

Diasporic Urbanism

Social and spatial agency of the
Eritrean and Ethiopian community in the
(trans)local urban context of Hamburg

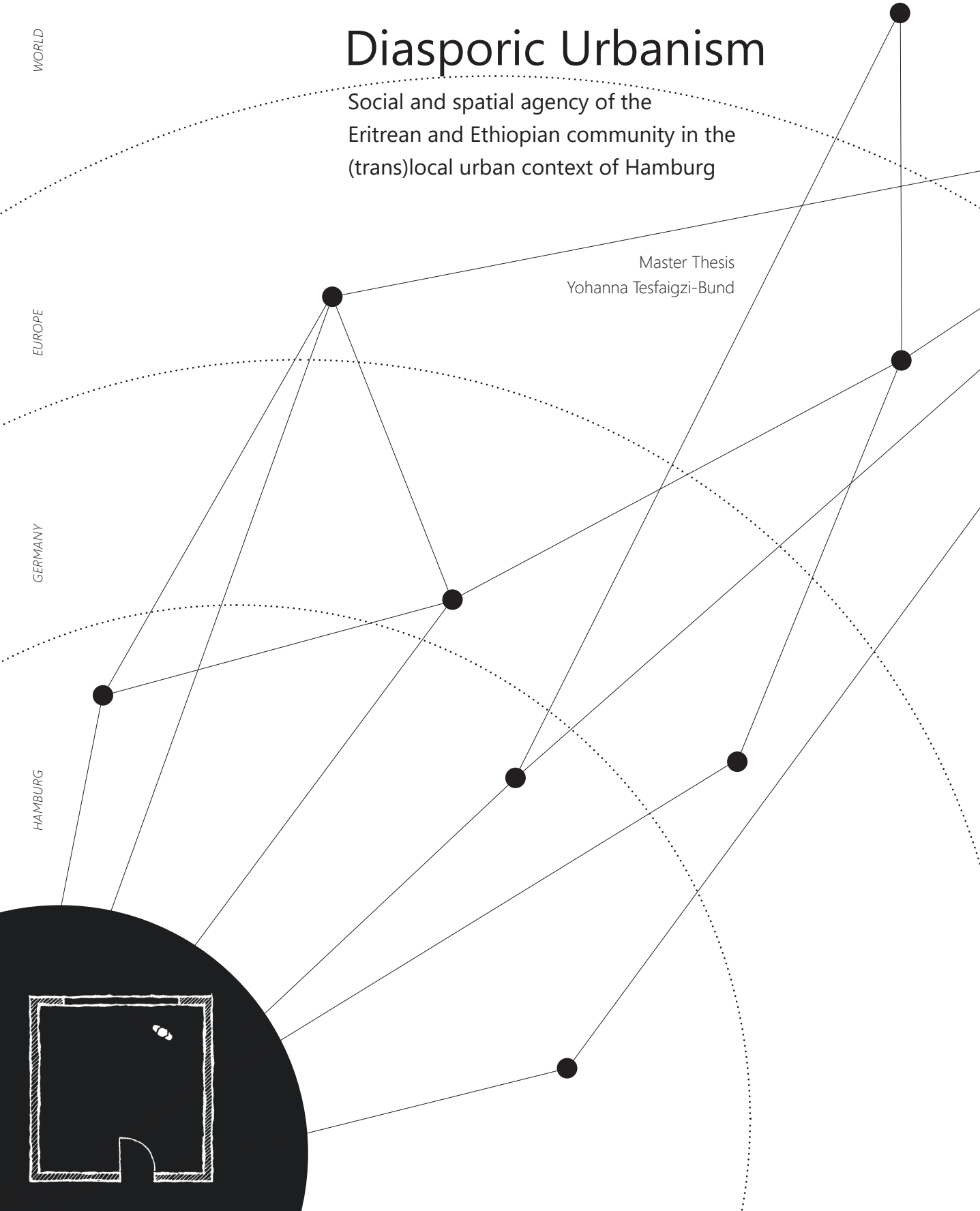
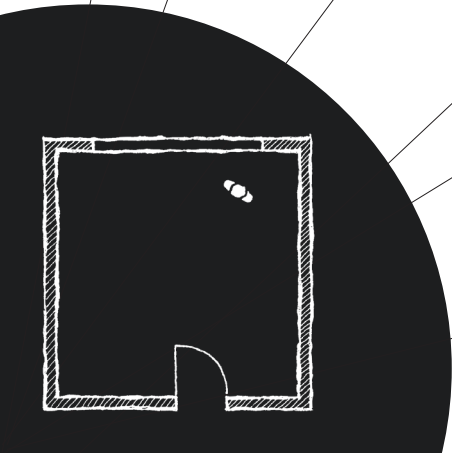
Master Thesis
Yohanna Tesfaigzi-Bund

