in Tingbjerg, is an important location for the daily activities of Tingbjerg’s residents. Other than traffic, it provides the area with almost all of its shopping and business facilities. Ruten has a central shopping plaza placed between Tingbjerg Church and Tingbjerg School, which has two supermarkets, a bodega, a paint store, a kiosk, a library, a post office, and a locale for slot machines. Otherwise, there is another small plaza and shopping arcade at the corner of Ruten and Terrasserne, which has a greengrocer, a butcher, a hair salon, a restaurant for takeaway, and some conference and meeting rooms. The only other place with shopping facilities in Tingbjerg is a small plaza along Gavlhusvej that has a kiosk and a pizzeria.

Physically, Tingbjerg is interesting and relevant for this thesis for many reasons. Being approximately one kilometre long in all directions, this relatively small and square-shaped city-section is isolated from the nearby municipalities of Gladsaxe and Herlev, through both natural and man-made barriers. Utterslev Mose to the southeast, a large highway to the northeast, Gyngemosen to the northwest, and a green area called Vestvolden to the south effectively define the outer reaches of Tingbjerg. In addition, because Ruten is the only way in and out of Tingbjerg it is both the main thoroughfare and heavily trafficked. Together, these various factors contribute to create a sense of physical separation from other parts of the city and surrounding areas.

The unique physical dimensions of Tingbjerg are accompanied by certain demographical characteristics that make the area interesting to study. There are approximately 6,600 people living in Tingbjerg, in which approximately a third of this total is children under the age of 18. On the other end of the age-scale, roughly 10 percent of the residents of Tingbjerg are pensioners (Helhedsplan, 2007: 4). Other statistics reflecting Tingbjerg’s distinctiveness from much of Copenhagen can also be seen in its ratio of ethnic minority and majority residents.
Approximately 62 percent of residents in Tingbjerg are ethnic minorities residents, and three-quarters of residents under the age of 18 are described as members of an ethnic minority\(^1\) (Helhedsplan, 2007: 4). This contrasts sharply with the fact that ethnic minority residents comprise only 11 percent of the population the municipality as a whole (Trivselsundersøgelse, 2006: 2). Further differences between ethnic minority and majority residents inside and outside of Tingbjerg can be highlighted in the fact that 90 percent of students attending Tingbjerg School are of an ethnic minority (Helhedsplan, 2007: 4), while comparative numbers for the entire municipality approximately 32 percent (Københavns Kommune, 2006b: 2). Additionally, only 10 percent of the people living in the area over the age of 50 are ethnic minority residents (Helhedsplan, 2007: 4).

In spite of the many resources and facilities available in Tingbjerg, there is still a higher than average concentration of certain social problems. When initially built the area attracted economically stable ethnic majorities from other parts of the municipality and city. More recently, the area has seen an influx of economically and educationally disadvantaged

\(^1\) The documents and information utilized in this section actually use the terms “immigrants” and “descendants of immigrants”. However, in this thesis I employ the term “ethnic minority” or “ethnic majority” when describing the diverse residents living in Tingbjerg. The understanding of ethnicity that I choose to employ is rooted in Richard Jenkins social constructionist approach, where the concept “ethnicity” is a social construction, and one that is produced and reproduced through social interaction (Jenkins, 1997: 50). The attachment of the terms minority and majority are also important, especially in terms of power. It is not necessary a way to demark who is a majority number wise, but rather who has the power to define themselves and others. Although all terms create categories when applied, and have the possibility of being contested, I find this description most fitting in light the multiple, and sometime contradictory, ways to construe and define populations.
residents. Due to the fact that Tingbjerg is comprised solely of social housing many residents have moved to the area via municipal social housing programs. The social and economic vulnerability of residents is partially reflected in the high rate of unemployment in Tingbjerg. Approximately 50 percent of residents of Tingbjerg are unemployed, which has resulted in the area’s average income level of 145,000 kr. being 50,000 kr. lower than the average for the rest of the Municipality of Copenhagen (Helhedsplan, 2007: 4). In total, the proportion of residents from Tingbjerg that are outside of the workforce is 90 percent higher than in the rest of the Municipality of Copenhagen (Forudsætningsmateriale, 2003: 18). In addition, the segment of the population of Tingbjerg that is receiving some form of social support is three times higher than numbers reported in the rest of the municipality.

The above summary is obviously very brief in relation to the numerous facets and intricacies that actually comprise Tingbjerg, as the area is obviously much more complicated and textured than is possible to get across in a few short pages. Yet, what has been important to establish is the general framework in order to understand some of the social and spatial realities confronting Tingbjerg, and the urban renewal that has started in this area. In the next section, a look at urban renewal in Denmark, and its specific form and structure inside Tingbjerg, will thusly be outlined.

**Urban Planning And Renewal In Denmark**

Urban planning has traditionally been seen through the lens of, and thought of in terms of, physical space and physical constructions. This has very much been linked to the major role that architectural theory and its discourses have played within the field of urban planning (Pløger, 2004: 172). In the 1960’s, Danish architects and planners believed that urban planning and could solve nearly all the various urban problems, including social ones. Functionalist planning principles for the design of new towns and large-scale housing estates were believed to be the ideal framework for “the good life” (Kristensen, 2001: 256). This planning was not only based in British town planning, but was rooted in the idea that housing estates at the peripheries of large cities could provide everything necessary for the daily life of families, including day care, schools, clubs, and shopping facilities. In relation to the above history and description of Tingbjerg, one can easily see that these same principles and ideals of development were likewise applied.

This type of urban planning was supported politically due to its supposed production of functional city-spaces, and homogenized and disciplined everyday spaces. In spite of this wish for functionality and homogenisation of urban areas, the early 1990’s saw increasing focus by
both politicians and the media on the problems of segregation, social housing, and social isolation (Pløger, 2004: 172). This was reflected in higher than average unemployment rates, problems with criminality, and the development of “ghettos” of ethnic minorities in certain areas. There were worries that specific urban zones would fall into a circle of negative development, whereby certain areas become less attractive to new residents, and simultaneously become more socially and physically underprivileged. This, in turn, would make it harder to attract new residents. The actual urban renewal of existing pockets of deprivation, led by the Urban Commission (Byudvalget), confronted these issues by suggesting that the quality of life of the most marginalized groups of society needed to be improved, along with initiatives that could tackle integration in living environments (Pløger, 2004: 172).

One way that marginalized areas have been reconsidered in terms of their integration within wider society has been in relation to altering the composition of residents that live in these districts. Urban renewal strategies since the 1990’s have focused heavily upon stopping “negative” resident development in marginalized areas by attracting more resource-strong residents to these neighbourhoods (Andersen, 2004: 5). However, the successes and implications of this strategy remain highly contested in terms of exactly how this planning actually impacts upon the social and economic conditions in marginalized areas, both negatively and positively, and the length of time such strategies take to show their effects upon areas and residents.

A core idea of modern urban governance was that the local communities should be self-supporting and self-regulating. Similar to the urban planning ideals from the 1960’s, every district of the city was to be a city within the city, with its own places of employment, governance structure, housing, and cultural and sporting facilities (Larsen, 2001: 5). Yet, it became apparent that to adequately confront both physical and social issues there was a need to organize after holistic planning. Urban renewal based upon holistic planning principles seeks to coordinate and integrate initiatives, whereby physical planning can provide a socially inclusive urban environment, and social planning can help residents be more included in their local area, policies and organizations (Agger, 2005: 125). Thus, activating and engaging residents so that they would participate more in their local area became a major part of many of these strategies.

This type of holistic planning and strategizing can be found in the majority of urban renewal projects currently underway in various cities across Denmark. As a result of some of the social and economic issues confronting Tingbjerg, similar considerations towards urban renewal have also been implemented in the area. In the section below I will delve deeper into some of the
specifics concerning urban renewal in Tingbjerg to draw out some of the issues that will be pertinent in my later analysis concerning the socio-spatial practices of residents of the area.

**Urban Renewal In Tingbjerg**

The abovementioned issues concerning high unemployment, social isolation and ghettos of ethnic minorities, have long been associated with Tingbjerg. Both politically and in the media, Tingbjerg is often utilized as illustration of the social and ethnic polarization that has occurred in many areas of Copenhagen in the past 10-15 years. As such, Tingbjerg is one of a handful of areas specifically named and targeted by the Municipality of Copenhagen that is in urgent need of better integration in the coming years. The municipality's integration policy indicates a need to alter the composition of residents and improve access to urban activities by coordinating efforts that touch upon areas such as employment, education, security, and health (København Kommune, 2006a). In light of what must be seen as various multiple problems requiring complex solutions, Tingbjerg has been the site of various initiatives and projects over the years. These will be briefly outlined in the following section.

**‘Tingbjerg-Utterslevhuse On The Go’**

In June 2001, an agreement was reached between Tingbjerg’s Community Council, the housing associations in Tingbjerg, and the Municipality of Copenhagen, for a holistically orientated urban partnership. This partnership and project, named ‘Tingbjerg-Utterslevhuse On The Go’ (Tingbjerg-Utterslevhuse På Vej), was designed to assure a collective effort for sustainable progress in the area. This reflected an acceptance that the challenges facing Tingbjerg could not be solved independently, but required support and coordination. The project was comprised of three separate initiatives that complemented and supported each other:

- Physical initiatives mainly financed by The National Building Association (Landsbyggefonden)
- ‘Cities For All’ (Byer for Alle) initiatives financed through The Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs
- Social housing initiatives financed through the Urban Commission

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2 Further details and information regarding the Municipality of Copenhagen’s integration policy ‘Københavns Kommunes integrationspolitik- Konkrete initiativer i 2007’ can be found at http://www3.kk.dk/Fakta%20om%20kommunen/De%20syv%20forvaltninger/Besk%C3%A6ftigelses-%20og%20Integrationsforvaltningen.aspx
The vision for ‘Tingbjerg-Utterslevhuse On The Go’ was to contribute towards the development of a comprehensive, safe and self-sustainable urban area through physical, social and cultural projects. Physical and social initiatives have been understood as “two sides of the same coin”, in that improvements of the physical area would provide the framework better and more successful social and cultural activities (Statusrapport, 2006: 6). The Project Secretariat (Projektsekretariatet), located in Tingbjerg, takes responsibility for the daily coordination and planning of the various projects. Projects and initiatives under ‘Tingbjerg-Utterslevhuse On The Go’ will run until the middle of 2007, though the physical projects will not be fully finished until spring 2009.

‘Open City’
Although ‘Tingbjerg-Utterslevhuse On The Go’ is set to stop in 2007, it does not necessarily mean that Tingbjerg has fulfilled all of the integration plans set by the municipality, nor fully developed into the urban area sought after by its residents. ‘Tingbjerg-Utterslevhuse On The Go’ was orientated towards initialising some of the ideas and projects for the area, as well as establishing some of the areas in need of improvement in terms of physical and social infrastructure. In addition, nearing the project’s end it is felt that a good platform has been created, in terms of the networks between organizations, residents, and the municipality (Helhedsplan, 2007: 10). On this basis, Tingbjerg entered a new phase of urban renewal in 2007 with the transition towards ‘Open City’ (Åben By). ‘Open City’ is a new step for the area of Tingbjerg, and seeks to open the area up and foster greater dialogue and connections with the surrounding society (Helhedsplan, 2007: 10). While still based on holistic planning, this new five-year phase would continue and/or modify some of the areas and projects that were already underway, while adding new aspects that could help Tingbjerg on its way to its goal of being a economically and socially viable urban area. Some of the examples of the main goals are:

- Help residents find employment and/or educational opportunities
- Keep and attract resource-strong residents
- Support resident initiatives and activities that seek to help improve the area
- Lessen instances of vandalism and criminality
- Improve the image of the area
- Improve Tingbjerg’s cultural opportunities
These, and many more plans, have been broken down into three separate but interconnected areas, which are supported and financed by The National Building Association. The three areas that are part of the full ‘Open City’ project are:

- Employment
- Social and Cultural Activities
- ‘Open City’

Under each one of these main focus areas are a series of different projects and plans that seek to tackle the most pressing issues facing Tingbjerg today. For example, under the area of ‘Employment’ are the plans for the Employment and Education Workshop, which is a continuation from the ‘Tingbjerg-Utterslevhuse On The Go’ project. Additionally, there has been establish a Job Patrol, and there are plans to intensify cooperation between the Job and Education House and the Municipality of Copenhagen so that there is greater sharing in terms of contacts, assistance and information.

Under the heading ‘Social And Cultural Activities’, there are a series of plans that seek to increase activity and interest in the area of Tingbjerg via a range of small and large projects. These are divided into two sections; one for *general resident activities*, and another specifically for *children and youth*. Although the actual activities have not yet planned, it could be imagined that they might be similar to some of the projects from ‘Tingbjerg-Utterslevhuse On The Go’ that included sports clubs, adult education and trips for residents. However, the plans under ‘Open City’ seek more specifically to activate residents in projects that will improve the area’s identity, and generate a greater sense of pride in the local area.

The last heading, ‘Open City’ is divided into four sub-sections; housing and organizational initiatives, communication and image, new city attractions and improved access points for traffic. Together, these various sections are meant improve the openness of Tingbjerg, and have it interact with the surrounding areas to a greater degree. The housing and organizational initiatives plan to create a one-stop and accessible housing office, improve Ruten by establishing new business and residential units, and alter the composition of Tingbjerg by attracting resource-strong residents. The plans for communication and image are designed to alter the image of Tingbjerg in the eyes of the outside world via a new public relations strategy, to improve a sense of pride, belonging and community in the area, and improve positive communication amongst the residents of Tingbjerg. The new city attractions would take the form of a cultural centre for the area of Tingbjerg, an open-access swimming pool, and there are plans to draw new businesses and educational institutions to the area. The final
section concerning improved access points for traffic has plans to reduce the area’s isolation by developing new traffic routes that makes it easier to get in and out of Tingbjerg.

The development of the plans, and the leadership behind ‘Open City’, is a combined effort between residents, the Project Secretariat and the Municipality of Copenhagen. Each one of the three initiatives (‘Employment’, ‘Social And Cultural Activities’ and ‘Open City’) will be led by a committee, comprised in part by residents from the area, who have responsibility for making sure that goals and plans are met. A coordinating group will have the responsibility to oversee the developments within each of the three committees, and report to the Municipality of Copenhagen if there are changes in the project. Additionally, there will be held a yearly conference so that the various committees, coordinating groups and politicians can meet. Although there definitely are many more details and facets concerning ‘Open City’ that have not been mentioned, this above overview of the project gives an introduction to the plans that will be discussed in greater detail throughout this thesis. The next chapter focuses upon the methodological aspects that have been employed to my case and research.
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

In the following chapter the various methodological considerations and decisions employed in this thesis will be discussed in relation to their role in the development and production of empirical and analytical material. In order to confront the many complex issues that are interwoven within the main problem definition it has been necessary to source new data pertaining to a specific place. This means, not only basing an analysis upon a case study, but also seeking to produce new empirical knowledge surrounding the marginalized area of Tingbjerg, and its connections to other parts of the city. The lack of already existing empirical data relating Tingbjerg and the specific questions asked in this thesis has thus necessitated the production of my own empirical information that could both explain and expand upon the existing theoretical information. This has meant utilizing two types of empirical data collection. First, I have done a series of qualitative interviews, which have had their interview design, structure and implementation based upon Steinar Kvale’s ‘seven stages of interview research’. Secondly, I have done a mapping of my interview subjects’ ‘activity spaces’, which has been inspired by Doreen Massey. Together, these two tools can help to illuminate the social practices and activities of the residents of Tingbjerg, and create a certain understanding of the actions and processes that are part of marginalized areas.

Choice Of Case

In order to best understand the connections and socio-spatial practices between marginalized areas and their surroundings, I chose to look at a particular part of Copenhagen, and its experiences with an urban renewal project. There are numerous different urban renewal projects currently underway in Copenhagen and the surrounding areas. Some of the urban renewal projects that might be more widely known to residents of Copenhagen include several projects underway in the neighbourhood of Nørrebro such as Mimersgadekvarter and Nørrebro, Park Kvarter. Reasons why these areas and urban renewal projects might be better known is possibly linked to their proximity to the city centre, and Nørrebro’s positioning as a thoroughfare to central Copenhagen by neighbourhoods to the north, west, south and east, as well as the inner city.

Due to these abovementioned issues, Tingbjerg arose as an excellent case by which to investigate my problem definition concerning marginalized areas. Due to its unavoidable positioning on the outskirts of Copenhagen, and not centralized in the same way that Nørrebro is, Tingbjerg presents a unique opportunity to learn about marginalization and social practices. The problem definition that I have worked with seeks to understand activities that happen in
different locations. Were I to concentrate my research upon residents from Mimersgadekvarter, for example, it might prove more difficult for the informants and myself to distinguish between experiences and uses of the local area contra other parts if the city, due to its relatively more central location. Therefore, Tingbjerg became a logical choice as a case study.

Choice Of Informants

After establishing which area of Copenhagen to focus upon, it was necessary to make some choices regarding whom would be interviewed from Tingbjerg. As demonstrated earlier in the previous chapter, Tingbjerg can be understood as a heterogeneous area in terms of population. Rather than seeking informants from one specific segment of the population living in Tingbjerg, I wished to interview an array of different residents to draw out some of the diversity that would lie within their different life experiences and daily realities. Thus, there were certain considerations made with regards to age, connection to employment market, ethnicity, and gender. Obviously, these parameters are hardly all encompassing, but it seemed beneficial to touch upon a few of the most apparent differences within the population. A more in depth discussion relating to the consequences, of utilizing these categories and how well the informants can represent any form for general tendency amongst residents of Tingbjerg, is dealt with in greater detail at the end of this chapter.

Accessing And Establishing Contact With The Informants

The following is a descriptive account of the process by which contact was eventually established with the informants, who served as the centre and basis for my empirical research through qualitative interviews and mapping of activity spaces.

The idea of analysing an urban renewal project had played a central role even in the earliest incarnations of the original thesis plan. As mentioned above, after careful and thorough research of the numerous urban renewal projects currently underway in and around Copenhagen, it was fairly quickly decided to focus upon the area of Tingbjerg. Thereafter, contact was established to the Project Secretariat at Tingbjerg via Antonella De Palo, an employment councillor working at the Employment and Education Workshop in Tingbjerg. An initial meeting was held with Antonella and a co-worker, Katja Giebel, who is a coordinator within the same department. Following this, there was a second meeting, as well as some informal visits to the Project Secretariat, in order to discuss certain ideas regarding urban renewal, their experiences with the project, and what possibilities there were to work together and establish contact to informants for the interviews.
The reasons for meetings with those employed in the project in Tingbjerg are twofold. Firstly, the original ideas that formed the basis of this thesis were altered and shaped as I learned more about issues pertaining to marginalized areas, delved deeper into general theoretical debates concerning places and spaces, and investigated the urban renewal project in Tingbjerg in particular. With each meeting I was able to ask questions with increasing specificity pertaining to my main problem definition, and discuss what my research could provide Tingbjerg with as a result of my investigation. Secondly, the people employed in the project in Tingbjerg provided me with the means by which I could access residents living in the area that could be the informants. Unfortunately, although these meetings with the Project Secretariat were helpful in shaping the path of the research, the actual interviews have not been able to be applied to the analysis in this thesis. This is due to the fact that when I initially met with the staff at the Project Secretariat they were still working from ‘Tingbjerg-Utterslevhuse On The Go’. Thus, the discussions from the original meetings were centred on the previous urban renewal project, and not the plans for ‘Open City’, which were released more recently.

Development, Design, And Utilization Of Empirical Research Tools

The empirical information produced for this thesis is based within two differing techniques; ‘Type A – The Qualitative Interview’, and ‘Type B – Mapping of Activity Spaces’. In the following section each one of these techniques will be discussed in terms of its development, design, and actual utilization.

Type A – The Qualitative Interview

The seven stages of interview research

Though there is a range of different interview techniques and formats available, the research question posed at the beginning of this thesis demanded the production of a certain type of information that I chose to access through the qualitative interview process. The development, design, and utilization of this interview technique is inspired by Steinar Kvale’s and his seven stages of interview research (Kvale, 2004: 95).

