

*At home at a large housing estate? Local identity and place identification at the Southern Town in Prague*

The aim of this thesis is to examine hitherto neglected question of the place identification of the inhabitants of large prefabbed housing estates on the example of Southern Town in Prague. What is the relation of the participants to their housing estate like? Which inductively defined factors play an important role in the process of identification of the residents of Southern Town with their home quarter? How is this relation influenced with the fact that the Southern Town is a monotonous physical environment, where the historical continuity was furthermore radically disrupted? What is the relation between the residential satisfaction of the participants and their emotional place identification? I examine the ways and factors of place identification of the inhabitants of the Southern Town by way of two complementary methods: by participant observation of the activities of engaged locals, who spontaneously articulated their relation to the Southern Town during the protests against controversial building projects, and by the semi-structured interviews with the long-time residents of two generations – people born there in 1980's and the generation of their parents. I expose the factors which strengthen or weaken the place identification of the inhabitants of the Southern Town. In conclusion I explain the forms of place identification on the micro level of the intimately known localism as well as on the macro level of the identification with the Southern Town as a whole.