WORLD

EUROPE

GERMANY

HAMBURG



Diasporic Urbansim
Social and spatial agency of the
Eritrean and Ethiopian community in the
(trans)local urban context of Hamburg

Urban Design Master Thesis

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“ It was this marginality that I was naming as a central location for the production of counter hegemonic discourses that is not just found in words but in habits of being and the way one lives. [...] It offers to one the possibility of radical perspective from which to see and create, to imagine alternatives, new worlds.

hooks (1989:20)

Abstract

This master thesis in the field of urban design explores spatial and social, material and immaterial aspects of 'Diasporic Urbanism' as an expression of the interdependencies between globalization and rapid urbanization in present times. A grounded and 'creolized' research approach guides the empirical analysis starting from stories out of the Eritrean and Ethiopian community and concrete places they create, use, transform and maintain in the city of Hamburg, Germany. Ethnographic mappings of socio-cultural and economic practices of particular localities, as well as network drawings tracing (trans)local flows of people, money, goods and information, are used to document and analyse multiple, cross-scale dimensions of diasporic space and agency in the urban setting. The situated findings regarding diasporic organizing and place-making uncover existing challenges and coping strategies from within the community. These are contextualized and discussed referring to theory from urban and cultural studies. This work aims to move beyond debates of integration of 'the other' by acknowledging the active, space-constituting role of diasporic subjects in the unfolding story of contemporary cities. By means of a radical change in perspective, this research challenges existing urban planning practices and offers knowledge for future development processes in post-migrant cities that take the realities of growing transnational and transcultural urban communities into account.

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Intro

In times of globalization and rapid urbanization, intersecting impacts of both phenomena are most visible in contemporary metropolises all around the globe, and have thus become a subject of interest for social, cultural, economic, political and urban studies. Highly abstract and economic perspectives on globalization, such as the notion of 'global cities', view metropolises as hubs in the network of global capital flows 'from above' (Sassen 1991, Castells 1996). However, these perspectives are complemented by a more comprehensive and tangible understanding that views globalization as socially constructed 'from below' by individual people and communities (Smith

““ *Nevertheless, the global cities theorists provide an incomplete social construction of globalization which privileges the functional logics of global capital "from above" while failing to address, or even acknowledge the presence of, myriad local and transnational practices "from below" which now cut across urban landscapes, producing disorderly, unexpected, and irretrievably contingent urban outcomes that do not sit well with the metaphors of urban hierarchy and social polarization envisioned in the global cities discourse.*

Smith (2001:12)

2001). By analysing local places and their links beyond, the notion of a strict dichotomy of 'the global' and 'the local' is renegotiated to one which appreciates their intrinsic relationship. Only 'a global sense of place' (Massey 1993) is able to capture the mutual interdependencies of a place, its people and their manifold global connections. Appadurai (1996) introduces the concept of 'ethnoscapes, mediascapes, technoscapes, finanscapes and ideoscapes' in order to be capable of tracing the fluidity of people, information and ideas, commodities, goods and capital across geographical boundaries.