1. Thematizing: Formulating the purpose of the investigation, and the concept of the topic to be investigated. In this stage I worked with developing the problem definition, research questions, and the introduction.

2. Designing: Planning the design of the investigation while taking into consideration what knowledge will be produced, and how it will be produced. In this stage I worked with developing research questions for the interview process and created the interview guide.
3. Interviewing: Conducting the interviews based on the interview guide. In this stage I carried out my interviews, which were recorded as mp3 files, while remaining consistently aware what type of knowledge I sought, and my role in the interviewer-interviewee relationship. The interviews were conducted in Danish.

4. Transcribing: Preparing the interview material for analysis. This was done through transcribing my interviews from oral speech to written text. Although one of the informants (Konrad) sometimes makes grammatical mistakes due to the fact that Danish is not his native language, these errors have remained a part of the transcribed interviews. This was done in an attempt more closely reflect what was actually said, and the way that it was spoken, during the interviews.

5. Analysing: Developing and utilizing a strategy for analysis that fits the investigation. This stage is where I worked on creating a structure and strategy for analysis, and conducted the actual analysis of my transcribed interviews. These two tasks have been seen as a dialectical process in order to achieve the greatest possible cohesion in terms of structure and content.

6. Verifying: Evaluating the universality, reliability, and validity of the interview findings. My considerations in relation to this stage are discussed later in this chapter when looking at the reliability and validity of empirical research.

7. Reporting: Communicating the method and findings of the investigation in a form that lives up to scientific criteria. This is the result of my study in a tangible and finished document.

**Design of interview and interview guide**

In connection with the second stage of interview research, I developed an interview guide that was based upon Kvale’s structure and formation of research questions and interview questions (Kvale, 2004: 133pp). Research questions are thematic and are utilized to conceptually group interview questions into various research themes. This allows for greater reflexivity concerning the interview questions relevance to the main problem definition. Interview questions are dynamic and are grouped thematically according to each research question, which, in turn, will answer the main problem definition.

The application of this abovementioned tactic means that each research question has a series of actual and relatively specific interview questions that are asked during the interview. In this way, I increase the possibility of getting answers to my research questions, even though the informants have not necessarily reflected over the content of the interview questions before the interview. The interview guide was developed with careful consideration to the dialectical relationship between the formulation of my problem definition and the formulation of my theory. Thus, the interview questions are created to find answers to my problem definition, yet this is done in a way in which the theory I have used is activated through the questions asked to, and responses from, the informants.
As a result of all these abovementioned considerations, the research questions utilized in my interview guide are:

- Hvem er informanten?
- Hvilke sociale relationer og socio-spatiale praksisser findes i byrummet inden for Tingbjerg?
- Hvordan kan et marginaliseret område forstås som en afgrænset bydel af en særligt størrelse?
- Hvilke sociale relationer og socio-spatiale praksisser findes i byrummet uden for Tingbjerg?
- Hvordan sammenligner/fortolker beboere i et marginaliseret område de andre bydele?
- Hvordan har kvarterløft ændret bydelen?
- Kvarterløft i forhold til andre bydele?

The interview process in practice

I conducted a total of five interviews with residents in Tingbjerg, all within a span of a few weeks of each other in the month of May. The first four interviews had been arranged in advance in terms of time and place. Due to difficulty in finding a fifth resident to be interviewed, and one incident of the interview subject not showing up at all, I was invited by the Project Secretariat to sit and work at their offices for a few days. The hope was that I could be introduced to one of the residents who happened to drop by to use the Employment and Education Workshop, or another of the office's facilities. Fortunately, this method worked as the fifth informant was found via this approach. All the interviews lasted between 40 minutes to an hour. However, as will be noticed throughout the analysis, certain interviews ended up being more relevant than others. While the interviews with Amira and Parveen were extremely informative, the interviews with the pensioners were the shortest in duration and least focused. Additionally, I sometimes had difficulty in keeping the interview with Arne on topic, as he seemed eager to talk about many different things from his past. As such, his statements and views tend to show up less than the other informants in the following chapters.

As previously mentioned, contact to all the informants was made through the Project Secretariat in Tingbjerg. This meant that, prior to the interview, my contacts at the Secretariat had already explained to the informants the general ideas and concepts that would be discussed during the interview. Before actually starting the interviews I described the purpose,
use, and goal of the interview, as a way of assuring that both the informant and myself were clear as to the interview process. None of the informant’s real names have been used in this thesis in order to protect their identity and personal information that might have come up during the interview process. They were informed of this prior to the actual interviews as I felt that it might enhance the level of trust during the process, and hopefully allow them express their thoughts more freely.

During the interview process I have been aware of the need to convey that all types of answers have relevance, as there can be a tendency for informants to seek acceptance for answering “correctly” with the interviewer. During the interview process I have tried as much as possible to remain within the framework of my interview guide and research questions, but also acknowledge that in each interview certain issues and topics were discussed more than in others. This can be seen as the result of me allowing space for the interview to function more as an open discussion than a concrete list of questions looking for specific types of answers. In having a more open format for the interviews, there is also the possibility of touching upon issues that might not necessarily be part of the interview guide. This can be beneficial in terms of raising issues that the informants find relevant, but that I have no previous awareness of. This is particularly true when trying to obtain the informants interpretations of Tingbjerg, as this is obviously based within personal experiences that I have no knowledge of prior to the interview. Being that I have not sought to produce objective or universal knowledge I do not see this open format as a problem for the empirical data’s validity. I have also been aware of, and tried to make use of, the personal resources I possess, which as an interviewer can aid me in getting the informants to open up in different ways. In this sense I am referring to the fact that by not having Danish as my native language, this could play a role in certain interview settings, or that being male can be important in other scenarios.

**Type B – Mapping Of Activity Spaces**

*Development of the mapping format*

As a way of trying to learn more about the informants social and spatial practices and relations I thought of utilizing a mapping technique that could provide me with a non-verbal way of understanding and visualizing the movements of residents, both inside and outside of Tingbjerg. The mapping idea utilized in my investigation has been inspired by Doreen Massey’s description of ‘activity spaces’. Massey describes activity spaces as being a heuristic tool that can help us rethink the organization of society by displaying: “(...) the spatial network of links and activities, of spatial connections and of locations, within which a particular agent operates.” (Massey & Jess, 2003: 54). Thus, it provides a way of thinking in terms of practices,
networks and relations that are involved in the places that people go, and the people that they meet. These links, activities and connections were an essential part the interview questions. However, I hoped that by investigating these practices through an alternative format that different results and information would be produced that could supplement the interview process. Thus, the main point of the mapping format was to develop an understanding of the informant’s activity spaces, so that these details could then be drawn onto a map of the Copenhagen area. By making their activity spaces more visual it was hoped that the similarities and differences between the informant’s practices would be easier to distinguish.

Design of the mapping format
The mapping format was developed to follow the informant’s movements and activities over a seven-day period in order to see how they were connected to places inside and outside of Tingbjerg. Instead of providing the informants with their own map to draw their actions, each person was given a form with the days of the week listed separately. Each day had boxes within which they were to answer two questions; where they had been and what they had done. There were told to try and be as specific as possible, and thus each time they did something new throughout the day, they were to write it down. Generally, the idea was to make it as simple as possible to increase the possibility that the forms would actually be filled out and sent back. When I received the forms back from the informants I then had to transfer the descriptions of their activities onto an actual map of Copenhagen. These final maps are presented later in the thesis in the analysis chapter.

The mapping format in practice
The mapping forms were given out to each one of the informants at the end of the interview process. I explained the purpose of this task along with some guidelines as to how the form was to be filled out. I was careful to express that I wished for it to be filled out in as much detail as possible, while being aware of not painting it as too big of an assignment or task to the degree that it might seem overwhelming to the informant. They were provided with a pre-stamped envelope with my address so that the forms could be mailed back to me upon completion.

Following the interviews I received only four of the five mapping forms, as Konrad never sent his back. I tried following up on this via the Project Secretariat, but was also weary of trying to push the issue too much, as I feel both they and Konrad had already been extremely helpful. During the interview Konrad expressed reservations regarding the mapping form, as he

4 For an example of the form used to determine the informant’s activity spaces see Appendix 7
seemed to think that his activity space would not be very revealing, although I tried to tell him otherwise. Obviously, his movement, or perceived lack thereof, would have been equally as instructive as the other informant’s. As a result, there will obviously only be presented four mappings of activity spaces in the analysis.

The maps shown in the analysis fully demonstrate all the movements listed by the informants with one exception. One informant, Arne, had a trip that went far beyond the activity spaces of any of the other informants. In order to be able to fully contrast the informant’s activity spaces it has obviously necessary to utilize the same map. However, were I to use a map that was large enough to incorporate Arne’s trip to Næstved, which lies far outside of Copenhagen, it would have been difficult to see any detail in terms of their actual movements within Copenhagen and Tingbjerg. In the end I chose to highlight the specific details of the informants movements by including maps that focus more on Copenhagen, which means that Arne’s trip is goes beyond the map shown.

**Reliability And Validity Of Empirical Research**

As already intonated in an earlier section of this chapter, a range of methodological and empirical considerations are very much connected to, and affected by, my choices regarding the possibility for reliability and validity of the data produced in this thesis.

In determining my selection of informants, I have already related the fact that I wished to draw upon the diversity of Tingbjerg, and interview people of different ages, ethnicities, genders, and etcetera. Yet, these parameters in and of themselves need to be seen as highly problematic, and need to be conceptualized and understood as loose and diffuse categories. First of all, categorizations such as ethnicity and gender, when thought of within the framework of social constructivism, must be immediately questioned. People are unthinkable as separate from their role as an actor in a society, which not only forms them, but supplies them with a range of knowledge that is internalized and later used to express, define and realize who that person is (Dahler-Larsen, 2005: 237). The perceived reality of these categories thus hinges on a common sense that is developed and negotiated by people through social interaction. As such, the categories that I would utilize to define and understand the informants have to be understood within this perspective. Secondly, as a result of the fluidity of these categories, choosing informants on the basis of such categorizations can in no way guarantee any form for representative information. The information drawn out by applying these categories to the interview subjects are relative, and related to whom I actually interview more than any actual or true universality within that category. Thus, the idea of
developing true representative knowledge could be questioned even if I had more than just the five interviews.

However, these considerations obviously do not mean that the knowledge produced in this thesis is of no value. Employing a phenomenological approach allows for the opportunity to understand: "(...) de sociale fænomener ud fra aktørernes egne perspektiver og beskrivelser af verden, således som den opleves af interviewpersonerne, og ud fra den forudsætning, at den afgørende virkelighed er, hvad mennesker opfatter den som." (Kvale, 2004: 61). These perceptions of the world surrounding people are important for drawing out certain processes and conditions. The insight gained from the informant’s social practices and interpretations can be employed to better understand how they relate to the same structures that are all located in Tingbjerg. Thus, the way that the informants think of and use their surroundings will not tell me how all residents in feel and act, but it will demonstrate certain tendencies that are an integrated part of their area.

There are further questions of validity that need to be touched upon. Due to the fact that my contact to the informants was through the Project Secretariat, I have been able to access certain residents of Tingbjerg that likely have greater contact to, and awareness of, the urban renewal project that is currently underway. This is an advantage in many respects, due to the fact that it has also provided me with informants who are willing to talk about the issues at hand. Two of the informants, Amira and Parveen, are actually very much connected to the staff at the Project Secretariat. They are both frequent volunteers, who are involved in organizing and helping out with various activities in relation to the project. Their knowledge of the urban renewal project and some of the complicated issues facing Tingbjerg was evident throughout the interviews. However, my choice of accessing informants through this means has also meant the necessary exclusion of informants that have little or no connection to the Project Secretariat, yet are just as much residents of Tingbjerg as those I actually did interview.

Earlier in this chapter I have described how my role as interviewer can affect the actual interview process. Another issue not yet mentioned is how my role as a student from Roskilde University, and as a part of a specific faculty, means that I will tend to seek and produce certain knowledge. Studying Cultural Encounters has meant that I tend to understand and interpret problems from a largely constructionist foundation, which obviously has certain effects for the type of knowledge produced in this thesis. There is no doubt that if this same research was conducted through another faculty, that there would have been produced
different results, due to a range of decisions rooted within different theoretical and methodological traditions.
CHAPTER FOUR: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Earlier in this thesis certain aspects of urban renewal and planning were introduced in order form the backdrop for some of the processes underway in Tingbjerg. This chapter will shift the focus towards some of the theoretical considerations that can help contextualize issues surrounding marginalized communities, their social and spatial practices, and urban renewal. Of central importance are the notions of space and place, which are also essential aspects in framing an understanding of perceptions pertaining to place identity and community. Although there are many different theorists that have worked towards redeveloping an understanding of these concepts, there will be heavy emphasis placed upon the work of Henri Lefebvre and Doreen Massey, as their terminology and theories play a special role in the methodological and analytical framework applied in this thesis.

Space

As intoned above, there are various theorists that have contributed to the present-day perceptions of the concept of “space”. The goal of the following section is to lay the foundation for understanding some of the various ways in which space can be conceptualized, as this has an impact upon the understanding and analysis of a marginalized area. Therefore, some of the key theorists that have worked within the field of space will be looked at in order to see how they can contribute to the understanding of social space that is employed in this thesis. It is also these theoretical conceptualizations that provide the basis for understanding the social and spatial practices, interpretations, and urban renewal that are connected to Tingbjerg.

A Rethinking Of Space

In order to think of space in the sense that is being employed in this thesis it can help to contextualize the discussion by looking at some of the previous debates and discussions surrounding the concept. Henri Lefebvre is relevant in this respect, as he is often referred to as one of the first urban theorists to, both philosophically and theoretically, argue for an understanding and utilization of the word space as a requirement for understanding the connections between societal developments, urban developments, and the development of the social life in cities (Pløger, 1997: 12). His most important work for the purposes of this thesis is ‘La production de l’espace’ from 1974, which was later translated into English in 1991, and entitled ‘The Production of Space’. Within this book he pioneered a new set of ways to interpret and view the static understandings of the concept of space by questioning how social and spatial practice are connected and produced.
Lefebvre has been so influential due to the fact that his conceptualization of space is an attempt to confront some of the previously existing ways that various sciences and disciplines dealt with and considered the term space. It was a challenge to both the way that philosophers and mathematicians defined mental space, and simultaneously a challenge to architectural understandings of space as being purely physical, territorial or an empty area enclosed by a material shell. According to Lefebvre space is:

“(…) constituted neither by a collection of things or an aggregate of (sensory) data, nor by a void packed like a parcel with various contents, and that it is irreducible to a ‘form’ imposed upon phenomena, upon things, upon physical materiality.” (Lefebvre, 1991: 27).

Thus, it is Lefebvre’s belief that space cannot be qualified as either specifically a physical or mental construction. Lefebvre believed that true understandings of space are concealed due to the existence of a ‘Double Illusion’ that effectively masks the reality of space. The first illusion, the *illusion of transparency*, forms an understanding of space that is bounded in both the spoken and written word, and posits a transparency of space that is based in knowledge, information, communication, and philosophical idealism (Lefebvre, 1991: 28pp). The second illusion, the *realistic illusion*, is rooted in an understanding of space that is connected to a “natural simplicity” or mechanical materialism, and as such space is seen as something physical.

Therefore, Lefebvre’s reason for introducing this ‘Double Illusion’ is to highlight the dangers of reducing or simplifying space to either something mental or physical. But if, as Lefebvre posits, space is not purely a mental or physical creation, then there remains a need to question what space actually is.

**What Is Space?**

In moving away from the abovementioned fragmental and singular constructions of space, Lefebvre instead wanted to raise the possibility of there existing a diversity or multiplicity of spaces. Additionally, he advocated for embracing an understanding of space that imagines a multitude of intersections for these spaces to meet. Lefebvre asks for an elimination of: “(…) the simplistic model of a one-to-one or ‘punctual’ correspondence between social actions and social locations, between spatial functions and spatial forms.” (Lefebvre, 1991: 34). Instead, Lefebvre is advocating for a rethinking of space in which both the spatial and social become, not isolated from one another, but intertwined and connected. More specifically, he believes that space must be understood through social actions, relations, and practices, and that the
implication of this process means that space becomes a social category. Lefebvre wishes to utilize the term social space, which combines the two notions; social and space.

To further develop this idea of social space it is useful to introduce some of the many theorists who have been influenced by, and have worked upon, Lefebvre’s concept of social space. Kirsten Simonsen, a theorist very much influenced by Lefebvre, seeks to uncover problematic conceptualizations of space within various veins of social theory. In her approach she argues for an understanding of space in which the "starting point" is social practices and/or social processes. Simonsen believes that, while spatiality always plays a role in space, the origin will always be located in a form of social activity. She argues that this is necessary so that space is not depicted as any kind of independent category (Simonsen, 1996: 505).

Therefore, an aspect of Lefebvre’s theory of social space that is clearly echoed in Simonsen’s thinking, is the role that spatial and social aspects play in forming space.

"The basic idea is that the spatial forms an integrated part of social practices and/or social processes – and that such practices and processes are all situated in space (and time) and all inherently involve a spatial dimension." (Simonsen, 1996: 503).

Thus, in this understanding, the connection between social life (practices, relations, and processes) and the material environment (spatial) can only be done by initially comprehending the social (Mazanti, 2002: 60). Simonsen’s conclusions are the same as Lefebvre’s, and she confirms that space cannot be seen or analysed as an independent, objective, or predetermined framework, and as such space must be a social category.

Doreen Massey is another theorist who is based within some of the same understandings of social space as Lefebvre and Simonsen. However, she too has a slightly unique way to employ the different concepts and terminology, in order to create her understanding of social space. Massey also argues against thinking of space as separate from social aspects, and describes space:

"(...) not as some absolute independent dimension, but as constructed out of social relations: that what is at issue is not social phenomena in space but both social phenomena and space as constituted out of social relations, that the spatial is social relations ‘stretched out’.“ (Massey, 1994: 2).

An aspect of Massey’s above portrayal of social space that is unique is her description of space being formed through social relations that are “stretched out”. This notion of stretched out social relations is very much a result of Massey’s views concerning time and space, and is
interwoven with various aspects of her conceptualizations of globalization as a factor that is increasing the flows of people and technology. Yet, the idea of stretched out social relations can also be a tool to introduce the way that relations can be visualized as mobile and dynamic, rather than static and defined. Further implications of these dynamic social relations will be elaborated upon in greater detail in the following section of this chapter concerning "place".

The above discussions concerning space have demonstrated the necessity to think of space in new ways and utilizing new terms. The understanding of space that I choose to employ in this thesis is one where space can primarily be understood as a dynamic and edgeless arena where sets of social relationships and practices can meet and interact, and yet are inevitably situated somewhere physical environment. A crucial issue that has been highlighted throughout this above section is the way space is interwoven with aspects of both the social and the spatial. To stress the value and necessity of thinking of these terms together it is pertinent to introduce the term “socio-spatial” which, by combining both aspects of social space into one concept, allows for a continual reminder of the inseparability of these components.

**The Production Of Space**

As outlined above, space is not a thing, but actually a set of relations or practices that have certain implications for the areas within which we live. This is why Lefebvre and Massey argue that we need to shift from looking at how things are organized in space to the actual production of space (Lefebvre, 1991: 37). This results in space being the actual product of social practice, social interaction, and social relations (Simonsen, Research Seminar, April 19th, 2007). Additionally, social space is not only produced but also reproduced by the relationships that exist within the space itself. Therefore, each social space will be distinct from one another due to the uniqueness of the social relations that continuously intersect.