The contemporary metropolis acts as a globally embedded locality for an increasingly diversified range of people and their interconnected activities; transcending local, regional, national and continental borders. These people have become a growing number of constitutional actors in shaping cities all around the globe. This raises a number of important questions: How are

global conditions reflected in local small-scale urban settings? How do people's trans-local social and economic practices inscribe themselves in the urban landscape? And what are the implications on urban planning practices? This work aims to explore these questions by taking the diasporic experience in the urban setting as a starting point, as "diasporas are the exemplary communities of the transnational moment" (Tölölyan 1991:5). They have become integral to the process of the socio-cultural, political and economic (re)construction of the current urban fabric and are thus "[...] no longer small, marginal, or exceptional [but] part of the cultural dynamic of urban life in most countries and continents" (Appadurai 1996:10). Diasporic communities establish, enliven, use, appropriate, adapt, maintain and transform urban space according to their specific position between multiple socio-cultural, political and economic reference points. In doing so, they create their own subjectivities and new typologies of places that find themselves in a field of tension between 'here' and 'there' (Awan 2011:7). These places have to fit in local conditions whilst, on the other hand, hosting socio-cultural and economic practices that pursue the goal of representing another place and its associated values and norms. The following empirical and theoretical research explores how diasporas navigate their 'in-between' position by analysing spatial and social aspects of diasporic agency of the exemplary Eritrean and Ethiopian community in the trans(local) urban context of Hamburg.

After some preliminary comments on the use of language and symbols in this work [*Glossary and Legend*], I begin by underlining the relevance and topicality of the subject using statistics relating to global and urban migration flows [1.1 *Diversified urban population in times of globalization*]; clarifying disciplinary and personal motives as basis for my research interest and aim of the master thesis [1.2 *Shift in perspective*]; and introducing the followed research approach that supports the intentions of this work [1.3 *The creolization of theory*].

The subsequent context chapter provides thematic-conceptual, historical as well as local, socio-spatial framings with regard to the empirical analysis, by addressing the diaspora term's history and giving an overview of related concepts from cultural studies [2.1 *'Diaspora' and its meanings*]; briefly outlining Eritrean and Ethiopian history in order to explain cultural origins as well as reasons for migration [2.2 *Eritrean and Ethiopian history through the lens of migration*]; the last section deals with the notion of 'community' and its significance, which will be discussed at the example of the Eritrean and Ethiopian community in Hamburg [2.3.1 *The (imagined) ሐበሻ [Habesha] Community*]; provides a spatial and temporal mapping of existing facilities which were established by people of Eritrean and Ethiopian descent in the city of Hamburg encompassing cafés, restaurants, shops, hair salons, different church congregations as well as non-profit associations [2.3.2 *Spatio-temporal survey of ሐበሻ [Habesha] places in Hamburg*]; and introduces a categorization of these places according to the activities they host [2.3.3 *Diasporic urban spheres: domestic, communal transactional*].

As prelude to the empirical analysis, the chapter on method(ologie)s elaborates on the selection and application of methods [3.1 *Crossing disciplinary boundaries*]; and explains the procedure throughout the research process [3.2 *Inductive and iterative reasoning*].

The empirical-analytical chapter traces social and spatial agencies of the Eritrean and Ethiopian community at three exemplary localities in Hamburg [4.1 *Tracing and mapping diasporic agencies*]: the ጸበና [Jebena] Café, which is a shop and hair salon at the same time [4.1.1], the Ethiopian Orthodox Church [4.1.2] and the home of ሉዋም [Luwam] [4.1.3]; conclusively the encountered recurring socio-cultural and economic practices during the empirical research are listed and contextualised [4.2 *Cataloguing socio-cultural and economic practices*]: Eating [4.2.1], Preparing coffee [4.2.2], Dressing traditionally [4.2.3], Styling hair [4.2.4], Playing music and dancing [4.2.5].

The subsequent chapter discusses the situated findings on diasporic space and agency referring to suiting theory from cultural and urban studies [5.1 *Diasporic organizing* and 5.2 *Diasporic place-making*].

The work will be closed by conclusive thoughts on the impact of the findings to the outside [6.1 *Contributing to the discipline*] as well as to the inside [6.2 *Contributing to the Community*]; opening thoughts on potential further research topics [6.3 *Carrying on the research*]; and speculative thoughts on how this work could provide impetus for societal change [6.4 *Imagining alternative futures*].

Glossary⁽¹⁾

I chose to use the original script for names and words that repeatedly appear throughout my research and which cannot be directly translated to English. In doing so, the act of ‘romanizing’ shall be made visible since it marks the otherwise unspoken dominance of the Latin script in academia. For reasons of better legibility, I chose common variations of phonetic spellings instead of using the official International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA).

አማርኛ / አምሐርኛ [Amarigna]⁽²⁾

is a Semitic language and serves as the working language in Ethiopia. Among the country's around 80 languages, it is the most widely spoken in terms of total speakers, whereas, the Cushitic Oromo is the largest language in terms of native speakers.

በርብሬ / በርብረ [Berbere]⁽²⁾

is a mixture of different spices and a key ingredient in the **ሓበሻ** [Habesha] cuisine.

ዕቁብ [Equb]

is a traditional socio-economic association, established by a self-organized group of people, for social gatherings and a rotating money saving system.

ሓበሻ / ሓበሻ [Habesha]⁽²⁾

is a self-denomination that is commonly used by people of Eritrean and Ethiopian descent in the diaspora. Originally it referred only to Semitic-language speaking Christian people from the highlands of Eritrea and Ethiopia. Today it is used in a broader sense as a supra-national identifier. When using it, one should be aware of the term's more flexible use in recent times with varying degrees of inclusivity and exclusivity.

ጃበና [Jebena]

is a coffee pot made of clay used in the traditional **ሓበሻ** [Habesha] coffee ceremony. Its shape slightly differs in Ethiopia and Eritrea.

እንጃራ [Injera]

is a sour fermented flatbread and the staple food of the **ሓበሻ** [Habesha] cuisine.

ሸሮ [Shiro]

is a prepared traditional stew as well as its basic dry ingredient of powdered chickpeas.

ቶግርኛ [Tigrigna]

is a Semitic language and serves as the working language in Eritrea. It is spoken in Eritrea as well as in Northern Ethiopia.

(1) Please note that I chose to use **አማርኛ** [Amarigna] and **ቶግርኛ** [Tigrigna] because they are the main working languages in Ethiopia and Eritrea, but they are only two out of close to 100 additional languages which are spoken in both countries.

(2) Because of the words' minor spelling differences in **አማርኛ** [Amarigna] and **ቶግርኛ** [Tigrigna], I will only use one version in the following thesis for the sake of convenience.

Legend

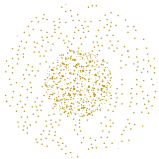
Symbols for sensory impressions



human voices



non-human sounds



odours

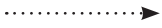
Symbols for trans(local) links



flows of people



flows of goods and money



flows of information

1.1 Relevance & topicality –

Diversified urban population in times of globalization

The concept of diaspora is gaining increasing significance as it engages with the realities of a growing number of the world's population, reflected in statistics on forced or deliberate migration in the present era of globalization. Over the last two decades, except in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the number of international migrants has grown steadily to an estimated amount of 280 million persons residing outside their country of origin in 2020 (see Fig. 1.1). This roughly equals the size of Indonesia, the world's fourth most populous country (UN 2020a). The major reasons for the increasing numbers are labour or family migration, whereas the number of refugees and asylum seekers accounts for only 15% in the total increase between 2000 and 2020 (ibid.).

Although the numbers are rising in all parts of the world, the distribution of migrants is highly unequal. In 2020, Europe hosted 87 million, the largest number of international migrants in the world. Within high-income countries between 2000 and 2020, growth in total migrant population is clearly driven by labour, family reunification and education (OECD 2020 in UN 2020a). In contrast, the majority of people displaced across national borders due to persecution, conflict, violence or human rights violations get absorbed by low- and middle-income countries. In 2020, only 3 per cent of all migrants in high-income countries were refugees and asylum seekers, compared to 50 per cent in low-income countries (UN 2020a:7) (see Fig. 1.2). In addition, the largest regional migration corridor is by far from Europe to Europe with 44 million migrants in 2020 (UN 2020a). This shows that the act of migration predominantly occurs among economic privileged countries. Consequently, the largest part of immigrants in Europe is of European descent and not from middle or low-income countries. They in turn carry a disproportionate responsibility for providing protection and assistance to forcibly migrated people. In contrast, European destination countries, including Germany, comparatively do not carry a high load in terms of hosting refugees but benefit from labour migration, since it is migrants who frequently fill the gaps of critical labour by working in jobs that native workers do not want to perform (Ottaviano, Peri and Wright 2013 in UN 2020a).