Lefebvre’s musings and investigations regarding the actual production of space coalesce in the development of an analytical tool that he called a 'Conceptual Triad'. This triad is Lefebvre’s attempt to demonstrate how the production of social space can be revealed. It utilizes three different “moments” of space that are, at the same time, both analytically separable and

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5 Although the issue of globalization plays an important role in much of Massey's theory and analysis of the concepts of place and space, a theoretical debate as to the validity or actuality of the various aspects of globalization will not be brought up in this thesis. This is not due to globalization's irrelevance in matters of space and place, but due to a wish to restrict the theoretical discussion in this chapter to subjects that can be thoroughly dealt with within the parameters and limitations of this thesis. Likewise, new technologies and flows that are associated with globalization are not applied to my understanding of movement and connections between people and places. The concept of socio-spatial relations will have a very different meaning when applied to communicative tools such as the telephone or Internet. My use of the concept of movement is not employed in relation to these above issues, but rather focuses upon the way that people physically move between social and spatial points.
unceasingly at interplay (Simonsen, 1996: 503). Importantly, he chooses to work within a triad in order to avoid dualistic or binary oppositions that would place the three elements in some sort of sequence (Lefebvre, 1991: 39). The three elements of his triad are:

- **Representations Of Space** (also known as *conceived space*)
- **Spatial Practice** (also known as *perceived space*)
- **Representational Space** (also known as *lived space*)

One element of social space is ‘Representations Of Space’, which is seen as the dominant space of society, and is linked to the order imposed by dominant social relations. This dominance is displayed through a system of signs, codes and knowledge, and is an element of social space alternatively characterized as conceived space, and constructed by: “(...) scientists, planners, urbanists, technocratic subdividers and social engineers.” (Lefebvre, 1991: 38). While this conceived space is mediated through intellectually worked-out signs it can manifest itself physically in the concrete shaping of space, which creates a relationship between the physical ordering of things in society, and the people that are living there.

“Its representations are abstract, but they have a substantial and decisive role in the production of space through social and political practices. Their interventions occur, for instance, in planning, construction and architecture, which consequently express and represent society’s dominant discourse.” (Simonsen, 1996: 503).
In relation to this thesis, I use the concept of ‘Representations Of Space’ to analyse and examine the urban renewal project that is currently underway in Tingbjerg. Urban renewal in Tingbjerg is the result of a culmination of strategies that has been comprised in cooperation with planning boards from the city and municipality. This element of the triad would also have been present when the area of Tingbjerg was planned 50 years ago, which has had an impact upon the area’s social space, both then and now.

Another element of the triad is ‘Spatial Practice’. While the previous element of the triad focuses upon the planning and organizing of an area, ‘Spatial Practice’ is about understanding the relationship between the physical space (and locations) of the city, and the actual use of this physical space by residents. In other words, it concerns the way that residents make use of their space in relation to their spatial practices and physical surroundings. As described by Lefebvre: "(...) It embodies a close association (...) between daily reality (daily routine) and urban reality (the routes and networks which link up the places set aside for work, ‘private’ life and leisure)." (Lefebvre, 1991: 38). This social space is also known as perceived space and is linked to social relations, which will obviously be unique for each social formation.

In relation to this thesis, I employ some of this thinking in terms of ‘Spatial Practice’ in order to better understand how residents from Tingbjerg interact and move amongst the social spaces in their local area and in the surrounding city. This is partially done through mapping the informant’s activity spaces, which ultimately serves as a tool to illustrate the relationship between daily activities and the use of social space.

The final element of the triad is called ‘Representational Space’, which is the space that is directly lived through its associated images and symbols. Lefebvre describes it as: "(...) the dominated – and hence passively experienced – space which the imagination seeks to change and appropriate. It overlays physical space, making symbolic use of its objects." (Lefebvre, 1991: 39). Thus, it is systems of symbols and signs, and a space that is based on individual and collective histories, which allows for various interpretations and understandings of the same space due to differing backgrounds and culture. This is alternatively known as the lived space, and can be seen as the space of residents and inhabitants.

In relation to this thesis, the concept of ‘Representational Space’ can be seen through analysing how residents from Tingbjerg interpret their own social space. These vital interpretations are drawn out through the qualitative interviews that were conducted with residents from the area.
Lefebvre’s triad is theoretically significant for a variety of reasons. Together, these three parts of the triad contribute and combine in different ways to demonstrate that social space is actually produced. Additionally, thinking in terms of a triad is vital as a means of expressing that no one element of the triad can exist in isolation. At many and various points these different aspects of social space interact and form on another. Finally, the triad is significant in how it demonstrates that these different aspects are not sequentially ordered, but rather simultaneous concepts that together comprise social space.

Summary: Space
This section of the theory chapter has introduced a number of essential concepts that play a key role in my later analysis of Tingbjerg. It has been demonstrated that there is a need to apply more social understandings of space, whereby social interaction, and not only physical location, is determinate for how people actually relate to one another. This highlighting of social relations will be shown to be an essential ingredient in investigating the social space of the marginalized area of Tingbjerg. Perhaps most importantly, Lefebvre’s conceptual triad provides the framework for the analysis in this thesis. Thus, I will be using the three aspects of his triad; ‘Representations Of Space’, ‘Spatial Practice’ and ‘Representational Space’, as divisions within my empirical analysis. However, I have chosen to be inspired by Lefebvre’s concepts rather than following them slavishly. Encouraged by the interconnectedness found between social and spatial spheres, I choose to think in terms of the ‘socio-spatial’, which more easily identifies the inevitable mutual dependence of social and spatial aspects of daily lives. Therefore, I will employ the term ‘socio-spatial practice’ rather than ‘spatial practice’ in my application of the triad, as a means of drawing out this aspect of relations. In applying the conceptual triad to my understanding of the goings-on in Tingbjerg I am therefore provided with a way to analyse the social space of that environment.
**Place**

While the above section has outlined the ways in which space needs to be rethought within the framework of social relations and practices, there is yet another aspect of our daily socio-spatial realities that needs to be considered. Similar to Lefebvre’s call for a reassessment of the term space, the term “place” can likewise be tested and prodded to determine its validity for contemporary society. Additionally, like space, place is a vital term to examine in order to understand certain aspects of urban renewal as well as its meaning and relationship to Tingbjerg and the socio-spatial practices of the residents that live in this area.

**A Rethinking Of Place**

Similar to Lefebvre’s questioning of static understandings of the word space, Doreen Massey calls for a reconsideration of the ways that we traditionally think in terms of “place”. Massey argues that there have long existed certain views of place, within both the political world and academia, which require analysis. Many past and present view of place see it as bounded, as in various ways a site of authenticity, as singular, fixed, and unproblematic in its identity (Massey, 1994: 5). However, Massey advocates for the need to move away from a view of place in which: "(…) we picture a settled community, a locality with a distinct character – physical, economic and cultural." (Massey & Jess, 2003: 46). A visualization of this traditional, bounded, and separate concept of place can be seen in the diagram below. Each one of the three circles is representative of different and unique places that are enclosed or settled areas. The different shapes demonstrate that each place is distinct from one another, while the fact that their borders do not cross is meant to symbolize their separation.

In many ways connected to the earlier discussion of space, fixed views of place neglect the movement, relations and interactions that are an essential part of its composition. As seen in
the diagram, the social relations of each place are not overlapping. Thus, Massey wishes to redefine the concept of place in favour of a more progressive construction that allows for the intensified interconnections, movements, and layering that are part of modern times. Similar to her reassessment of space, Massey argues that the need for a rethinking of place is closely related to the latest era of globalization and changes in worldwide communications, time-space compression and convergence, and heightened flows of international migration (Massey & Jess, 2003: 46). Combined, these factors have altered static and physical understandings of place. She believes that:

“(…) spatial movement, interaction, influence and communication have become so extended, so fast, and so available, that the borderlands and boundaries which once used to define places as distinct and in some degree separate from each other are so often crossed that the notion of place which was previously viable has to be rethought.” (Massey & Jess, 2003: 53).

Thus, Massey sees an acute need for rethinking the term place so that it meets the realities of complex present day lives, which is composed of a multitude of spatial movement and connections between people located in different areas that overlap one another. Additionally, Massey also goes to lengths to stress that these connections and relations are not new phenomena, in the same way that globalization is not only a new process. However, she stresses that we are in a qualitatively new and intensified phase (Massey & Jess, 2003: 61). In the same way that we need to revise how we think about social relations, Massey sees a need to look again at the role places play in these changing social practices. Therefore, she stresses the necessity of developing an understanding of place that takes into account these new conceptualizations.

**What Is Place?**

Based upon Massey’s wish for a re-conceptualization of place it is necessary to ask what becomes of place if it is no longer a bounded physical area and locality that acts as a site for a certain set of social relations? The abovementioned increase in the intensity of social relations and social activity must have a profound result upon the notion of place that had previous been employed.

A key element in Massey’s request for a rethinking of place concerns the need to account for various forms of greater mobility. Yet, whereas Massey chooses to look at the mobility and flexibility of relations in terms of how they can cross into new places, Kevin Hetherington describes place in a slightly different manner:
"Imagine place as being like a ship. It is not something that stays in one location but moves about within networks of agents, human and non-human. Places move around in what has been described as arrangements or networks of heterogeneous materials and can be seen as an ordering effect of those agents. To begin with, then, place is about relationships, it is about placing." (Hetherington, 1997: 185).

In certain respects, Hetherington’s interpretation of place is based on the same principles as Massey’s. Similarly, Hetherington imagines social relationships as the cornerstone for understanding and imaging what a place is. However, Hetherington’s reference to place as a conceptually a mobile unit is unique as it introduces the idea that a place can shift location, dependant upon the set of social relations that are being activated. In other words, a place will mean and signify different things amongst different groupings of interrelations. This mobility of places forces them to be understood as unfinished and alterable constructs (Hetherington, 1997: 187).

Similar to these ideas from Hetherington, the impact of the earlier mentioned notion of stretched out social relations actually makes it more difficult or impossible to think about places as contained and closed units. Places are understood in terms of processes of networks and social relations instead of as fixed elements. John Urry likewise examines the essential role that relations must play in our understanding of places. Whereas Massey thinks of social relations as stretching out, Urry chooses to describe places in terms of flowing processes that end up combining the local with other wider sets of social relations. Urry describes: “Places can be loosely understood therefore as multiplex, as a set of spaces where ranges of relational networks and flows coalesce, interconnect and fragment.” (Urry, 2000: 140). While Urry is not necessarily describing the mobility of the places in the same way as Hetherington does, there is a general agreement that there is an expansive complexity to places, which defines them as sites of social relations and interconnections.

Therefore, a key aspect in all of these discussions concerning a place is the fact that social relations play a decisive role. However, due to the fact that social relations will always have a connection to some sort of spatiality, places can be understood as the open locations where different sorts of social relations can take place. In this sense, places become the intersections where the actual social and spatial sites of relations can take place.

**Place As Meeting Places**

To further explain the concept of place it is helpful to return to some of Massey’s concepts and terminology. While she argues that space is comprised of interlocking and articulating nets of social relations, she describes place as being understood and formed out of the particular set
of social relations, which interact at a particular location (Massey, 1994: 168). On this basis, Massey thinks it is necessary if places could:

“(…) be imagined as articulated moments in networks of social relations and understandings, but where a large proportion of those relations, experiences and understandings are constructed on a far larger scale than what we happen to define for that moment as the place itself, whether that be a street, or a region or even a continent.” (Massey, 1994: 154).

It is at these articulated moments that one finds the heart of Massey's description of place. Each moment represents an instance where social relations come in contact and overlap one another. In addition, these moments need to be conceptualized as occurring in wider and more complex spheres than is possible to employ in settled, enclosed, and internally coherent understandings of places. Thus, it is possible to see places as “meeting places”, which becomes the location of the intersections of particular bundles of activity, of connections and interrelations, of influences and movements (Massey & Jess, 2003: 58).

The diagram below represents a contrasting figure to the previous diagram displaying the traditional notion of place as bounded or defined. Similar to the first, each place is unique and has a different form and shape. However, in this new diagram, each circle and/or place interacts and is interrelated with one another, but in slightly different ways. When one circle crosses another, or when social relations cross one another, a new meeting place or articulated moment is produced. Therefore, re-conceptualizing places entails re-imagining them so that it is possible to more fully recognize their interconnectedness.

Related to this idea of meeting places is another concept of Massey’s, which is termed “activity space”. Interconnected with ones daily movement amongst and between different places, Massey argues that: “The activity space of something is the spatial network of links and
activities, of spatial connections and of locations, within which a particular agent operates.” (Massey & Jess, 2003: 54). Thus, the activity space of each individual will be different, as people inevitably interact with diverse places and people throughout the course of the day, week, and etcetera. Consequently, social relations and actions will inevitably comprise all activity spaces, as this plays a central role in all spatial activity.

The above diagram of places as meeting places and social constructions raises another important issue that needs to be considered. While open idealizations of place seek to open borders and perimeters, an unavoidable reality is that, conceptually, many of these borders persist in various forms. However porous boundaries may be thought in terms of, the fact remains that they are an essential character of places, both previous and subsequent. As described by Hetherington: “Places cross boundaries too. Indeed places are not just what lies on either side of the boundary, but they are constituted through boundary work.” (Hetherington, 1997: 186). Thus, borders are still relevant for stretched out social relations, as they remain essential in determining the inside from the outside, the connections and the relations, and will influence inclusion and exclusion. Borders are not only about the lines where a person lives, but are also about the range of social and spatial opportunities available to places.

**Summary: Place**

This section of the theory chapter concerning place has, similar to the section on space, sought to draw out certain re-conceptualizations that provide new ways to interpret the areas that we live and interact with. Yet, whereas space needs to be thought of as defined primarily through reference to social relations, the term place has certain other implications. The understanding of place that I want to utilize in this thesis is one where place is a product of fluid social relations, but is nevertheless understood as the location or context where social relations become momentarily frozen at certain sites or meeting places. In this sense space can be imagined as that which “fills up” the openings within and between different places. This rethinking of place will prove to be of great importance in the later analysis of the different meeting places and spaces located inside Tingbjerg. Additionally, these discussions relating to place has introduced the concept of activity places, which is a tool that has been utilized to develop the mapping technique that is one aspect of the analysis of Tingbjerg.
Identities And Communities

In the previous two sections I have covered some of the various arguments for comprehending space and place as concepts that are highly social, both in terms of how we interpret them, and in terms of how we explain them. This opening of spaces and places, as advocated for by Lefebvre and Massey, has severe consequences, not only for how we understand socio-spatial relations and practice, but also for the lives of the people living within these zones of interrelation. Thus, in the following section, I will delve deeper into some of the reverberations of this re-conceptualization and look into the consequences of this rethinking upon how we understand the identities of different places, and how we understand the concept of community that comes about through this process. Both of these issues play a central role in understanding the socio-spatial practices of residents of marginalized areas, their connections with other parts of the city, and urban renewal.

Inferring The Identity Of A Place

As previously described by Lefebvre, Massey, and the other theorists in this chapter, there exists a need to take into account the burgeoning social relations, activities and practices that unavoidably are part of understanding both place and space. If spaces are socially constructed yet interwoven within a spatial framework, and places are sites or meeting-places for unique and articulated moments of socio-spatial interaction, then this requires a reappraisal of how we comprehend and relate to these new realities.

For example, if Tingbjerg cannot be looked at in isolation, but rather needs to be viewed and understood in light of its inevitable relations with the areas that surround it, there must be further implications for the ways that we can understand and think of this place called Tingbjerg. Thus, in the same way that socio-spatial practice extends past the area where one lives, and cannot be seen as place-bound, the identity ascribed to a place must likewise need to be understood in a similar vein of openness (Mazanti, 2002: 69). The “place identity” and character attached to a place becomes a part of, and the result of, the complex relations that define and surround it.

Thinking about place identity within the context of social relations will have certain consequences and results. First, the singularity of an individual place identity will be formed, in part, via the specific interactions that occur at that one location, due to the fact that nowhere else does this precise mixture of socio-spatial relations occur (Massey, 1994: 168). Thus, the place identity found at one location cannot be repeated elsewhere.
Secondly, place identities will inevitably be unfixed due to the fact that the social relations that construct them are dynamic and changing. In addition, they will remain unfixed because of the continual production of further social effects through the juxtaposition of those social relations, which means that they are always open for contestation (Massey, 1994: 169). This obviously opposes a place identity that is dependent upon one particular moment and location, and defined by one particular group within a specific set of social relations.

Additionally, conventional understandings of place and place identity are hinged upon the idea that meaning is derived via internal relations, closed borders, and an identity established: "...through negative counterposition with the Other beyond the boundaries." (Massey, 1994: 169). Yet, thinking of socio-spatial relations as borderless and interconnected, as outlined previously in this chapter, means that identity does not have to be dependent upon an internalized history. Thus, this can allow for place identities to be, in part, constructed out of positive links and interconnections with elsewhere.

However, as intoned above, while these factors highlight the many possibilities and openings that can be part of socially based understandings of place identity, it is another issue as to how well and often this is actually applied to places. Counteracting the fluidity and complexity mentioned above, the place identity that is actually imagined by, both residents and urban planning, is still often hinged upon more static conceptions. This means that, while place identity might be socially constructed, continually contested, and a dynamic concept, there remain other important perceptions that persist and continually compete for validity. Thus, as will be demonstrated below, place identity in practice becomes a representation of certain moments of an actual place, and is naturalized to a degree so that it becomes the basis by which a place is understood.

One of the results of these representations of place identity is that it will most often end up being based on specific perceived characteristics or qualities of the area (Hague & Jenkins, 2005: 12). Thus, despite the fact that interconnected forms of socio-spatial practice points toward a multiple and endless set of characteristics or qualities within an area, this diversity is often not necessarily applied to the place itself. Additionally, these perceptions concerning the character and quality of a place will always lean on the past because the future of an area is not yet known (Hague & Jenkins, 2005: 12). Thus, as Massey describes, the identity of place becomes: "(...) constructed out of an introverted, inward-looking history based upon delving into the past for internalised origins." (Massey, 1994: 152). Yet, this is done whilst spatial flows make any such notion of place identity more and more difficult to maintain. An example of this conflict between past and present will be exemplified in a later chapter, whereby
Tingbjerg’s identity is linked to an urban period hinged upon separation and isolation, while it simultaneously tries to incorporate aspects of more fluid place identities (Kristensen in Andersen & van Kempen, 2001: 256). There can also be serious consequences for constructing place-bound rather than open-ended identities, as it can divide people into localities and places that are based upon tradition. This can obscure connections that might otherwise unite people to other places and relations (Massey & Jess, 2003: 49). This also implies that, rather than identities actually belonging to places, people are very much active in “making places” by ascribing identity to them.

Paradoxically, part of the reason why place identity is often contemplated in terms of past existence and static characteristics is due to a supposed need to search after and establish meaning amid the heightened socio-spatial mobility that is part of lived realities. A “sense of place”, or rather the way that a place becomes significant due to personal experience and perceived attachment, becomes conceived and utilized by people and institutions as a coping mechanism. Thus, a sense of place and belonging is tied to the means by which people will describe and formulate the identity and relations within the places that they live. As explained by Massey, while:

“(…) senses of place may be very personal, they are not entirely the result of one individual’s feelings and meanings; rather, such feelings and meanings are shaped in large part by the social, cultural and economic circumstances in which individuals find themselves.” (Massey & Jess, 2003: 89).

Thus, although a sense of place may be specific for each individual, it will always be the product of the complex social relations and connections that are placed inside and outside of the place in question. As such, a sense of place is tied to the entire surrounding environment, and is not only achieved through identifying with a particular location, but is also achieved through identifying against a place, or alternatively, not identifying with a place at all (Massey & Jess, 2003: 89pp). Consistent in all these conceptualizations is the decisive role that socio-spatial relations play in identifying and interpreting living places.

**Considering Communities**

There remains a final important element relating to these discussions surrounding place identity, and the notions of tradition and belonging, that has not yet been bridged. Interwoven with the multiple social relations and daily realities connected to a place lies the concept of community as a contributing factor in the way that people try to make sense of places around them. As such, the remaining part of this chapter is dedicated to exploring the role and implications of community for people and planning.
Similar to space and place, a “community” is often initially thought of in terms of its
topographical placement within the physical boundaries of cities and areas. This thinking has
likewise often produced an understanding of community that views it as being localized within
a relatively bounded set of interrelationships that take place between specific groups and
within specific areas (Urry, 2000: 133). These characterizations of community can be
illustrated through our everyday assumptions of the existence of groupings such as the
‘Chinese community’ or the ‘Italian community’. However, the description of community so far
explained seems indistinguishable from the earlier explanations of space and place that were
contested by Lefebvre and Massey. As will be demonstrated below, while it is definitely
interlinked, community also implies and activates a different set of qualities that makes it a
unique concept.