Urban centres are the predominant destination points of international migrants. The world's 20 largest cities host nearly one in five of all migrants and in many of these cities, the share of the migrant population represents one third or more of its total population (IOM 2015) (see Fig. 1.5). In 2020, Germany was the second largest country of destination for international migrants, with around 16 million (UN 2020a) (see Fig. 1.3). Their population is clearly concentrated in West Germany as well as in urban centres (see Fig. 1.4). The percentage of migrants without German citizenship in cities range from 7 per cent in Rostock to 42 per cent in Offenbach, and 17 per cent in Hamburg which is a little above the country's average of 12 per cent (see Fig. 1.6).

Against the backdrop of these statistics, it becomes clear that first generation migrants and their descendants have become a constitutive part of present urban

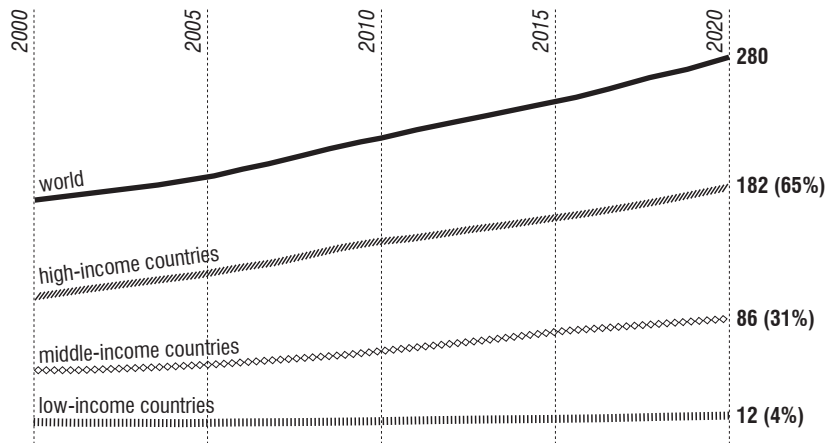


Fig. 1.1: Number of international migrants, by World Bank income group at destination, 2000-2020, in million
Source: UN 2020



Fig. 1.2: Percentage of refugees and asylum seekers, 2020
Source: UN 2020



Fig. 1.3: Five countries of destination with the largest number of international migrants, 2020, in million
Source: UN 2020

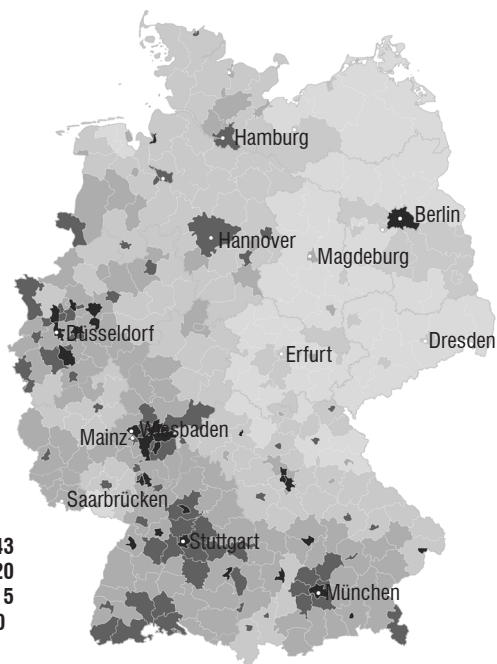


Fig. 1.4: Percentage of non-Germans of the total population, 2019
Source: Demografieportal des Bundes und der Länder 2020



Fig. 1.5: Percentage of foreign-born population in major global cities, 2015
Source: IOM 2015

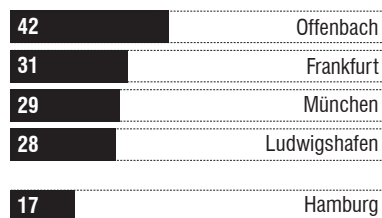


Fig. 1.6: Percentage of non-German population in selected German cities, 2019
Source: Statistisches Bundesamt 2020

societies. Urban populations will be composed of an increasing number of diverse communities. They are shaping the spatial and social surrounding of German cities and will growingly continue to do so in the upcoming years. The statistics also reveal that only a very small proportion of migrants in Europe are destitute and seeking help. The decision to leave their country of birth was mainly an active decision. The majority thus has a clear agenda for staying in Germany. The World Migration Report of the International Organization of Migration (IOM 2015) labels them as “resourceful partners in urban governance”, as “builders of resilience”, “agents of local development” and “city-makers” underlining the importance of “migrant-inclusive urban governance”. Migrants are thus increasingly being recognised as key agents within urban governance and development.

Even though Germany has, de facto, a long history of immigration regarding the large-scale recruiting of so-called guest workers in the 1950s, it still fails to call itself a country of immigration in today’s colloquial as well as political ‘debates of integration’. Germany has become a post-migrant society that experiences “[...] a process in which affiliations, national (collective) identities, participation and equality of opportunity are being renegotiated and adjusted [...]” (Foroutan 2015). Growing international communities in urban centres are taking an active role in shaping the economic, political, social and cultural as well as spatial development within German post-migrant cities. Hence, it is a necessity for disciplines from the fields of urban studies and city planning to consider their perspectives, needs and ideas. In order to plan for a heterogeneous public, a ‘multicultural literacy’ (Sandercock 2003:22) needs to be developed that is familiar with the multiple (hi)stories of urban communities. Only through understanding how the practices of diasporas and their descendants intersect with both local and global development can the discipline of urban planning propose sustainable concepts for future cities.

1.2 Motive & research interest –

Shift in perspective

The studies in Urban Design invite to question and scrutinize underlying structures of urban planning processes as well as general implications of knowledge production in science. The mutual interdependency of knowledge and power (Foucault 1980) is the starting point for biases in theory and practice that highlight certain perspectives whilst others are side lined or made invisible. My motive is to point out inequalities regarding the distribution of attention and the access to discourses as well as its implications in the field of urban studies and design: What topics are considered, which stories are told and whose voices get heard? Here I follow Wade who emphasises that “[t]he means by which knowledge in urbanism is produced and circulated has vast currents of influence into creating accepted perceptions of the urban environment. Through this knowledge, power relations are continually retraced, darkening existing biases and sketching out future frameworks that limit the development of evolutionary ideologies” (Wade 2009:3). Following up on this

idea, bell hooks stresses the great potential of marginal perspectives for challenging dominant narratives and for stimulating new ways of knowledge production, when she defines “[...] marginality [...] as a central location for the production of a counter hegemonic discourse” (1989:20). In my opinion, a progress in rebalancing existing power geometries will not be achieved by the dominant narrative of treating everybody the same (Burayidi 2015:4). Only a targeted representation of structurally disadvantaged interests, according to the idea of ‘Advocacy Planning’ (Davidoff 1965), can enable an equal access to urban planning discourses (Chatterton 2010:242). It is necessary to bring alternative narratives and marginal knowledge into the larger consciousness (Wade 2009:13) because only a multitude of perspectives can draw a complex yet differentiated picture of the urban environment.

In order to make existing biases visible my aim is to shift perspectives by drawing attention to narratives of the city which are underrepresented but hold great potential to contribute knowledge to urban discourses and to enhance urban developments. Diasporas or migrant communities are mostly addressed under the point of view of ‘integration’ or ‘inclusion’. Their daily realities and urban agencies are seldom the main subject of interest without evaluating them according to the norms and values of the dominant culture. By adopting the perspective of the exemplary Eritrean and Ethiopian community in Hamburg, I aim to show their role in city-making processes which is characterized by their specific diasporic situation. My chosen research interest is grounded on the personal experiences and knowledge I gathered during my stay abroad in 2019/2020 at the ‘Ethiopian Institute of Architecture, Building Construction and City Planning’ in Addis Ababa as well as personal ties to people of Eritrean and Ethiopian descent living in Hamburg. Both served as entry points for my theoretical and empirical research.