One of the key aspects that are often used to differentiate community from place lies within
the perceived degree or quality of interrelations and connections that take place within its
borders. As already described, a sense of place is a personal construction that is concerned
with how one relates to particular places or locations. Alternatively, a sense of community is
defined through, not only a relationship to places, but crucially an additional connection to
individuals or groups that reside in these or other areas. As such, communities are often
understood as being characterized by close personal ties, belongingness and warmth (Urry,
2000: 133). This results in community often being conceptually dependant upon: "(...) an
imagined past in which horizons were local, the meaning of life was relatively consensual,
cooperation prevailed, and everyone knew everyone else and ‘knew their place’.” (Jenkins,

Yet, similar to the previous discussions concerning place, there are a series of issues and
realities that seemingly counteract these above ideals of community. In light of stretched-out
social relations, there will be many and severe consequences for traditional understandings of
community. The main aspect at stake is the assumption that the interrelations of a community
are primarily confined within geographic boundaries. Likewise, it is assumed that close physical
proximity actually produces intensified social relations. In both of these suppositions,
community becomes a concept that attempts to “freeze” social relations and interactions at a
particular time and space, and then employ these moments as representative for the area.
However, as discussed earlier, this negates lived realities that demonstrate a lessening concern
or need to think in terms of physical location.

Iris Marion Young touches upon this issue concerning the relevance of traditional
understandings of community. She ponders the value in establishing communities on the basis
of intimate and face-to-face relations. According to her, idealizing this form of community is wrong for two reasons: "First, it denies the difference within and between subjects. Second, in privileging face to face relations it seeks a model of social relations that are not mediated by space and time distancing." (Young, 1986: 5). She believes that the community ideal is slightly irrelevant and counterproductive in light of the complex interrelations that are actually present in these imagined communities. Additionally, Young believes that in light of socio-spatial practices being multiple and placed within many social networks, that the whole idea of immediacy and closeness will not work. As Massey would argue, socio-spatial practices are, and have always been, equally based and related with places other than the one where a person lives. As shown earlier, boundaries need to be conceptualized as open and porous, which casts further doubt upon idealisations of internal relations confined to a community.

Thus, there remain certain important contradictions that need to be taken up in these different aspects of community. While community is often seen as a provider and signifier of connection and closeness, many places that use the notion of community are actually characterized by highly unequal internal relations (Urry, 2000: 134). However, while socio-spatial practices and relations contradict the concept of community in so many ways, it remains a concept that is often employed and utilized by residents living in certain areas, and urban planners seeking to redefine these domains. This would imply that, irrespective of many factors, the idea of community is important for other reasons.

One of the most instructive ways to investigate this issue is to highlight certain assumptions regarding community and its close associations with the concept of home. Like community, “home” is a powerful construction and conceptualization that is firmly placed within understandings of belonging and identification. Yet, most importantly, ‘home’ repeatedly brings up issues of security, family, comfort and control: "(...) and does not simply harbour or provide a background context for these sentiments – rather, it embodies them in its physical structure." (Morley, 2000: 24).

These same feelings and concerns are very much applicable for the way that a community is idealized to serve as a home for residents. The physical structure of community is seen as providing residents with a refuge and save haven, by means of its physical attributes and meaningful interrelations. Although there remain many questions concerning the validity of an assumed heightened socio-spatial insecurity in modern cities, there is no doubt that this insecurity and thinking does plays a large role in many aspirations for community. These reasons can be seen as partially responsible for the fact that community continues to play an important role in the way that societies are organized and imagined. While community might
be a symbolic conception, and hinged upon an imagined past and assumed in-group social interactions, the actual role that it plays in people’s lives is not imaginary. In other words: “Community is a powerful everyday notion in terms of which people organize their lives and understand the places and settlements in which they live and the quality of their relationships.” (Jenkins, 2004: 109). However, as touched upon earlier, this will result in producing powerful notions of community that will necessarily be based upon an attempt stop the stretching out and flows of social relations at certain moments. This also makes these imagined communities become very specific representations of a certain set of relations. The true impact of these constructions of community is that, as referred to by Jenkins, these imaginations will impact upon the actual socio-spatial practices of people.

These above discussions surrounding community highlight several important issues. Although it is possible to question the actual existence of a bounded community, it is nevertheless an extremely relevant concept for both urban planning and residents. Simultaneously, the variation of people and experiences means that there will always be multiple interpretations of community, and that people will have different ways of participating, utilizing, and contributing to these places and spaces. As a result, while community can be seen as providing the framework for possible social relations and significant socio-spatial practice, the actual outcomes of these social relations cannot be planned (Frick, 1986: 50). This means that, rather than being truly reflective of the socio-spatial practices of residents, community becomes a naturalized concept of certain representations of how a community should be and function. This point will be examined and elaborated upon in greater detail in the following chapters.

**Summary: Identities And Communities**

The first two sections of this chapter have been essential for providing the background for the concepts and debates initialized by these questions concerning identities and communities. This third part of my theory focused upon various implications of the restructuring of space and place that is described by Lefebvre and Massey. Similar to space and place, both of these concepts are based upon static notions of places and people. However, extending and interlinking social relations seems to suggest a heightened irrelevance, and a greater difficulty, in thinking in terms of place identity and community. Thus, of crucial importance is the fact that while these notions might seemingly be obsolete, they are in reality still of great importance for people and urban renewal. Aspiring for a community and identifying with a place is continually done and sought after despite the fact that the theory would seem to suggest that this is a mismatch. It is this contrast, as well as differing aspects of space and place, that will be revelled and examined in the following and remaining chapters of this thesis.
CHAPTER FIVE: ANALYSIS

Based upon my earlier presentation of Tingbjerg and my methodological and theoretical considerations, I will now delve deeper into various factors concerning the urban renewal of Tingbjerg, the socio-spatial practices that take place there, and interpretations of these spaces by the residents. The first part of this chapter will outline the strategy for analysis in terms of structure and content. This will then be followed by a three-part analysis that unravels some of the many intricacies of the social space in Tingbjerg.

Strategy For Analysis

The analysis employed in this thesis is developed and organized around the information gained from the Project Secretariat, the qualitative interviews, and the mapping of the informant’s activity spaces. As mentioned in the previous chapter, I have been inspired by Lefebvre’s conceptual and analytical tool; the triad. It is utilized to provide a framework by which I can separate the diverse aspects and issues apparent in Tingbjerg, and form them into manageable components for analysis. While these three aspects are presented separately, it needs to be noted that they are very much simultaneously intertwined and interconnected in one another. The three elements of my triad are:

- **Representations Of Space** (the plans for the urban renewal project)
- **Socio-Spatial Practices** (the social and spatial activities of the informants)
- **Representational Spaces** (the interpretations of spaces and places by the informants)

The first part of the analysis, ‘Analysis Part One – Representations Of Space’, is based upon the Helhedsplan for the ‘Open City’ urban renewal project. Although I have also gained insight into the project via various reports, newsletters, and other materials produced by the Project Secretariat, the examples and information employed in the analysis refer solely data from the Helhedsplan. As presented in the earlier chapter concerning Tingbjerg, ‘Open City’ is actually comprised of three major initiatives; ‘Employment’, ‘Social And Cultural Activities’ and ‘Open City’. The information presented in the analysis is primarily from the last two initiatives being that these had the strongest relation to my theory, and the questions and answers from the interview process.

The information within the Helhedsplan, and the theory employed in this thesis, has also had implications for the development of the four themes of this first part of the analysis. Each
theme touches upon an aspect of the planning behind ‘Open City’ that, in different ways, reveals something about space, place, identity and community in Tingbjerg.

The second part of the analysis, ‘Analysis Part Two – Socio-Spatial Practices’, is a combination of my two empirical tools. The informants are presented along with each individual map of their activity spaces, except for the one informant who never returned the necessary form. The maps are partially intended as a standalone visual documentation of their social and spatial movements within a seven-day period. However, the movements demonstrated on the maps are elaborated and expanded upon through the use of the interviews.

To better understand the informant’s socio-spatial practices it has been necessary to divide this part of analysis into two themes. The empirical data pointed to the fact that there are great contrasts in relation to how the informants use the social space of Tingbjerg versus the social space in other areas. As such, the differentiation of practices being located inside and outside serves the two themes for this part of the analysis.

The last part of the analysis, ‘Analysis Part Three – Representational Space’, is based upon information from the interviews. The maps of the informant’s activity spaces still play a role in understanding where and what each informant relates to. However, due to the fact that this part of the analysis is intertwined with the informant’s perceptions and interpretations, I have chosen to concentrate upon the issues that arose during the interviews.

The three themes presented in this part of the analysis are a combination of my theoretical framework and the subjects that the informants dwelled upon during the interviews. While the analysis represents the three issues of space and place, identity, and community, many of the actual specific details that are analysed under each of these themes is the product of agreements and differences between the informant’s points of view.
Analysis Part One – Representations Of Space

This part of the analysis is primarily concerned with looking into the ways in which the social space of Tingbjerg is thought of, interpreted, and produced through the plans of the urban renewal project. As introduced earlier in this thesis, Tingbjerg has recently begun a new project called ‘Open City’. Being both a long-term and holistically orientated urban renewal, ‘Open City’ covers a range of different plans and goals for the area of Tingbjerg. Yet, within these varied and interlinked plans for Tingbjerg, it is also possible to draw out certain themes, which demonstrate the way in which the area is being imagined through planning. The four themes that I will look at are ‘Open City versus Local City’, ‘Planning For An Identity’, ‘Planning For A Community’, and ‘Planning For A Resident’. The assumptions of urban planning that will be discussed below are not necessarily highlighting things that are wrong with the plans for ‘Open City’, but rather are meant to draw out certain issues and interpretations that lie within the thinking and planning of the urban renewal project in Tingbjerg.

Open City versus Local City

One of the primary objectives behind the plans for ‘Open City’ is to demarcate a shift from the previous urban renewal project ‘Tingbjerg-Utterslevhuse On The Go’. Whereas the previous project definitely had a heavy focus on many of the physical changes needed in Tingbjerg, ‘Open City’ is designed to introduce new social dimensions to Tingbjerg and to the planning of the area. According to the Helhedsplan this entails a shift in focus that moves away from thinking of Tingbjerg as a place in isolation, and towards recreating it as a place in relationship with other areas. As stated in the Helhedsplan:

“Man er nu kommet så langt, at næste fase naturligt vil være at åbne bydelen op og komme i dialog med det omgivende samfund. Med andre ord skal der i næste fase både arbejdes på at videreudvikle en platform og bygge en bro til verdenen udenfor.” (Helhedsplan, 2007: 10).

This opening-up of Tingbjerg, according to the Helhedsplan, includes a range of new activities and constructions seeking to attract new visitors and residents to the area via these new social and spatial offerings. Among the plans for the so-called ‘New City Attractions’ is the possible development of a cultural centre in Tingbjerg that would: "(...) give bydelen endnu en attraktion." (Helhedsplan, 2007: 26), and an open-access swimming pool that would: "(...) medvirke til at tiltrække besøgende til bydelen." (Helhedsplan, 2007: 26). Similarly, plans such as enticing new businesses and educational institutions to Tingbjerg, and improving the traffic connections to the area, are intended to help with “opening” Tingbjerg up. Additionally, one of the overall goals in the section entitled ‘Communication and Image’ is: “At tiltrække nye
These above examples of the goals and plans for the future of Tingbjerg demonstrate a strategy that seeks to reorient Tingbjerg so that it is a greater part of the surrounding areas. Yet, while these above designs for 'Open City' conceptualize a greater porousness of Tingbjerg’s borders, there are certain elements of the Helhedsplan that could contradict some of the ways in which an ‘Open City’ can be imagined. For example, on the one hand there is a wish to open Tingbjerg up and enter into dialogue with the surrounding society, yet on the other hand there is also a wish that within the next 10-15 years: “(...) Tingbjerg-Utterslevhuse skal udvikles til at blive en socialt og økonomisk selvbærende bydel.” (Helhedsplan, 2007: 10). This social and economic self-sufficiency is seen as partially acquirable through the implementation of the abovementioned plans and attractions, which would increase the entertainment and leisure opportunities for residents of Tingbjerg, as well as initiatives such as finding employment or education for Tingbjerg’s residents, and keeping and attracting resource-strong residents (Helhedsplan, 2007: 10).

An inconsistency lies in the fact that, while ‘Open City’ is seemingly based upon the principle of heightened interdependence with the outside world via attracting people to Tingbjerg, this same area is simultaneously being conceptualized as needing greater independence from, and less reliance upon, neighbouring areas and institutions, both economically and socially. Some of this inconsistency may be attributed to the fact that, while there are various initiatives seeking to heighten the outside world’s socio-spatial practice inside Tingbjerg, there is relatively little mention of the residents need for socio-spatial practice in other parts of the city. Thus, the plans for ‘Open City’ can be seen as having a heavy focus upon designing openness primarily in one direction, and do not seem to account for movement outside Tingbjerg to quite the same degree.
In conclusion, there exists a tension between plans that seek to interrelate Tingbjerg with the surrounding society, and plans that simultaneously employ a design of Tingbjerg that sees a need for it to function as an independent or self-sufficient unit. In the following section, some other aspects of this rift between the concept of an ‘Open City’, and the way that the local area should function, will be looked at in greater detail as the future plans for the identity of Tingbjerg will be considered.

Planning For An Identity

In addition to the aforementioned goal of developing Tingbjerg’s ability to be socially and economically self-sufficient, there are other facets of ‘Open City’ that seek to redevelop and re-conceptualize Tingbjerg in specific ways. One example of this is the wish to tackle and alter the manner that residents and outsiders think of, interpret, and perceive their area. The reasons for this reinterpretation of the image of Tingbjerg is linked to the fact that:


In response to these concerns over Tingbjerg’s negative image, there are various aspects of the current urban renewal project that seek to address issues pertaining to the future identity and character of Tingbjerg.
To meet this challenge there are plans to intensify contact with the surrounding areas, and promote Tingbjerg and its many new initiatives so that it can attract new visitors and events to the area. Plans such as a cultural centre are designed so that both residents and the surrounding population have access to local facilities, and therefore reduce Tingbjerg’s dependency upon places outside of the area. Additionally, the transportation initiatives of ‘Open City’ seek to confront Tingbjerg’s seclusion and: “(...) bryde bydelens isolation.” (Helhedsplan, 2007: 28). Together, these many plans suggest that Tingbjerg’s identity is being re-envisioned so that it is a more integrated part of the surrounding areas, and as a place that offers cultural opportunities and facilities that can allow it to compete with other areas of the city on certain levels.

However, there simultaneously can be highlighted a contrasting proposal that wishes to tap into an identity and vision of Tingbjerg that places it in a bygone era. Part of the plans for ‘Communication and Image’ is to work on and develop Tingbjerg’s external image.


This construction of Tingbjerg’s identity based upon 50’s nostalgia could have certain implications for the overall plans for ‘Open City’. While ‘Open City’ is trying to realign Tingbjerg with a more revitalized perception of how an area should function via openness and multiple facilities, the area is simultaneously being re-branded through reliance upon an older version of Tingbjerg and urban planning. Thus, the plans for the new identity of Tingbjerg would seemingly oppose some of the concepts that are being activated through the plans of ‘Open City’.

In conclusion, the plans for ‘Open City’ might be in the process of producing parallel yet opposing identities for Tingbjerg at the same time. The plans to transform Tingbjerg’s facilities and open its borders is a concerted effort to reinterpret the way the area is understood by both residents and the outside world. Yet, there are also plans to re-identify the area via a longing for days gone past. This inconsistency can be relevant for how the residents of the area understand and interpret their living spaces. In the following section, the way that Tingbjerg is thought of and imagined will be dealt with in greater detail via an examination of how the area is being planned to function as a community.
Planning For A Community

Apparent in both of the previous discussions concerning the plans for urban renewal are certain ideas relating to the ways that Tingbjerg is hoped to function, and certain ways that Tingbjerg is imagined. More specifically, there are elements of the urban planning in Tingbjerg that are based upon the assumption of, and demonstrate a desire to create, a form of local community.

One way to see this planning towards a “local community” is evident, in part, by looking more closely at the suggestions within ‘New City Attractions’, such as the cultural centre and the open-access swimming pool. Together, the construction of these new social spaces inside Tingbjerg are meant to: “(...) etablere et samlingssted og naturligt centrum for beboerne i Tingbjerg-Utterslevhuse.” (Helhedsplan, 2007: 26). These plans are very much intended to create more spaces and meeting places for local interaction, and to place emphasis on keeping people engaged within the local area as a way of developing community.

Other indicators that planning in Tingbjerg is interlinked with the aspiration of creating a local community can be seen by looking more closely at the initiatives and plans for activities of ‘Open City’. One of the goals for ‘Open City’ is to: “(...) støtte beboere, der ønsker at lave lokale aktiviteter til gavn for lokalområdet.” (Helhedsplan, 2007: 10). Elsewhere, the activities planned for under the section ‘Social and Cultural Activities’ are intended to (Helhedsplan, 2007: 16):

- Skabe synlige aktiviteter i bydelen
- Styrke stolthed og kendskab til området
- Styrke beboernes kendskab til hinanden og til andre aktiviteter
- Styrke fællesskab i bydelen
In addition to the explicit wish to strengthen community in the area, there is otherwise ample evidence of reliance upon the idea that Tingbjerg and its residents should seek an intensification of localized activity, and that a local community should be the arena within which residents operate and interact. Yet, these plans can be looked at more closely in order to understand the implications for Tingbjerg.

Firstly, there seems to be the assumption that intensifying plans and activities based within the local area can create a community. Secondly, by placing importance upon the need for knowing the area, knowing one another within the area, and knowing what activities are happening in Tingbjerg, there is reliance upon the assumption that the area needs to have a functioning and active community. Lastly, the social and cultural activities sought after in the Helhedsplan are very much orientated towards reforming the socio-spatial practices of residents so that they are less reliant upon surrounding areas, and so that their actions and daily realities become increasingly localized interactions inside the boundaries of Tingbjerg. Yet, this might also imply that there is something negative for Tingbjerg if residents need or wish to seek cultural opportunities or activities elsewhere. Seen in the light of the urban renewal basing itself upon the concept of ‘Open City’ the title could be construed as a slight misnomer.

In conclusion, some of the primary concerns of ‘Open City’ seek to develop a series of activities and attractions that could increase the opportunity for residents to interact and meet within the local area. These same plans also seek to cultivate and contribute to the formation of a community by influencing and planning for the way that residents interact with one-another and their local area. This impact of planning upon residents will be looked at more closely in the next section.

**Planning For A Resident**

The abovementioned planning towards the creation of a form of community has various implications for the residents of Tingbjerg. In this section I will highlight some of the ways in which ‘Open City’ raises certain assumptions concerning how the residents of Tingbjerg should take part in their local area.

As already demonstrated, ‘Open City’ entails plans to support initiatives in which residents are involved in local activities for the benefit of the local area, and plans to: “(...innvolvere flere beboere I formidlingen af aktiviteter og indsatser.” (Helhedsplan, 2007: 25). In addition, the goal is also to: "(... give almindelige beboere mulighed for indflydelse på og ejerskab til det samlede projekt.” (Helhedsplan, 2007: 16). Together these ideals and plans are thus signifying
an aspiration that residents should participate, and become actively involved, in the local area or community.

Other plans in ‘Open City’ seek to enhance, not only the resident’s participation in the area, but also their participation with one another. As such, there is a wish to: "(...) styrke naboskab og fællesskab på tværs af alder og kulturel baggrund." (Helhedsplan, 2007: 24), or elsewhere: "(...) at opbygge netværk og sociale fællesskaber mellem beboere." (Helhedsplan, 2007: 30). This incorporates the notion that residents of Tingbjerg are presently lacking, and thus need to have more, contact with each other. Thus, ‘Open City’ is planning for a future in Tingbjerg in which intensified social contact between residents becomes a representation of a healthy and functioning community.

Another issue mentioned in the plans for ‘Open City’ is the desire to change or affect the way that residents see and think of their local area. One of the goals under ‘Communication and Image’ is to: "(...) styrke tilfredsheden blandt områdets beboere. Tingbjerg-Utterslevhuse skal være et sted, man er stolt af at bo." (Helhedsplan, 2007: 21). More specifically, some of ‘Open City’s’ internal image and communication plans are to (Helhedsplan, 2007: 24p):

- **Opbygge lokal stolthed**
- **Sætte fokus på områdets attraktive beliggenhed, flotte arkitektur og tilbud**
- **Styrke oplevelsen af at Tingbjerg-Utterslevhuse er et sted, man bor, fordi man har lyst**
- **Øge den lokale opfattelse af at man kan gøre en forskel, det sted man bor**
Together, these abovementioned plans are designed to enhance the way that residents think of, feel towards, and interpret their local area.

A different aspect of ‘Open City’ that impacts upon the residents of the area is the plans to alter the composition of residents. The present composition of people living in Tingbjerg is seen lacking in terms of resource-strong residents and families. As such, part of the plans for ‘Open City’ is to alter the mixture of residents living there:


Within these plans to alter the composition of residents is likely the hope that new residents might contribute more to matters such as participation in the community, social contact between residents, and pride felt towards the local area. However, adding resource-strong residents to Tingbjerg will not necessarily contribute to a sense of community purely on the basis of them being more economically stable.

In conclusion, many of the plans and assumptions of ‘Open City’ are concerned with recomposing the way that residents relate to each other and their area. This can be seen as an attempt to alter problems such as criminality, as well as worries over low social cohesion within the area. Thus, having identified certain aspects that are seen as lacking in Tingbjerg, the plans for ‘Open City’ seek to improve the level of participation, social interaction, pride, and composition of the residents. As such, this can also be understood as a way of delineating what type of residents the urban renewal envisions living in the area of Tingbjerg.

**Summary: Analysis Part One**

In summary, this section of my analysis has been primarily concerned with investigating the various ways that the social space of Tingbjerg is under construction. The majority of the plans under ‘Open City’ are progressive in that they seek to readdress Tingbjerg’s apparent problems with isolation; be that social or physical. As such there have been developed a wide array of interesting and challenging new plans and proposals that could challenge the many difficult issues facing a marginalized area. Attempting to re-identify and re-integrate Tingbjerg with other places and people has meant that certain assumptions and issues have been made concerning the area’s identity, construction and composition. Yet, as seen above, there can be pinpointed and identified certain issues that might work against the plans and project of ‘Open City’. In the next part of the analysis greater detail will be paid to the actual lived realities of
the informants, which will help identify how these plans for urban renewal match or contradict some of the socio-spatial practices of the residents of Tingbjerg.
Analysis Part Two – Socio-Spatial Practices

As outlined at the beginning of this chapter, I am basing the structure of my analysis upon Lefebvre’s conceptual triad, and thus employing some of his ideas to the social space in Tingbjerg. The following section delves into another element of his triad, which I have re-titled ‘Socio-Spatial Practices’. In this examination of the movements and activities of the informants I will utilize the ideas resulting from the five interviews, and the four visualizations from the mapping of their activity spaces. In combining these tools I intend to paint a picture of some of the different socio-spatial practices of the informants, and the implications of this for their actual lived realities. Following a presentation of the informants together with the mapping of their activity spaces, I will outline in greater detail their socio-spatial practices. The analysis will be broken down into two themes; ‘Socio-Spatial Practices Inside Tingbjerg’ and ‘Socio-Spatial Practices Outside Tingbjerg’.

Presentation Of Informants And Mapping Of Activity Spaces

Konrad: Male – 39 years old – born in Poland and has lived in Denmark for 18 years – unemployed – attends Danish language classes – lived in Tingbjerg for 3 years – has no family in the area

Due to the fact that I never received the mapping forms back from Konrad I cannot display his activity space.
**Amira:** Female – 17 years old – born in Denmark and family comes from Syria – student – has lived in Tingbjerg for 16 years – has parents and three siblings living in Tingbjerg – sister to Parveen

Some examples of her activities are:

- Going to school in Nørrebro
- Shopping along Nørrebrogade with her sister
- Doing homework or watching a movie at home
- Shopping in Frederiksbergcenteret with friends
- Dropping off books at the library on Ruten
- Visiting an uncle in Vanløse
- Going on a day-trip to Klampenborg
- Shopping at Fisketorvet

**Arne:** Male – 86 years old – born on Lolland and lived in Copenhagen majority of his life – pensioner – lived in Tingbjerg for 50 years – has no family presently living in Tingbjerg

Some examples of his activities are:

- Playing cards and bingo at the Pensioner Club
- Visiting Bispebjerg Cemetery
- Visiting to Tingbjerg Church
- Shopping trip to Vanløse with his daughter
- Eating at Menstrup Kro in Næstved (this movement extends beyond the borders of the map)
- Grocery shopping along Ruten
Ebba: Female – 87 years old – born in Copenhagen and lived in Copenhagen her entire life – pensioner – has lived in Tingbjerg for 38 years – has daughter and two grandchildren living in Tingbjerg

Some examples of her activities are:

- Chatting with the others at the Pensioner Club
- Watching television at home
- Grocery shopping along Ruten
- Drinking coffee in the mornings at the Pensioner Club
- Having a visit from her daughter and grandchildren
- Eating dinner with family

Parveen: Female – 21 years old – born in Syria and moved to Denmark shortly afterwards – student – has lived in Tingbjerg for 18 years – has parents and three siblings living in Tingbjerg – sister to Amira

Some examples of her activities are:

- Going to school in Nørrebro
- Shopping for books along Nørregade
- Sitting with friends in Fælledparken
- Shopping along Nørrebrogade with her sister
- Visiting her old school in Nørrebro
- Shopping at Fisketorvet
- Visiting the library along Ruten
- Going on a day-trip to Klampenborg
- Visiting her uncle in Vanløse
Socio-Spatial Practices Inside Tingbjerg

One way of developing a greater understanding of the social space of Tingbjerg is through revealing the socio-spatial practices of the informants. Due to the fact that all of the informants live in Tingbjerg, I am thus provided with common ground by which I may analyse their use of, and relations within, this area.

An issue that became evident throughout my interviews with the informants was an apparent lack of different or alternate meeting places inside Tingbjerg. However, this can be perceived as a problem to varying degrees dependant upon the informant. The pensioners, for example, utilize the Pensioner Club on an almost daily basis, and it functions as an essential site for their socio-spatial relations. This also can also be seen in their relatively more enclosed activity spaces on the maps above. When asked about what happens on an average day and how much he use the Pensioner Club, Arne answers: “(...) den er åben mandag til fredag. Og jeg vil gerne herover ved 8.30, og så går jeg hjem ved 14.30 senest eller sådan noget (...) Det er stort set det, som fylder min tid.” (Arne, App. 2: 2).

Similarly, Ebba describes the Club as being the main centre for her activity in Tingbjerg. For Ebba, an additional advantage with the Pensioner Club is precisely the fact that it is close-by and accessible:


Although this heavy usage of the Pensioner Club can also be detected by looking at the mapping of activity spaces of Ebba and Arne, there is something else that can be drawn from the interviews. Especially the last citation by Ebba demonstrates a great contentedness with an activity space that is relatively confined to Tingbjerg, or more specifically, mostly confined to the Pensioner Club. This is can clearly be seen in the limited span of Ebba’s activity space. Only very rarely do either Arne or Ebba utilize other places in Tingbjerg such as parks, benches, or the library. This is also a very clear example of how their social and spatial activities are bound together. Where they go, and whom they see, are combined, which demonstrates the importance of thinking of these terms together.

While the pensioners express a level of contentment with a daily routine that is largely made up of socio-spatial practices that take place inside Tingbjerg, the other informants express
dissatisfaction over the lack of opportunities in the area. When asked whether he is satisfied with his present use of Tingbjerg, Konrad responds:

"Man altid passer sig til det sted, hvor man bor, ja? For eksempel, hvis jeg havde boet i byen så vil jeg gå måske lidt mere rundt i forretninger, og butikker og sådan noget. Så længe man bor her, så er der begrænsede muligheder. Så man prøver at finde det bedste i det hele." (Konrad, App. 4: 10).

At another point in the interview Konrad was asked whether he would consider utilizing Tingbjerg more in terms of spare time. He answers:

"Jeg vil hellere gå på Frederikssundsvej og finde en cafe eller restaurant eller hvad som helst for at komme ud. Men ikke her i Tingbjerg. Tingbjerg er kun god for at gå til supermarkedet og købe ind, og så komme hjem." (Konrad, App. 4: 6).

While Konrad is consistently the most vocal of the informants to express frustration with the lack of things to do in Tingbjerg he is not the only one of the informants to do so. Both Amira and Parveen display a similar disappointment over the limitations of Tingbjerg. When asked about whether she utilizes Ruten, the main shopping and traffic street of Tingbjerg, for anything other than grocery shopping, Parveen replies: "Nej, der er ikke så meget mere end bare det. Også fordi selskabslokaler fylde ret meget, og så kommer Aldi, og så er der en maler butik. Og så er det sådan "Ja, ok...spændende!"." (Parveen, App. 5: 13).

Similarly, Ebba does not find many things to utilize Ruten for other than grocery shopping: "Jeg er kun dernede for at handle og så færdig!" (Ebba, App. 3: 7). Yet, due to the fact the two supermarkets in Tingbjerg are located along Ruten, this stretch of road can be interpreted as essentially the only space in Tingbjerg that all the informants share, although quite possibly at different times.

Other than the supermarkets, the only other space along Ruten that seems to be utilized by the informants is the library, which Konrad, Parveen, and Amira sometimes visit. Yet, although they all find the library to be an asset in some form or manner, it is still not described as a space that is used intensively. As explained by Amira:

Another element of Tingbjerg that is discussed by the informants is the many surrounding green areas and marshes. For example, Utterslevmosen is an important location for Konrad and his spare time activities when not attending Danish classes:

"(...) jeg plejer at gå faktisk her ved Utterslevmose og bare sidde der et eller andet sted. Det er meget hyggeligt, der er masser af græs, og masser af buske så at man kan gemme sig, og der ikke er nogen der vil forstyrre en." (Konrad, App. 4: 3).

Likewise, both Amira and Parveen name Utterslevmosen as an important destination in terms of their socio-spatial practices in Tingbjerg. Yet, a crucial issue can be drawn out of these choices as to which green spaces are actually utilized. Although there are a number parks and green areas located more centrally within the area, all the informants favour the green areas found outside the main core of Tingbjerg. This means that much of their leisure time in Tingbjerg ends up being in less central areas, where there will be lessened chance for interaction with other residents.

These questions relating to the informant’s social relations illuminate a key issue tied to decisions concerning how they choose to interact with and utilize Tingbjerg. As explained above, and seen in the mapping of their activity spaces, Arne and Ebba have an everyday life that is centred inside Tingbjerg to a much higher degree than the other informants. Their daily visits to the Pensioner Club accounts for, not only a large part of their physical movement inside Tingbjerg, but is additionally their greatest source for social interaction with other residents. Ebba states:

"Jeg har både min datter og to børnebørn boende herude. Hun bor på oven i købet den samme vej som mig selv. Så det er fint. Så jeg har en tæt kontakt. Altså så har man jo også medlemmerne...der er nogle man knytter sig mere til, og kommer sammen mere, som ægte." (Ebba, App. 4: 2).

At the other extreme is Konrad, who has neither family nor many social relations with other residents of Tingbjerg. He describes himself as only having one close contact in the area:


This relatively little social contact with other residents obviously results in, and produces, Konrad’s relative socio-spatial isolation from other parts and people of Tingbjerg. As such, he
spends the majority of his time alone, either in his apartment, or in the green areas around Utterslevmosen:

"Det er IP-telefoni, og netværker og alt det. Så ja, det er noget som optager meget af min tid på. Men ellers går jeg i skolen, og så kommer hjem, og så som de fleste spiser og ser måske noget fjernsyn eller bruger computeren." (Konrad, App. 4: 1).

This quotation above demonstrates an unique aspect of Konrad’s social relations. Although he mentions a lack of social contact with other residents in Tingbjerg, he utilizes the Internet and online communication to actively pursue the social relationships that he might be lacking in Tingbjerg. Instead of face-to-face contact, the majority of his social relations are forged and maintained online. In this sense, his social relations are a unique construction in relation to the other informants.

Parveen and Amira similarly mention a lack of friends and contacts in Tingbjerg, and have few relationships with people other than family. This is caused by the fact that neither of them actually went to school in Tingbjerg. This has meant that Amira, for example, only has one contact in Tingbjerg: “Og så har jeg én veninde, som bor her i Tingbjerg. Hun er også en af min klassekammerater på gymnasiet. Men det er meget skole-relateret, når vi ser hinanden.” (Amira, App. 1: 3).

This problem with a lack of social contact seems to stem not only from a lack of pre-existing relationships but also due to the fact that it is difficult to meet new people in Tingbjerg. Parveen describes this problem:


Thus, other than the pensioner’s use of the Pensioner Club, the informants express dissatisfaction with the present level of social interaction in Tingbjerg, and frustration over the lack of opportunities to forge new social relations. The only other reference to social contact made by any of the informants are the occasional, and more casual, relations between themselves and the staff working at the Project Secretariat, the library, or in the supermarket. Parveen relates to this when she states:

In conclusion, there is a range of differing socio-spatial practices inside Tingbjerg expressed by the various informants. While Arne and Ebba are very much centred inside Tingbjerg their socio-spatial practices can be seen as somewhat limited to only a handful of different places. However, they do not communicate this as being a problem. Alternatively, Konrad, Amira and Parveen have very few social contacts in the area and feel somewhat limited by lack of things to do or see in Tingbjerg. Thus, this seemingly contributes to their increased isolation from parts of Tingbjerg, and their lack of interaction and opportunities to meet other residents. The next section will look at the other social and spatial opportunities for the informants in an analysis of their socio-spatial practices outside of Tingbjerg.

**Socio-Spatial Practices Outside Tingbjerg**

Delving into the informant’s relations and movements inside Tingbjerg comprises only half of the story of their socio-spatial practices. Similar to the fact that they all have some degree of social contact and activity inside Tingbjerg, they likewise all share an everyday life that is interwoven with the world outside of Tingbjerg. Thus, in this next section I will outline some of the overlaps and dissimilarities in their relationships with the spaces and places outside the borders of Tingbjerg.

As clearly demonstrated in the maps of their activity spaces, the informants with the greatest range of mobility outside of Tingbjerg are Amira and Parveen. Generally, their socio-spatial practice is tied to an almost daily contact with spaces outside of Tingbjerg, which is heavily linked to the fact that both Parveen and Amira are students that commute to Nørrebro, albeit at different institutions. Yet, it is not only school that accounts for their activities outside of Tingbjerg. In opposition to her somewhat limited activity space in Tingbjerg, Amira has a quite different relationship to other parts of the city. When asked about which parts of the city she utilizes Amira says:

Similarly, Parveen describes her spare time activities as including things such as visiting shopping centres, parks, or going to cafés; all of which take place outside of Tingbjerg. The ranges of activities shown on her map are not necessarily confined to after school. Weekends, for both Amira and Parveen, also involve visits to the city centre, or going on trips with family or friends. When asked whether her weekends are always composed of trips further afield Parveen replies: "Ja. Hvis ikke lørdag... der skal man skulle måske i byen eller sådan noget, eller vi får gæster om aftenen. Men søndag, der skal vi i hvert fald fald ud." (Parveen, App. 1: 3). Thus, the amount and range of activities that Amira and Parveen partake in stands in stark contrast to their relatively little use of the spaces inside Tingbjerg.

Similar to Amira and Parveen, Konrad’s schedule requires him to frequently travel outside of Tingbjerg, although for Konrad this is to the neighbouring district of Brønshøj where he attends Danish language classes four days a week. Yet, other than these trips to school, his daily movements outside Tingbjerg are restricted in scope. Other than very rare trips to the city centre he generally only goes as far as Brønshøj, where he will shop, eat, or sit in a café:

"Du har set på Frederikssundsvej, at der er en stor forretning kaldt Føtex? Så man går i Føtex og køber et eller det andet eller det tredje. Der er mange spisesteder, og et stort udvalg. (...) Og så en anden ting er, at der er mange cafeer hvor man kan sidde udenfor, ja?" (Konrad, App. 4: 6).

Although considerably less regularly than the other informants, both Arne and Ebba also occasionally travel outside of Tingbjerg. Sometimes this is simply to Brønshøj for grocery shopping or something similar. When asked how often he goes outside of Tingbjerg, Arne responds: "En gang i mellem skal jeg ind at handle, og køber de ting, som jeg har brug for, og så går der langt tid inden jeg skal gøre det igen." (Arne, App. 2: 5). Arne’s map of his activity space demonstrates a handful of trips outside of Tingbjerg, as well as some of his trip to Næstved.

Yet, another way that the pensioners have the opportunity to travel outside of Tingbjerg is when they participate in the bus trips organized through the Pensioner Club. Ebba says: "Jamen altså, vi har mange tur herovre. (...) Det har vi altid gjort. Vi har altid haft tur ude af huset (...) [Interviewer: Er det cirka en gang om ugen eller...?] Ja, der er faktisk noget hver måned." (Ebba, App. 3: 5). These organized bus trips account for an important aspect of Ebba
and Arne’s activity outside of Tingbjerg. They both describe that they previously had travelled much more independently in the past to places in central Copenhagen and surrounding areas, but that this movement has decreased along with less physical mobility and increasing age.

Yet, the pensioners’ utilization of organized trips brings up an important fact regarding differing tendencies in the informant’s movements. On the one hand, the pensioners primarily travel outside Tingbjerg together with their pre-existing social relations i.e. on organized trips with the other residents from the Pensioner Club. This means that the same social interrelations that they have inside Tingbjerg remain intact and are temporarily transported to places outside of Tingbjerg.

On the other hand, Amira and Parveen’s socio-spatial practices outside of Tingbjerg have a very different construction due to the fact that their spatial practices outside of Tingbjerg involve, and are based upon, those very social relations that they find lacking inside Tingbjerg. This can be exemplified by looking at two of Amira’s statements. She states that: “Nej, de fleste veninder osv. jeg har er faktisk uden for Tingbjerg.” (Amira, App. 1: 2), and later comments: “Tit når jeg er sammen med veninder uden for skolen, så er det sådan noget hvor vi går ud at shoppe sammen eller på café. Og mange af de her ting ligger ude i byen, altså uden for Tingbjerg.” (Amira, App. 1: 3). Thus, the reason why Amira and Parveen spend time outside of Tingbjerg to a much higher degree than the other informants is interrelated with the fact that, unlike the pensioners, Amira and Parveen’s socio-spatial needs and opportunities are very much based in a reality that is beyond Tingbjerg’s borders. This is clearly shown on the maps of Amira and Parveen’s activity spaces. Additionally, this is a further illustration of how the informant’s spatial practices are rooted in some sort of social relations. There are occasional instances where the socio-spatial practices of Amira and Parveen will mimic the pensioner’s via certain activities and trips planned by the urban renewal projects such as ‘Meeting-Place for Women’, which takes women over the age of 18 on day trips to places such as the Royal Theatre.

While Konrad has very little social contact with other residents in Tingbjerg he similarly has infrequent contact with the relations and friends that he has living in areas outside of Tingbjerg. When asked how often he travels outside of Tingbjerg to visit friends, Konrad responds:

Thus, Konrad’s socio-spatial practices outside of Tingbjerg are seemingly some of the most restricted of all the informants being that he seldom travels very far from Tingbjerg, and simultaneously has very infrequent social contact with persons in the rest of Copenhagen. As demonstrated earlier, these issues are always interrelated.

A last issue not yet touched upon is the frequency of social relations from the outside coming to Tingbjerg to visit the informants. Arne and Ebba have little social contact with people outside of Tingbjerg other than family because the majority of their social relations are already located in the area that they live. Konrad, Amira, and Parveen all have a greater number of social relations outside of Tingbjerg, yet very rarely are these contacts part of their socio-spatial practices inside Tingbjerg. Konrad mentions the difficulty of having visitors come and visit:


Thus, the distance between Tingbjerg and other places has an impact upon the informant’s social relations and socio-spatial practice. Frustration over this isolation is also expressed by Parveen:

“Ja, det har været rigtig irriterende...de fleste af dem jeg kender, de bor inde på Nørrebro. (...) det kunne have været rigtig rigtig nemt, hvis man bare boede tæt på hinanden. Og så kunne man komme og gå, som man har lyst til det, og ikke skulle tænke på, at det tager en halv time til at køre derind. Eller det tager 40 min til at tage derud. Det har været rigtig irriterende, at man er lidt væk fra dem, eller man ikke har boet i det samme område. Dem fra min klasse, de er sådan 5-6 stykker, de bor bare lige i nærheden af hinanden, og de ser hinanden meget mere.” (Parveen, App. 5: 9).

Tingbjerg’s detached location from other parts of the city is very much a factor for the informant’s socio-spatial practices because it limits the ease and availability for social contact with others. Moreover, Tingbjerg’s possibility to function as a forum for socio-spatial practice is further complicated due to the perceived lack of opportunities within the area. Thus, this is seen as providing very little incentive for social contacts to make the trip to Tingbjerg.

In conclusion, Amira and Parveen have a great deal of contact and socio-spatial activity outside of Tingbjerg. While Konrad is regularly in Brønshøj, he rarely goes further into Copenhagen, which seems to add to his social isolation from others. For the informants, having
the majority of their social relations outside of Tingbjerg is further complicated by the fact that it is difficult to have others visit Tingbjerg due to its non-central location. Meanwhile, Arne and Ebba, while occasionally on trips outside of Tingbjerg, most often stay within the same social relations that they already have inside Tingbjerg.

Summary: Analysis Part Two
In summary, this section of my analysis has sought to highlight some of the intricacies and trends within the informant’s socio-spatial practices, both inside and outside of Tingbjerg. While some of the informants are centred inside Tingbjerg more than others, there seems to be a general lack of intensive use of multiple spaces and places in the area. Likewise, the degree of social interaction with other residents that accompanies their physical movements seems variable, yet this too can be described as generally narrow or constricted. Tingbjerg’s relative isolation seems therefore to play a role for the informant’s socio-spatial practices outside of the area. While all the informants travel outside of Tingbjerg on occasion, the frequency and reasons for doing so are tied to different factors and social relations. Overall, this provides evidence of the essential bond that social relations play in the spatial movements of the informants. In the next part of my analysis, I will unravel some of the ways that the informants interpret and understand these socio-spatial practices within the area, and investigate how they conceptualize Tingbjerg in various ways.
Analysis Part Three – Representational Spaces

Based on the previous investigation of the informant’s socio-spatial practices, this section of the analysis look into the remaining element of Lefebvre’s conceptual triad, ‘Representational Spaces’, which is primarily concerned with looking at interpretations and understandings of social spaces and places. In analysing how the informants express their opinions about certain spaces and lived experiences inside Tingbjerg, I can better understand the connections between their socio-spatial practices, and their space that is in the process of urban renewal. Similar to the last section, this part of the analysis is dependent upon knowledge gained via interviews, and has been broken down into three segments, all of which are based upon themes and concepts that were shown to be of importance by the five informants. The first theme, ‘Ruten And Spaces Of Contention’ looks at various negative and positive perceptions of Tingbjerg’s main road. The second theme, ‘An Identity In Isolation’ looks at how the informants express certain ideas about Tingbjerg’s identity. Finally, the third theme, ‘Construing A Community’ looks at instances where the informants express a certain understanding of community.

Ruten And Spaces Of Contention

A certain space inside Tingbjerg that was brought up by all of the informants was the main shopping street and thoroughfare; Ruten. This space is of interest, not only due to the fact that it is a site that raised different reactions by the informants, but also that it seems to be the only area of Tingbjerg that is shared and utilized by all the informants at some point or another. Thus, in the following section I will attempt to draw out some of the divergent interpretations of this, and its connecting, spaces.

A key issue for Tingbjerg is that Ruten presently holds a key position as the main area for both people and businesses in Tingbjerg. However, the informants interpret the implications of this area’s central role both negatively and positively. For example, several of the informants single out Ruten as the place where they feel the majority of...
Tingbjerg’s problems are located. When asked for his impressions of Ruten, and whether it could be developed as a place to utilize more, both socially and physically, Arne responded: “Nej nej. Det tror jeg ikke. For mit velkommen så bliver det bare til dem, som er der nu.” (Arne, App. 2: 6). Ebba feels similarly negative towards Ruten and describes the problem as:


Ebba’s interpretation of Ruten is that it is not a place where she feels particularly welcome. This has meant that she tries to utilize the area as little as possible in spite of the fact that, due to grocery shopping, it is one of the few areas of Tingbjerg that she frequents on a regular basis other than the Pensioner Club. Thus, Ebba’s uneasiness, with what she seems to be describing as alcoholics from the area, has a direct influence upon her socio-spatial practices in Tingbjerg.

Konrad’s wariness and perception of Ruten seems to share certain similarities with the views expressed by Ebba. Yet, there are also some subtle differences apparent in their descriptions of how they find this space discomforting. Konrad says:

“(…) her på Ruten virker det lidt mere farligt, som det er på den side hvor jeg bor (...) Det er mere faktisk...der er mange indvandrere som samler sig, for eksempel tæt ved supermarkedet. Og man bliver måske lidt...ikke bange, men det er bare ikke behageligt af gå den vej.” (Konrad, App. 4: 2).

Although both Konrad and Ebba are describing the same space there is an apparent disparity in terms of what they actually see as causing some of the problems along Ruten. It can be interpreted from Ebba’s statement that she thinks alcoholics are causing the main problems along Ruten, while Konrad raises the issue of ethnic minorities grouping together in certain areas, which makes him feel uncomfortable. Thus, it seems as if Konrad and Ebba are not seeing the same people and problems, and as such are interpreting the same space in quite different ways. While both of these issues might be prevalent along Ruten, the dissimilarity of their views highlights the openness and flexibility of interpretations.

Nevertheless, it is not all of the informants that look upon Ruten with unfavourable eyes. While Konrad and Ebba are clear about their discomfort with this space, Amira and Parveen have
quite a different view of Ruten. When asked whether she is afraid to walk around Tingbjerg in general, and Ruten specifically, Amira responds:

“(...) generelt er jeg ikke bange for at gå ud, også hvis jeg skulle til supermarked eller sådan noget...det er ikke sådan at jeg kigger rundt omkring, fordi jeg er bange. Det er ikke den følelse jeg har...overhovedet ikke. Selvom jeg ikke oplever det så ved jeg, at der er ballade og sådan noget, men det er ikke noget jeg er bange for.” (Amira, App. 1: 5).

Thus, the disquiet felt by the pensioners and Konrad is not present in Amira’s experiences with Ruten. Another way of illustrating the different views concerning Ruten can be seen in Parveen’s suggestion that a café along Ruten would provide residents with a new meeting place in Tingbjerg:

“Og så er der den der...jeg tror det er en bodega...jeg ved ikke lige hvad den er, og det er sådan lidt...jo selvfølgelig må den godt være her, men tænk på, hvis der var en cafe! Alle de unge ville bare strømme dertil og bruge den!” (Parveen, App. 5: 13).

Parveen’s optimism towards the idea of a café along Ruten is very different from Ebba’s current interpretation of Ruten, whereby she would not even sit on a bench along this same stretch of road. The contrast in views surrounding Ruten can also be demonstrated by displaying Konrad’s reaction to suggestions that a café along Ruten might be a good idea:


Thus, despite of the fact that Konrad utilizes cafés as a leisure activity, as demonstrated in the previous part of this analysis, he seems to have no interest in this activity becoming part of his socio-spatial practice in Tingbjerg.

As demonstrated by many of the above citations, there is a reoccurring concern for safety and criminality amongst the informants. Although Amira and Parveen do not describe Ruten as an area plagued with problems, this does not necessarily mean that they see no problems existing in Tingbjerg. Instead, they both interpret the physical midpoint of Tingbjerg, and not Ruten, as being a location for confrontation. This is demonstrated when Parveen states:

"Jamen også, altså jeg synes bare...herinde mod centrum efterhånden er ikke så fredelig som den har været. Nogle af de unge drenge er blevet ældre, og nogle af dem er blevet ballademagere. [Interviewer: Så det er der i centrum, hvor der er
Thus, Parveen articulates the concept of Tingbjerg as having dangerous and discomforting areas, which on some levels resemble comments from Konrad and the pensioners, yet this is crucially located in another space in Tingbjerg.

Although there is a great variance in views amongst the informants, there remains a final issue that actually demonstrates a degree of commonality linking their interpretations. This is touched upon in the following citation from Amira:


Amira’s comments not only identify an area of Tingbjerg where she believes problems do occur, but additionally entails an explanation of where she believes the problems do not occur i.e. not in the area that she lives. Similar statements relating to problems in Tingbjerg are echoed by Ebba when she says: “Ja, der er problemer dernede. Men heroppe er der stille.” (Ebba, App. 3: 2), and Arne when he states: “Kun i det der højhus, men ikke hos os.” (Arne, App. 2: 4).

Of particular interest is the fact that, despite only Amira and Parveen living in the same area of Tingbjerg, all of the informants interpret the area around their homes as being free from conflict, and that problems necessarily occur elsewhere.

In conclusion, the very different views of Ruten, as displayed above, exemplify the fact that the same social space can and will be interpreted in a multitude of ways. Not only is there a discrepancy as to whether Ruten actually is a space of contention, but there also exists further inconsistencies concerning the root causes of the perceived problems. All of this seems to impact upon the informant’s choices and socio-spatial practices inside Tingbjerg to varying degrees. While they might not agree upon where the problems are located, the informants universally identified the fact that problems, such as criminality, do exist in Tingbjerg, although none of them believed it to be an issue that affected their own specific area of residence.
An Identity In Isolation

As touched upon earlier in this thesis, places are often conceptualized as having a certain identity, or a range of qualities, which one associates them with. Additionally, each place can be construed as being unique and different from other places. Thus, in the following section I will look at interpretations of Tingbjerg’s identity as expressed by the informants.

An important issue for the informants is the fact that the area’s physical positioning causes it to be construed as isolated from surrounding elements of the urban landscape. One way this sense of isolation is expressed is through common references to the idea that if one were not looking for Tingbjerg, one would not be able to find it. This is stated most clearly by Amira:

“(...) det er den samme kommentar man hører igen og igen. At der ikke er nogle, der er bevidste om, at der ligger noget her. Man skal kende sit område. Og der er kun én indgang fra motorvejen, og ikke andre måder at komme ind. Så det er den eneste måde...så hvis du ikke kommer forbi her, så ved du ikke, at den eksisterer.” (Amira, App. 1: 5).

Amira is describing Tingbjerg’s isolation as being, at least partially, attributed to the fact that outsiders are actually unaware of its existence, which is caused by its physical inaccessibility. Konrad relays a similar vision of the area in his description of his first experiences in Tingbjerg: “Jeg havde været to gange forbi, da jeg skulle cykle, og så lige pludselige havde jeg kommet til Tingbjerg, men jeg havde faktisk ikke vidst, at det var Tingbjerg.” (Konrad, App. 4: 5).

Thus, the practice of actually arriving in Tingbjerg for the first time is understood as imbued with this sense of obscurity and concealment.

Yet, it is not just this physical act of locating Tingbjerg that signifies a sense and identity of isolation for the informants. Isolation plays a large role in the way that they imagine and describe their local area, which causes them to see it as cut-off and different from the rest of Copenhagen. Amira expresses this most clearly when she states:

“Tingbjerg i sig selv adskiller sig fra København. Det er næsten en lille samfund i sig selv (...) Der skal bare være nogle tøjbutikker og så er det et samfund i sig selv (...) Tingbjerg er virkelig som et lille afskåret område.” (Amira, App. 1: 3).

Likewise, Parveen has a similar conceptualization of Tingbjerg as being different and separate from the rest of the city: “Det er næsten en lille landsby-agtig. Altså jeg ved godt, at den er en del af København, men det føles ikke som om den er en del af København.” (Parveen, App. 5: 7). Collectively, these descriptions of Tingbjerg display an interpretation of the area whereby it is more than just hard to find, but is additionally an area that permeates certain characteristics.
that make it different and unique from other places. These comments display how the informants are active in reproducing an image of Tingbjerg that is based upon associations to isolation.

Some of the informants identify positively with the image of Tingbjerg as being an isolated and separate society. In the above comments concerning Tingbjerg’s differentiation from the rest of the city, both Amira and Parveen refer to the area’s village-like qualities. This concept of the village actually plays a central role in many of the informant’s idealizations of Tingbjerg. As described by Parveen: "Jeg elsker når vi får besøg udefra, så at jeg kan vise, at her har vi vores eget lille Tingbjerg Bibliotek, og vores eget lille Ruten supermarked, og sådan noget.” (Parveen, App. 5: 9). Thus, Parveen seems to be thinking in terms of a “small-town” image of Tingbjerg that plays upon the idea that the areas continues to act and function in a way that is not possible or found in other parts of the city.

This view of Tingbjerg is supported by Amira, who similarly subscribes to an identity of Tingbjerg that is based upon the preservation of a past way of life. When talking about the many future opportunities for Tingbjerg she responded:

"Der skal heller ikke være alt for meget byliv. Vi er så godt afskåret...jeg vil ikke have, at det hele skal være herinde. Sådan noget som storcenter og store bygninger og sådan noget, det passer ikke til Tingbjerg.” (Amira, App. 1: 6).

In other words, Amira is describing a version of Tingbjerg that conceptually maintains certain borders or boundaries, and which preserves a sense of uniqueness that she attributes to the area.
These comments from Amira and Parveen highlight another important aspect of the way that the informants imagine and experience Tingbjerg. The area is interpreted and described as providing respite and security from other parts of a city that is hectic and chaotic. For some of the informants, such as Ebba, the rest of Copenhagen is often portrayed as a place where: "(…) der er meget larm, og busser og biler." (Ebba, App. 3: 5). For the informants, living in Tingbjerg is seen as providing them with a way to insulate themselves from some of the negative aspects of city living. Parveen says that Tingbjerg is: "(…) bare et dejligt sted, hvor man kan få sådan ro, og komme lidt væk fra byen." (Parveen, App. 5: 5), and Amira relates to a similar idea when she says:


Thus, similar to Ebba, Amira interprets Tingbjerg as a peaceful alternative to the complicated and stressful city found outside of its boundaries. This reliance upon imagining Tingbjerg as a natural refuge, separate from the city, plays a large role in the way that the informants communicate Tingbjerg to the outside world, and simultaneously comprises an important way that they interpret the area themselves.

Yet, while the informants often employ and reproduce a positive identity of Tingbjerg as isolated, there are also instances where Tingbjerg’s isolation is perceived negatively. Konrad, in particular, is less than enthusiastic about Tingbjerg’s separation from the rest of the city. He is also unique for being the only informant expressing a desire to move away from Tingbjerg, as he would prefer living closer to central Copenhagen:

"For det første, det vil være nemmere med socialt liv. Og nummer to, det kunne måske også være nemmere at få noget arbejde, fordi det vil være så tæt. Transport er betydelig bedre. Der er faktisk mange ting.” (Konrad, App. 4: 8).

Other than discussing some of the practical advantages of living inside of the city, Konrad also describes some of the ways that his present isolation impacts upon the way that he perceives Tingbjerg as an area. In relation to his earliest encounter with Tingbjerg Konrad describes his first reaction: "(…) jeg kan godt huske, hvor jeg kiggede omkring, og så tænkte "Hold da op!", fordi den ligner en slags ghetto, ja? (…) Men nu bor jeg her.” (Konrad, App. 4: 5). Thus,
Konrad did not initially see the idealistic small-town village that Parveen or Amira assign as a central characteristic of Tingbjerg’s identity. In fact, rather than seeing certain facets of Tingbjerg’s physical isolation as being beneficial, Konrad says: "(...) nogle ting der irriterer mig i Tingbjerg, er at det er sådan et lukket område. Ellers faktisk som en ghetto på et eller en anden måde." (Konrad, App. 4: 2).

The importance of these statements from Konrad lies in how they illustrate that the same place can simultaneously support various different perceptions and interpretations. Although Parveen consistently has positive things to say about Tingbjerg she can sometimes be distressed by the area’s exclusion from the rest of the city:

"Jo, der er selvfølgelig dårlige dage, og så er der gode dage, hvor man er sådan...Tingbjerg, det skal man bare ikke. Hvor man er træt af sit liv, og tænker "Hvorfor bor jeg derude i ingenmandsland?" (...) ”Ej, hvor bor vi?”." (Parveen, App. 5: 11).

Thus, while Parveen often sees Tingbjerg’s remoteness and isolation as a factor that provides her with a sense of relief from the rest of the city, she is not exempt from interpreting the same features as exclusionary in certain respects.

In conclusion, isolation is discussed as an inescapable aspect of both Tingbjerg and the area’s identity. In some respects, this exclusion allows the informants to imagine Tingbjerg as an idealized village that acts and functions in independence from the surrounding city. Yet, while one informant can interpret Tingbjerg as a safe haven, another can simultaneously interpret Tingbjerg as a ghetto. This discrepancy highlights the fact that, while isolation might be an attribute similarly ascribed to Tingbjerg by the informants, the actual interpretations of this isolation is much more variable. The same informant can interpret Tingbjerg’s separation as both a positive and a negative factor. This discrepancy also highlights the flexibility and fluidity of place identities, and demonstrates the difficulties in ascribing a set of attributes to any one place, as these attributes can easily provoke differing results and interpretations.

**Construing A Community**

An important issue that is very much interrelated to the above discussion regarding the identity of Tingbjerg is the extent to which this area can be thought of, described, and function as a form for community for the informants. In the following section I will delve into some of these ideas surrounding the notion of community, and highlight some of the ways that the informants interpret and experience their interrelations with other residents.
The idea of community is touched upon by all of the informants. However, the concept is actually articulated is expressed in variable ways. One of the ways that this sense of community is spoken of and experienced is through reference to residents being able to recognize and acknowledge one another. Parveen gives an example of how she connects to others in Tingbjerg when she says: "Så er det sådan “Hej, går det godt?”, når man går rundt nogle gang, eller skal til biblioteket. Så vinker de lige ud af vinduet. Så det giver også en fornemmelse af, at man kender hinanden." (Parveen, App. 5: 3). A key issue drawn from this citation is the fact that these very casual relations are actually of great importance for Parveen. This is further illustrated in another comment from Parveen concerning the same issue:


Thus, the ability to recognize, or know one another, is interpreted as an intensification of social relations, and something that provides a greater and more meaningful connection to both the people and the area. Arne expresses this association between people and place when he says: "(…) jeg er godt kendt. De kender mig alle sammen, og jeg føler jeg mig som en del af Tingbjerg." (Arne, App. 2: 4). For Arne, this ability to be recognized and acknowledged in Tingbjerg is tied to his ability to feel a part of the area.

These above comments from Parveen and Arne display some of the ways that the informants are thinking of and idealizing community. Even Parveen’s casual contact with other people is interpreted as symbolizing something quite significant for her area. Yet crucially, the informants also interpret Tingbjerg’s relative physical isolation as being responsible for favourable interrelations, such as knowing or recognizing one another. For example, Amira says: "(…) når man bor her i Tingbjerg, så kender vi hinanden. Altså alle kender alle. Og det er også fordi det er et lille og et meget afskåret område. Så alle kender hinanden." (Amira, App. 1: 5). Thus, Amira is communicating the belief the area’s separation from the rest of the city allows it to function as a more close-knit community. Ebba echoes this way of thinking when asked whether she would feel at home if she lived somewhere else in Copenhagen:
“Hvis du kommer hen et andet sted...lad os sige for eksempel, at du kommer op og bo på Frederikssundsvej eller et andet sted, du vil jo ikke have det der tætte. [Interviewer: I forhold til de andre mennesker, mener du?] Ja. Det vil du ikke få, hvis du flyttede derop. [Interviewer: Så det er en form for fællesskab du snakker om?] Jeg tror, at man vil have det svært ved at finde et fællesskab, hvis man kommer bare, og sidder i sådan et tilfældigt hus deroppe. Det skal du arbejde for at finde noget...til at få sammenhold. Det skal du ikke her. (...) [Interviewer: Så du synes, at det er nemmere for, også én der lige er flyttet ind, at det er nemmere for dem til at føle sig hjemme i Tingbjerg på en måde?] Ja, det tror jeg. [Interviewer: Tror du, at det er fordi Tingbjerg er sådan et firkantet område, at det kun er beboere herude?] Ja, det er det jeg mener. Vi er faktisk lukket inde. [Interviewer: Og du tror det gør...?] At folk kommer mere tæt på hinanden.” (Ebba, App. 3: 5).

Thus, similar to Amira, Ebba interprets Tingbjerg’s isolation as having a direct and positive result upon the ability of the area to function as a community. Yet, as I will demonstrate below, these conceptualizations can be questioned for a number of reasons.

One of the most striking contradictions to these above idealizations of Tingbjerg as a community where everybody knows one another is illustrated by considering Konrad’s socio-spatial practices inside Tingbjerg. Ebba remarks that Tingbjerg’s isolation makes it easier for new residents to be part of and included in the area, yet Konrad, who has lived in Tingbjerg for three years, can only claim one actual contact or friend. Thus, the unifying aspects of Tingbjerg’s seclusion, as dwelled upon by the other informants, seem to have had little actual benefit for the experiences of Konrad.

Other evidence of an idealization of Tingbjerg’s capability to operate as an inclusive yet excluded community is apparent in the socio-spatial practices of the other informants. While Amira, Parveen, and Ebba mention that people are closer together in Tingbjerg, and that residents know one another, their own socio-spatial practices demonstrates an alternative reality. Ebba, for example, seems to have very little social contact with residents other than pensioners from the Pensioner Club, or her own family. Additionally, both Amira and Parveen
express frustration over the lack of friends in Tingbjerg, and their casual social relations seem to be limited to the possibly non-resident staff at the Project Secretariat, the supermarket, or the library. Thus, one can question how closely their daily realities and lived experiences actually match the picture of community that they envision.

Another counterpoint to the ease by which Amira and Parveen apparently interrelate and meet with other residents of Tingbjerg is exemplified, once again, by looking at Konrad’s experiences of the same process. Instead of feeling part of a community where “we all know one another”, he actually feels excluded through certain casual social relations with other residents. He says:

“For eksempel, som mange udlændinge reagerer, når man siger “Hej” og man kender ikke dem, så kigger de på dig som du er en idiot. Og så når man siger ikke noget, for eksempel i min tilfælde fordi de tror jeg måske også er muslim eller sådan noget, så har jeg hørt sådan ting som “Aslam alakum”, og når jeg siger ”Hej” så får jeg ingenting. Så var der ikke nok at snakke om.” (Konrad, App. 4: 10).

Thus, while some of the other residents feel that their relationship with Tingbjerg is strengthened and reconfirmed via casual greetings with other residents, Konrad’s negative experiences make him feel like an outsider, and perhaps less a member of this same community that the other residents believe that they are a part of.

These abovementioned issues of wanting to know one another, and Konrad’s understanding of his exclusion from a social situation, highlights another issue. All of the informants share the perception that the present diverse composition of residents in Tingbjerg acts as a hindrance to how the community could or should actually function. Touching upon this issue, Arne says:

“(…) det gamle Tingbjerg...det var lidt andet end det er nu. Nu er der mange udlændinge, der kommer. Men selvfølgelig er det jo også forandret sig. Da vi først kom her, vi kendte jo alle. Så det er så efterhånden noget andet, og der kommer nogle andre.” (Arne, App. 2: 4).

The citation from Arne highlights two differentiations that are relevant for the discussion concerning community. First, Arne distinguishes between an “old” Tingbjerg, which was largely composed of ethnic majority residents, and present day Tingbjerg, which has many ethnic minorities residents. Secondly, he remarks that in “old” Tingbjerg, residents identified with each other more, thus implying that this is lacking in modern, and more ethnically diverse, Tingbjerg.
Arne is not the only one of the informants to touch upon the idea that Tingbjerg’s high composition of ethnic minorities has been counter productive for both, social relations, and a sense of community. While discussing changes in the population in Tingbjerg Parveen says:

“Altså i den seneste periode har vi bare fået en tilstrømning af Somaliske familier. Jeg har slet ikke noget imod dem, og de er meget velkomne, men hvorfor ikke blande, altså jeg savner lidt, at jeg havde danske naboer i min opgang. At man havde nogen, hvor man kunne imponere dem med “Hej, jeg har lavet noget mad, vil du ikke have noget?”. Nu er det bare “Nåh, du har lavet det samme!”. Nogle basale ting, at man havde noget sådan...hvor man kunne lære hinanden at kende, men også at man lærer hinanden andre ting, fordi man er anderledes. Det synes jeg kunne godt være...altså nogen der er anderledes på en helt anden måde. Det synes jeg godt...det savner jeg faktisk. Det er lidt sådan 'too bad'.“ (Parveen, App. 5: 15).

Similar to Arne, Parveen communicates a past version of Tingbjerg that had a greater number of ethnic majority residents, and a present version of Tingbjerg where new ethnic minority residents do not mix. Yet, she also makes another distinction that is quite important for this idea of community. Even though she is not Somali, she implies that she has less to learn from and share with Somalis, because they are not dissimilar enough to learn and share new things. Thus, Parveen seems to overlook the ways that Somalis will obviously be different from herself.

Another issue to look at from the above statement by Parveen is that she wishes there were more ethnic majority residents in Tingbjerg, due to the fact that their diversity would provide Tingbjerg with a greater intermixing of people, and thus a greater sense of community. However, there is an important inconsistency to draw out from these ideas. On the one hand, Parveen insinuates that the more different people are, the greater the opportunity to get to know one another. Yet, on the other hand, comments from Arne and herself suggest that there was greater community and togetherness in the past when there was actually a lesser diversity of residents, and simply more ethnic majority residents. Thus, there seems to exist an understanding that the more ethnic majority residents present, the greater sense of community. Finally, due to the fact that Parveen believes that greater diversity is the key to community this would mean, by extension, that paradoxically ethnic majority residents would ensure diversity.

In conclusion, all the informants, in some form or manner, articulate community as being an important issue. For many of the informants community is interpreted as being about knowing other residents and being recognized in the area. Yet, while there are aspirations towards Tingbjerg being a place where community comes easy, the experiences of the residents
sometimes betray this possibility. This causes the informants to idealize Tingbjerg’s past, where they feel that the area more greatly reflected this ideal of community.

**Summary: Analysis Part Three**

In summary, this section of my analysis has been based upon illustrating some of the interpretations and perceptions that can play a decisive role in how the informants think of, and interact with, the area in which they live. Through investigating various understandings of Ruten it is obvious that conceptualizations of this space are varied and, importantly, influential as to how or whether it is utilized. Interpretations also play an important role in drawing out the various ways the informants discuss what type of identity can be ascribed to Tingbjerg. Lastly, community is an issue of importance for all of the informants, yet this notion is very much interlinked with specific interpretations and/or incongruities. In the following chapter the main issues from the three parts of the analysis will be discussed together in terms of how the urban renewal underway in Tingbjerg matches, both the lived realities of the informants, and their understandings of the place that they live.
CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION

In the previous chapter containing my analysis of Tingbjerg I utilized the three elements of Lefebvre’s triad to draw out certain key aspects that play a role in creating the area’s social space. This was done purposefully to introduce various similarities and differences that are contained within the many ways that the informants experience and interpret their area, as well as the planning and assumptions of the urban renewal project. Yet, to create a fully comprehensive understanding of the network of issues at play, it is finally required to re-examine Tingbjerg when all three elements of the triad are joined together at certain intersections. Thus, in this discussion I will consider how the initiatives and plans of the urban renewal project underway in Tingbjerg relate to the socio-spatial practices and interpretations of the residents that live in this area under transition. The discussion will be broken down into three themes; ‘Spaces And Places’, ‘Imagining Identity’, and ‘A Community Of Meaning’.

Spaces And Places

One way of drawing out some of the complexities that exist between the plans for urban renewal and the actual world of the informants, is to centre upon various aspects of space and place that are connected to Tingbjerg. More specifically, there are certain aspects of ‘Open City’ that may or may not intersect with some of the realities and aspirations commented upon by the informants in the previous chapter.

As outlined in the analysis, an important aspect of the ideas and plans of the urban renewal project is to reconsider the various spatial and social opportunities for the residents in Tingbjerg. There is a wish to: "(...) etablere et samlingssted og naturligt centrum for beboerne." (Helhedsplan, 2007: 26), and thus create specific spatial features such as a cultural centre and open-access swimming pool. Additionally, these new physical structures are designed with the intention of altering the social structure and relations that are presently a part of Tingbjerg, and seek to meet the challenge of creating new opportunities for people to meet and interact. However, the question remains as to how well these plans can actually confront the daily realities and interpretations expressed by my sample of residents from Tingbjerg.

On many levels, these ideas of ‘Open City’ are quite adequate to match the needs of the informants. An important issue raised during a number of the interviews was the fact that Tingbjerg suffers from a lack of adequate meeting places. As demonstrated through both the interviews and the mapping of activity spaces, Arne and Ebba can be characterized as having
the most intensive use of Tingbjerg. However, their movements are fairly limited to the Pensioner Club, both as a place to go but also as a place of social interaction. Additionally, their negative perceptions of Ruten display the fact that other spaces in Tingbjerg mean something or are significant to them in some form or manner. In theory, this could signal that there is room in their daily socio-spatial practice for introducing new meeting places and social spaces.

Similarly, Konrad, Amira and Parveen express an overt desire to have more attractions in Tingbjerg and mention specifically a cultural centre as a space that is presently lacking in Tingbjerg. Amira sees it as possibly being: "(...) et rum, hvor alle kan komme." (Amira, App. 1: 5). Thus, a cultural centre might possibly allow Amira and Parveen to find and forge some of the intensive social relations with other residents that they mention as lacking in present day Tingbjerg. Presently, Amira and Parveen’s socio-spatial interactions inside Tingbjerg are not as intense as their relations outside of Tingbjerg, and the social interactions they do have stem mostly from casual ties, rather than what they describe as close friends. Thus, there seems evidence of both a possibility and a desire to utilize and embrace this aspect of the plans of ‘Open City’.

However, there could exist certain roadblocks for these plans to actually match the socio-spatial realities of the informants. While, in principle, the cultural centre could provide the opportunity to serve as a meeting place for all of Tingbjerg’s residents, it might not necessarily develop into a social space that is actually used by all residents. Arne and Ebba, for example, very rarely go out in the evenings due to safety and comfort issues. More importantly, they are the only informants who do not express a desire to have more social relations with other residents of Tingbjerg or utilize the area in new ways. Their activity spaces are very clear examples of the connection between social and spatial practices in that they are both very much rooted in the relations and activities at the Pensioner Club.

While the remaining informants might assert a wish for a new space to meet other residents, their socio-spatial practices at the present time do not necessarily denote that the instillation of new meeting places in Tingbjerg will wholeheartedly alter their activity within the area. Konrad, for example, expresses scepticism over the actual desirability and usability of a new café in Tingbjerg despite the fact that café visits are one of the few activities that he partakes in outside of the area. Thus, due to the fact his socio-spatial practice contradicts his interpretation of Tingbjerg it seems unclear what impact a café or cultural centre would have upon his daily activities.
The remaining informants, Amira and Parveen, have socio-spatial practices that are very much interwoven with people and places outside of Tingbjerg. Amira describes her life as being so busy that she often has to choose between being in Tingbjerg and friends, and that: "Selvfølgelig vil man hellere være sammen med vennerne, fordi man ser dem heller ikke så tit." (Amira, App. 1: 9). The social relations that Amira and Parveen presently partake in are stretched out, yet primarily in a direction that situates their relations more in other parts of the city than in Tingbjerg itself. This means that there could exist some real hurdles for the plans of 'Open City' in terms of shifting these informants leisure activities to a new meeting place in Tingbjerg, as Amira and Parveen’s social networks outside of Tingbjerg will continue to play a decisive role in their lives due to the fact that social relations play such a fundamental role in spatial practices.

Overall, in many respects the urban renewal project is actively incorporating social understandings of space and place by recognizing that certain localities have the possibility of interplaying with social activity. For example, the proposal for a cultural centre demonstrates how planning can endeavour to shape social relations via physical transformation. However, the theoretical discussions from earlier in this thesis have also highlighted the fact that the starting point of social space needs to be thought of in terms of social practices and not spatiality. Thus, while there might exist a forum or location for social relations, this does not necessarily mean that socio-spatial practices will automatically shift there. The interpretations and socio-spatial practices of the informants seem to suggest some obstacles to the social possibilities that a cultural centre could offer. This also might imply that the lack of meeting places inside Tingbjerg is not necessarily the key reason why there is a lack of social relations between the residents. In the end, actual social relations will ultimately be the decisive element of whether these new spaces will be used or not.

In recognizing the fact that Tingbjerg often operates in relative isolation from some of the surrounding areas there are various parts of the plans for 'Open City' that attempt to improve upon the area’s separation. Thus, there are plans to: "(...) åbne bydelen op, bryde isolation og sikre interaktion med omverdenen." (Helhedsplan, 2007: 18). There is an overt desire to make Tingbjerg more attractive to outsiders, which might provide residents, such as Amira and Parveen, with the opportunity to draw or stretch their socio-spatial relations to Tingbjerg. In addition to the cultural centre and open-access swimming pool, there are various plans to bring businesses and boutiques to Tingbjerg. This, obviously, would be one way of counteracting Konrad’s sentiment that: "Så længe man bor her, så er der begrænsede muligheder." (Konrad, App. 4: 10).
Yet, while there is no doubt that Tingbjerg’s residents would appreciate more variation in their area, it is possibly another issue as to whether these new stores along Ruten would provide a realistic alternative to the social relations that are tied to the café and shopping activities of Amira and Parveen’s socio-spatial practice outside of Tingbjerg. Additionally, Ruten will continue to face a challenge in terms of how the area is thought of and interpreted in the minds of Konrad, Arne, and Ebba. Presently, their perception of Ruten is generally negative, which has meant that they tend to limit their social and spatial contact with the area. This could continue to provide a barrier for the way that they use this space, whether there are new businesses and shopping opportunities or not. Once again, this illustrates the fact that social relations, and not simply physical structures, are essential to addressing the way that residents use and perceive the spaces around them. While interpretations are essential for how the informants relate to this space in Tingbjerg, real change for the area will come about through enhancing multiple ranges of social relations in the area.

These factors concerning the socio-spatial practices and interpretations of the informants brings up some important issues in light of the plans of ‘Open City’ to draw people and activity to Tingbjerg. On the one hand, future planning for Tingbjerg is apparently being imagined so that its borders more greatly reflect the fluidity and interaction that is part of social spaces. There is envisioned an opportunity to draw the socio-spatial practices from surrounding areas to Tingbjerg, including the pre-existing networks already utilized by the informants. Thus, this demonstrates that the urban renewal plans have accounted for the fact that stretched out social relations, and webs of meeting places, can and will stretch to Tingbjerg. Yet, on the other hand, there simultaneously seems to be less emphasis and acknowledgment of the social relations of residents that will inevitably stretch out from Tingbjerg and towards other sets of relationships and localities. This is clearly the case for a number of the informants. Thus, there seems to be an unequal balance in terms of interpreting the area’s role for social relations inside and outside of Tingbjerg.

Generally, certain dichotomies surface when comparing a number of the plans of ‘Open City’ against the socio-spatial practices of some of the informants. A key issue of the urban renewal plans is apparently a concern for strengthening the internal relations and activities that could take place inside the area of Tingbjerg. While this premise seems logical enough on many levels, it also tends to go against some of the actual social practices of the informants, who have a great deal invested in social relations outside of Tingbjerg. Rather than fully embracing the fluidity and variability of social relations that actually comprise social space, the plans for urban renewal involve certain attempts to freeze activity and relations at specific instances.
This could present itself as itself as serious barrier to the actual effectiveness and success of the proposed plans and ambitions for ‘Open City’.

**Imagining Identity?**

Located at the intersection of the urban renewal project, and the activities and interpretations of the informants, are the various constructions of identity that are associated with Tingbjerg. In the following section it will be discussed how issues pertaining to identity overlap and compete with one another within the social space of Tingbjerg.

The wish and desire to confront Tingbjerg’s image and identity issues is an important aspect of ‘Open City’. As reported in the Helhedsplan, the name and area of Tingbjerg is often associated with negative conceptualizations of a residential area, especially amongst outsiders to the area. In the eyes of the urban renewal project, these negative stories and visions of Tingbjerg need to be addressed, as: "dårlige rygte er med til at skabe dårligere trivsel lokalt, da det påvirker glæden ved at bo i området. Det er også en udfordring til ønsket om at tiltrække nye ressourcemælende beboere.” (Helhedsplan, 2007: 22). Thus, the plans for readdressing Tingbjerg’s image is seen as necessary due to consequences resulting from the way that the area is perceived.

The importance of negative and positive perceptions of a place is not only touched upon in the plans for ‘Open City’. The informants also describe some of the different ways that Tingbjerg is interpreted both by themselves and by residents from other areas. Both Konrad and Amira discuss the fact that many people do not even know that Tingbjerg exists, or alternatively have great difficulty in finding it. These interpretations of Tingbjerg as an isolated area are important as they influence the way that the informants see, think of, and articulate the identity of the area within which they live. Thus, based upon these issues, it would seem as if the plans to communicate a new image of Tingbjerg to the surrounding areas is an important and much needed initiative.

While the idea of communicating Tingbjerg’s qualities to the rest of Copenhagen has the possibility of being a constructive idea for the area, there remain certain questions as to the formation and content of the identity created. As described earlier, one of the suggestions in the plans for ‘Open City’ is to develop an image based on a village concept that plays upon 50’s nostalgia. Thus, Tingbjerg would be re-imagined as a society rooted within its traditional past. These plans based upon 50’s nostalgia are very much reflective of the introverted, inward looking histories that Massey argued are commonly activated in place identities. Consequently,
it is important to look at what effect this process of identity creation can possibly have upon the informants and the area.

One issue to be mentioned is that an image rooted within 50’s nostalgia will necessarily be linked to a romanticized version of Tingbjerg, in terms of how residents related and connected. However, this idealization would overlook the inevitable unequal social relations that this community of the past would undoubtedly also have had. Places and their identities are, and have always been, based on multiple and ever-changing sets of relations that necessarily includes and excludes people at different levels.

Additionally, related to these representations of 50’s nostalgia are the imagined links between people that are based upon the past internalised origins of the area, and which conceptualizes static boundaries and clearer definitions of who belongs and who is a resident. However, this seems counterproductive to many of the plans and ideas of ‘Open City’ that seek to reinvent Tingbjerg as just the opposite – an open city area that is part of, and communicates with, the places around it. Thus, it actually seems as if conflicting images or identities of Tingbjerg are being produced in this process.

Aside from seemingly counteracting some of the meaning behind ‘Open City’, reliance upon 50’s nostalgia brings up some other questions relating to Tingbjerg’s isolation. As demonstrated by the informants, Tingbjerg’s isolation will be interpreted in a number of ways. For some informants, the seclusion can be seen as a positive thing, such as when Amira says: "Vi er så godt afskåret...jeg vil ikke have, at det hele skal være herinde." (Amira, App. 1: 6).

This statement, along with similar sentiments from Parveen, seemingly shows that they identify positively with the urban renewal’s concept of a village identity for Tingbjerg. However, it is also possible that Amira and Parveen’s idealizations of “small-town” Tingbjerg could be linked to their close contact and work with the Project Secretariat, and in this way have both influenced and been influenced by the project’s re-interpretation and re-formulation of Tingbjerg’s image.

While there are definitely positive associations to the plans of developing Tingbjerg’s image within the framework of a traditional community, these sentiments are not shared equally by all the informants. Konrad interprets Tingbjerg separation from the rest of the city as one of the main disadvantages of living in Tingbjerg, and it contributes to him identifying negatively with the area, and interpreting it as a ghetto. In fact, it was only the informants who had been living in Tingbjerg all their lives that saw the area’s isolation as having some positive attributes. Thus, it can be questioned how broad of an appeal the plans to create Tingbjerg
within the framework of 50’s nostalgia might actually have to people who have not grown up in that environment. It is possible that some of the future residents that the area is hoping to attract might share Konrad’s un-romanticized vision of Tingbjerg in isolation. Even Parveen, who is otherwise happy with Tingbjerg’s distinctiveness from other parts of the city, interprets the area’s isolation as sometimes problematic.

The dichotomy of views and interpretations concerning Tingbjerg expressed by some of the informants highlights some final important issues. While within urban planning there might be a tendency or wish to create a concise and collective view of an area, the possibility for the vision to be shared equally amongst the residents is shown to be highly unlikely, if not impossible. This presents a great challenge to the plans of urban renewal to develop place identity. As discussed earlier, places and spaces are interwoven with social relations, and the exact composition of these social relations will always be different for each person. These differing, fluid, and ever-changing social relations have a very real influence upon how a resident will view or identify with an area due to the fact that social relations impact upon the way a person experiences a place. For example, Konrad’s dissatisfaction with Tingbjerg is not simple a result of the area’s bad identity, but is probably more closely linked to his social relations, or lack thereof, within the area itself. Thus, alterations to the image of a place cannot alone produce positive identifications.

A Community Of Meaning

The final aspect to be discussed is the similar and dissimilar impressions of community that are reflected in, and interwoven within, the social space of Tingbjerg. As such, certain issues pertaining to the plans for urban renewal, and the various interpretations and lived realities of the informants, will be examined in relation to one another in order to understand the implications for the area as a whole.

A very evident aspect of the plans for ‘Open City’ is the intention and goal to create a sense of community in Tingbjerg. This is partially planned by establishing new places for residents to meet and congregate. These new meeting places are seen as allowing for new relations to develop, which is envisioned as cementing people’s relation to, not just one another, but also to the area of Tingbjerg itself. Additionally, there are various social activities that wish to: "styrke beboernes kendskab til hinanden.” and "styrke fællesskab i bydelen.” (Helhedsplan, 2007: 16). Finally, it is hoped that better or more intensive relations amongst residents will aid in producing more pride and interest in the area and community of Tingbjerg.
In certain respects these abovementioned plans would seemingly match the needs and requirements of the informants. Konrad, for example, has very few strong links within the area socially, and does not express very much bonding to the other residents or the area itself. At the same time, Ebba, Amira, and Parveen seem to care and think positively about their area and have take pleasure in their social contact with other people from Tingbjerg. These contrasting images of Tingbjerg, or alternatively the community of Tingbjerg, support the theory that a sense of community is a very important aspect of how people organize their lives and how they relate to an area. Seemingly, Tingbjerg can act as a home in terms of physical location, but is also relevant in terms of providing a sense of comfort and well being for the informants.

However, this notion of community draws out other important issues when comparing the plans for its creation against the realities of the informants. A matter that presents itself throughout the Helhedsplan are intonations that seem to suggest that residents are or can be thought of as a collective unit. For example, planning in terms of the: “almindelige beboere.” (Helhedsplan, 2007: 16) can be looked at in several ways. Naturally, it will a challenge for urban renewal to be planned in terms of multiple and alterable lives and realities in Tingbjerg. Yet, this displays one of the limitations of urban planning due to the fact that there is obviously a great diversity of people, opinions and movement in the area. Thinking in terms of “the resident” in planning cannot encompass the various ages, ethnicities, family statuses, etcetera that actually comprise this imagined community. The fact that there was so much difference in opinion and practice amongst my sample of five residents hints to the broad spectrum of people that are meant to eventually comprise a community. This means that there are, and will always be, great challenges to plans that are based upon the notion that it is possible to combine numerous people into a single and united society or community.

Connected to the idea of diversity in Tingbjerg, both the informants and the urban renewal plans express a belief that this sense of community is obtainable if there was a different composition of residents in the area. The plans for ‘Open City’ discuss attracting more resource-strong residents to the area, and Parveen and Konrad both state a wish for more ethnic majority residents in the area. In this sense there is a great deal of agreement between the residents and the urban renewal plans. Within both of these perspectives lies the supposition that new residents can produce a greater sense of community and the social interrelations that are presently interpreted as missing. However, this has several implications.

First of all, planning for community via altering the composition of residents will be based upon the assumption that new residents arriving in the area are already in possession of the
knowledge, skills, and ability to function as a community. In this sense, they are seen as representative of a form of pre-existing community that can influence upon the present residents and their social relations in the area. However, it can be wondered if new residents can provide greater webs of social interaction than the residents who are already established and living in the area.

Secondly, by hoping that new residents will help create community in Tingbjerg there is seems to be an assumption that community is not already present in the area in various ways. As mentioned above, there is a great diversity of people and social relations inside Tingbjerg. Thus, whilst Parveen feels that there is a lack of interaction with Somali families, for example, this does not necessarily mean that Somali families do not have a sense of community with one another or with other residents of Tingbjerg. There can be many possible ways to interpret, imagine and experience community. So while Amira says: "(...) når man bor her i Tingbjerg, så kender vi hinanden. Altså alle kender alle." (Amira, App. 1: 5), she is actually only referring to certain sets of social relations. Much of Amira’s socio-spatial activity demonstrates that she does not actually experience or “practice” community in the same way that she imagines it. What is important to emphasize is the fact that all of these interpretations of community are valid and legitimate. The fact that the informants imagine community in a different way from how they practice community is not a problem in and of itself. Overall, the informants are happy with the way that they personally experience community. However, this can have serious complications for the how the urban renewal project can plan for community being that they must confront these inconsistencies that lie between how the residents think of community versus how they actually experience a sense of community.

Another aspect of importance within the urban renewal project’s wishes to create community is the idea that it is desirable and positive if residents are active or based within their local area. While this goal of structuring and striving for community via intensified local participation is a common objective found in many urban renewal projects across Copenhagen, it raises a significant issue for Tingbjerg. As discussed earlier, theoretical debates would argue that prioritising of face-to-face relations could be counterproductive in light of the actual social realities of residents, as it denies positive social relations that might be located elsewhere. Konrad, for example, might not be locally based in terms of his interactions with other residents from Tingbjerg, but there are a series of important social relations that he engages in through the Internet. Thus, focusing solely on resident’s local participation might actually ignore the other forms of community and social relations that exist, and which stretch out over the boundaries of an area. This type of planning for intensified local activity is something that is especially applied to marginalized areas. However, while this might possibly be the result of
believing that marginalized people can share and connect via their lack of resources, this planning obviously neglects that resources, in terms of social networks, can just as often be located outside of the marginalized area.

A final essential issue that has been intertwined throughout the entire current chapter remains to be considered. As seen in many of the above discussions, there is often a large difference between the plans for urban renewal and the actual practices of the residents living in an area. This raises an important issue as to whether planning should develop from a perspective of how things actually are in an area, or if it is reasonable to plan from an outlook of how things ought to be. The plans for ‘Open City’ clearly demonstrate organizing in terms of incorporating and integrating new and old social relations of Tingbjerg’s residents. Thus, on the one hand, both the plans for urban renewal and the informant’s own wishes point to visualizations of Tingbjerg in which there are intensified social relations between residents, a greater use and need of the local environment, and a greater sense of belonging. On the other hand, the informants often display a socio-spatial reality that exhibits an intensity of activity and relations located outside of Tingbjerg that counteract many of the ways that Tingbjerg is imagined as functioning.

The possibility of altering these patterns of behaviour and activity by promoting, redesigning and shifting resident’s socio-spatial relations inside Tingbjerg is uncertain. In spite of planning, socio-spatial relations will tend to remain flexible, open and alterable. This means that while there is a possibility for networks to shift inside Tingbjerg, there is equally a possibility that they will remain connected or concentrated outside of the area. This is an essential issue for urban planning to take into account, not only in terms Tingbjerg’s social space but also in terms of the community and identity based within the area. By planning for how things should be there will be created an opportunity for socio-spatial relations, both negative and positive, to be modified. However, by focusing upon and prioritising plans for how the area should be, instead of how they actually are, there is also the possibility of overseeing certain necessities within the area that are tied to the resident’s actual experiences, and not their imagined ones. In other words, there is a danger of developing plans and activities that will not match the way that the residents actually use the area. Thus, these many interwoven and opposing sides of planning, socio-spatial practice, and interpretations need to be reflected upon and considered together in order to find the best possible future for the area of Tingbjerg.
CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION

Like many other marginalized areas, Tingbjerg is in the process of balancing the complexities of an urban renewal project with the socio-spatial practices and interpretations of its residents. However, while each one of these individual elements raises a series of important issues, the most illuminating way of understanding the intricacies of Tingbjerg’s social space can be brought to light by viewing the aspects of planning, practice, and perceptions together.

An important part of the plans for urban renewal has been the wish to intensify the socio-spatial practices and relations that occur inside Tingbjerg. This can be witnessed through a variety of projects and plans that seek to create forums such as the cultural centre that could serve as the basis for positive and constructive interaction amongst all residents of the area. The desire to meet and interact with other residents is similarly reflected in the views of the informants. However, despite the fact that, both the plans for ‘Open City’ and the opinions of the informants indicate a consistency of outlooks, there remain certain obstacles for the actual realization of these plans. The combination of interviews with the informants, and the mapping of their activity spaces, displays a clear example of the unity between social and spatial practices. However, elements of the informant’s socio-spatial practices also demonstrate tendencies that indicate a possible resistance to restructuring their activity in Tingbjerg. Most notable is the fact that many of their social relations, which serve as the starting point for all socio-spatial activities, are already based in other networks that do not include Tingbjerg’s residents to a high degree. This is not to say that transformation is not possible, but rather is a means to highlight the fact that social relations should be seen as the primary feature in new spaces designed with the intention of enhancing social activity.

There is currently a great deal of Tingbjerg that is under construction, both physically and socially. Another element of Tingbjerg that the plans for ‘Open City’ are hoping to alter or reproduce is the way that spaces are perceived and represented. One space that has been shown to be of particular interest in this respect is Ruten, the main shopping arcade. Questions as to how to re-imagine Ruten highlights a series of multifaceted issues facing the plans for urban renewal. While the informants equally share certain reservations towards the area, their reasons why, and what they see as a problem, is very much a matter of individual interpretation. What is clearly demonstrated is the impact that these interpretations will and can have upon the actual socio-spatial practices of the informants. This demonstrates the fact that solutions directed towards Ruten need to be integrated with providing the opportunity for positive social interaction, and not only positive interpretations.
A central theme running throughout the analysis of the plans of ‘Open City’, and the experiences of the residents of Tingbjerg, has been the importance of recognizing the complexity of socio-spatial relations. However, while there generally is great awareness of the need to think within these open parameters within the plans for urban renewal, there also appear instances where there is reliance upon more traditional notions of space and place. One such example can be seen in how ‘Open City’ seemingly accounts for greater socio-spatial activity inside Tingbjerg, yet neglects to equally value the need to think of openness stretching outside of Tingbjerg. While there do exist certain activities that are intended to involve residents with other spatial networks, these plans often entail transplanting the social networks that are already located inside Tingbjerg. However, this will tend to exclude the possibilities for positive social relations that could be bridged with other localities. Thus, there could be a real benefit if ‘Open City’ could organize in even more open terms and address the other multiple social relations that are possible and available.

Another aspect of the plans for urban renewal that has been necessary to examine are the ideas addressing the identity and image of Tingbjerg. Amongst the informant’s statements lies a variety of ways of thinking about, and interpreting, the identity of the space within which they live. However, the fact that the identity of a place will always be imagined and a representation, rather than something that innately belongs to an area, means that perceptions of Tingbjerg will continually be varied and alterable. In light of this, there appears to be certain hazards with planning to develop an identity of Tingbjerg based on a traditional image of the area that is rooted in 50’s nostalgia. One issue of importance is the fact that this picture goes against the parallel representation of Tingbjerg’s transformation that is based upon the area developing into an “open city”. Additionally, this identity based within a traditional view of Tingbjerg might not necessarily appeal to all present and future residents. While place identity construction is extremely complicated it must also be remembered and accounted for that, no matter how Tingbjerg is promoted to residents and non-residents, the actual perceptions of the area will ultimately be interwoven with the social experiences and relations that take place there.

Linked to the complicated relationship between perceptions and planning are the difficulties involved in creating a sense of community in Tingbjerg. While community is something that is imagined by residents as a way to give meaning to relations and activities, it simultaneously continues to be an important notion that actually impacts upon socio-spatial practices, and how people relate to the areas within which live and come in contact with. Thus, it is with good reason that the plans for ‘Open City’ address and consider this aspect of life in Tingbjerg. However, the diversity of views amongst the informants concerning who and what a
Community is demonstrated the danger of thinking of community in all-encompassing terms. Planning for a community in too narrow of a perspective, in relation to both new residents and the ones that already live in Tingbjerg, might actually exclude some of the social relations and networks that are currently an important aspect of the resident’s socio-spatial practices. There are many ways in which to participate as a resident, and many ways to have a sense of community.

A crucial issue for the urban renewal of Tingbjerg concerns the implications and possibilities of planning from the perspective of “ought” rather than “are”. Planning from the perspective of what the area ought to be can provide a range of new opportunities and prospects for the residents. While this can definitely have a positive impact upon the area in question, this same thinking runs the risk of not identifying or misinterpreting some of the positive and negative elements that already are part of the way the residents practice and relate to Tingbjerg. Thus, it is necessary for the planners of urban renewal to be aware of which perspectives and assumptions lie within their plans so that future changes to the area can, to a higher degree, harmonize with the realities and possibilities that are sought after by the residents.
CHAPTER EIGHT: FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

The examination of Tingbjerg undertaken in this thesis has touched upon a variety of important and interconnected issues. As has been demonstrated, the combination of urban renewal, socio-spatial practices, and various interpretations of Tingbjerg have numerous wide-ranging effects upon how people relate to and use the spaces around them. However, many of the discussions and debates that have surfaced over the course of this thesis can also function as a catalyst for a series of ideas and proposals of relevance to the ‘Open City’ urban renewal project.

A matter of significance that arose throughout the investigation of the multiple social and spatial realities located inside Tingbjerg was the perceived lack of a true central meeting place within the area. The main structure that is envisioned to replace Tingbjerg’s lack of a pre-existing midpoint is planned to be a cultural centre. However, there can exist limitations as to how well a cultural centre will be able to “capture” all the residents of Tingbjerg due to various aspects of social and spatial practices that base residents within certain networks. One example mentioned in this thesis is the fact that the pensioners seemingly have all their social needs met by the Pensioner Club. While the Pensioner Club is undoubtedly an extremely important meeting place for the pensioners it could simultaneously restrict their need or use for a cultural centre. To best integrate more and differing social networks at the cultural centre it will important to base as many possible various clubs and social organizations within this new social space. While this is definitely already part of the vision for the cultural centre, it is also important to incorporate those residents who already have a well-defined meeting place. Thus, it would be beneficial if the Pensioner Club were to have or hold many of their own activities at the cultural centre as a way of promoting and providing greater interaction amongst residents of Tingbjerg.

Related to this wish to further understand the significance of meeting places, it could be instructive to draw out some further deviations relating to the use and interpretation of the same spaces in Tingbjerg. Ruten acts as a crucial space for residents of the area for various reasons. However, while the informants interviewed for this thesis tended to have limited activity and unfavourable opinions in relation to Ruten, there is undoubtedly a whole other set of perceptions attached to this space. New knowledge and possibilities lie within the experiences of residents who already invest a large part of their social activity along Ruten. Tingbjerg’s bodega, for example, exemplifies a space that likely functions as a crucial meeting place for certain residents, in a similar way to how the Pensioner Club acts as a centre for social and spatial relations for the pensioners. In light of the fact that Ruten is in the process of
being redesigned and reinterpreted, it is essential to find some of the ways that this space represents a necessary and positive site of social and spatial practice. These findings need to be incorporated in the future planning of the entire area so that the residents who do have a positive relationships with Ruten can still have their needs met in Tingbjerg’s new form.

One of the issues already touched upon in this thesis is the fact that ‘Open City’ has a clear goal to plan for more intensive social relations inside of Tingbjerg. While this is definitely an important goal, it might also signify that only one half of the resident’s stretched out social relations are being accounted for due to the fact that it does not account for the many social activities that extend beyond the area to the same degree. Similarly, while the day-trips organized through the Pensioner Club and ‘Meeting-Place For Women’ are definitely valuable assets, they effectively transplant the social relations already present in Tingbjerg to new settings. However, in order to engage the resident’s social networks to a greater extent there is a need to find ways to incorporate all these networks that draw them beyond Tingbjerg. Thus, there might be benefits derived from creating activities and trips that play upon social networks in other settings to a higher degree by organizing trips to for youth, adults, or pensioners that purposefully incorporate and mix with residents from other areas of Copenhagen. One example could be gathering a group of youth from Tingbjerg, finding out what and where their social networks lie, and then doing multiple-stop day-trips whereby the various youth from Tingbjerg meet with their various friends or family from these other places. This would be not only a way to support the important and necessary social networks that residents already have in other places, but could also form a way of expanding the social networks of residents, both inside and outside of Tingbjerg.

The identity of Tingbjerg has been shown to be a difficult thing to define, yet an essential aspect of the way that residents think about the places within which they live. However, there are possibly some negative drawbacks to basing Tingbjerg’s identity upon 50’s nostalgia, as this might not necessarily provoke the desired results from all pre-existing or future residents. Although any singular identity for Tingbjerg will be contested, there do exist certain attributes of Tingbjerg that universally provoked positive responses from the informants. These might provide alternative or additional starting blocks by which to think about Tingbjerg’s identity. All the informants identified the many green areas (such as the marshes and parks) as the greatest asset to Tingbjerg, and as being the best overall quality and characteristic of the area. These overwhelmingly positive remarks in relation to Tingbjerg’s green spaces might mean that these views are similarity shared by a higher degree of the area’s residents, and have less chance of being misconstrued or interpreted negatively. Although playing upon Tingbjerg’s
green areas is surely part of the plans to develop an image for Tingbjerg as a traditional village, it is maybe this “green aspect” that should play a central role.

Highlighted throughout this thesis are the many difficulties involved in thinking in terms of community. While community is imagined and construed differently from person to person, it is also an essential aspect of how people organize and think about their lives. This is why it is necessary to hold an open concept of what it means to be a community. By thinking of community as something specific, and something that encompasses all residents, will not only mean that this ideal of community will have challenges in being realized, but also might overlook the important aspects of community that already exist in Tingbjerg. Therefore, while it definitely difficult to plan for variable and multiple interpretations of what it means to live in Tingbjerg, it is also necessary to recognize that the area has this form in order to find and support the positive social and spatial practices that are already part of Tingbjerg.
Udgangspunktet for dette speciale har været et ønske om at forstå sammenhængen mellem et isoleret beboelsesområde, og dets mulighed for at indgå som en del af resten af byrummet. Mere præcist er der fokus på et bestemt marginaliseret område, Tingbjerg, som ligger otte kilometer nordvest for Københavns centrum. Dette område har været i gang med en helhedsorienteret byfornyelsesproces siden 2001, hvilket omfatter diverse boligsociale, kulturelle og fysiske indsatser. For nylig har dette område påbegyndt en ny projektfase kaldt ’Åben By’, hvis formål er at skabe bedre forbindelser og kontakt mellem området og de omkringliggende bydele.


Det teoretiske fundament sættes i spil gennem en analyse af en byfornyelsesplan, og empirisk arbejde i form af kvalitative interviews med beboere fra Tingbjerg, samt en kortlægning af deres socio-spatiale praksiser. Tilsammen giver disse data en forståelse for, hvordan beboerne bevæger sig rundt i forskellige sociale og fysiske netværk, samt deres egne betragtninger og fortolkninger af de rum og steder, de kommer i kontakt med.

Analysen af den empiriske data viser, at der kan opstå et misforhold mellem nogle af de antagelser og forestillinger, som er udgangspunktet for byfornyelsen, og de fortolkninger og socio-spatiale relationer, som eksisterer og praktiseres af beboerne i et marginaliseret område. Beboernes socio-spatiale praksisser og fortolkninger viser sig at være mere fleksible og åbne end visse planer og projekter i byfornyelsen.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


**Other**

Research Seminar: *Rum, Sted, Mobilitet og By*. Held at Roskilde University on April 19th, 2007
LIST OF APPENDIX

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Appendix 2: Interview with Arne
Appendix 3: Interview with Ebba
Appendix 4: Interview with Konrad
Appendix 5: Interview with Parveen
Appendix 6: Interview guide
Appendix 7: Form for mapping of activity spaces

(All appendix materials are located on the CD-ROM attached to this thesis)