Hitherto, a broad range of research related to diasporas and migrant communities has been conducted from a political, historical and sociological point of view engaging with notions of cultural identity, transnationality, hybridity, and so forth. Much less research exists on material and spatial aspects of diasporic place-making in cities and the agency of diasporic communities in urban design processes. This master thesis is supposed to contribute, alongside others (Awan 2011, Price & William 2020, Burrell & Vathy 2021), to filling a research gap at the interface between urban and cultural, spatial and social studies by combining formerly separated disciplinary knowledge as well as research approaches and connected methods.

By taking the socio-cultural and economic practices of the Eritrean and Ethiopian community in the situated context of Hamburg as a starting point, I want to uncover social and spatial factors of diasporic (trans)local space and agency as constitutive aspects of diasporic urbanism. I do this by posing the following research questions:

“ “ *The means by which knowledge in urbanism is produced and circulated has vast currents of influence into creating accepted perceptions of the urban environment. Through this knowledge, power relations are continually retraced, darkening existing biases and sketching out future frameworks that limit the development of evolutionary ideologies.*

Wade (2009:3)

How does the Eritrean and Ethiopian community embed their socio-cultural and economic practices in the (trans)local urban context of Hamburg?

In answering this question, I let me guide by the following sub-question:

What are the encountered challenges and the responding strategies of the community?

By exploring the above introduced research questions, my aim is to move beyond debates on 'integration of foreigners' reproducing categories of 'us' versus 'others' which have their roots in colonialism. Instead, I want to overcome cultural binaries and understand the conditions of what it means to live in a globalized society. Therefore, I want to draw a complex, multi-layered portrait of a underrepresented perspective that should be accessible on different levels: not only rationally, but also aesthetically/artistically and emotionally. The research findings of this thesis should hold the potential to contribute to the discourse of postcolonial urban studies and provide knowledge for future urban planning processes that take representation and accessibility to urban resources serious in order to avoid progressing (urban) segregation.

1.3 Research approach & positioning –

The creolization of theory

In accordance with the motive for the selection of topic, the approach of this research shall reflect its intended goals through a careful positioning within existing power-structures of knowledge production by considering historical, political, social and cultural embeddings. This particularly relates to a conscious choice in graphic and textual representation, in methods applied throughout the field research, as well as in contextual and theoretical references. Hereby, I let me guide by the relational, intersectional and anti-colonial concept of the 'Creolization of Theory' (Lionnet & Shih 2011) whose origins resonate well with the topic of this work and shall be operationalized throughout my research.

The term 'creole' emerged during colonial times and refers to the mixing of different ethnic groups due to violent imperial encounters. 'Creolization' describes both the specific sociocultural phenomena in the Caribbean, including language and music, and the on-going processes of cultural encounters in all parts of the world which continue to grow in number and significance against the backdrop of globalization. As a concept initiated by the works of Édouard Glissant, it counters Euro-American theory production which is criticized for being too exclusive while retracing structures of knowledge that are complicit with the politics of global hierarchies and inequalities, privileging certain perspectives that are misconstrued as universal. In doing so, it claims to be descriptive and analytical, situated yet univer-

sally relevant at the same time: “[...] it emerges from the experiential but provides a theoretical framework that does justice to the lived realities of subaltern subjects [and is] integral to the living practices of being and knowing” (Lionnet & Shih 2011:2).

In order to approach the living practices of people in an appropriate and respectful way, Leonie Sandercock highlights the importance of stories and ‘story-telling’ in the field of urban planning practices, especially in multicultural contexts where they can help to examine and challenge the norms of the dominant culture (2003:19). With my thesis I want to provide a platform for some stories from the Eritrean and Ethiopian community in Hamburg by retelling them in a condensed textual and visual form. In doing so, I intentionally try to directly cite my interview partners as much as possible throughout the narration of my research since the voices from within the community can tell their stories and transmit the connected emotions best. In order to create a dense fabric of experiential material, my aim is to gather less conventional representations of content in contrast to scientific data and theoretical concepts. Artistic drawings, poem citations and specific native words and writings are supposed to add an ‘emotional component’ that makes knowledge tangible and accessible in different ways.

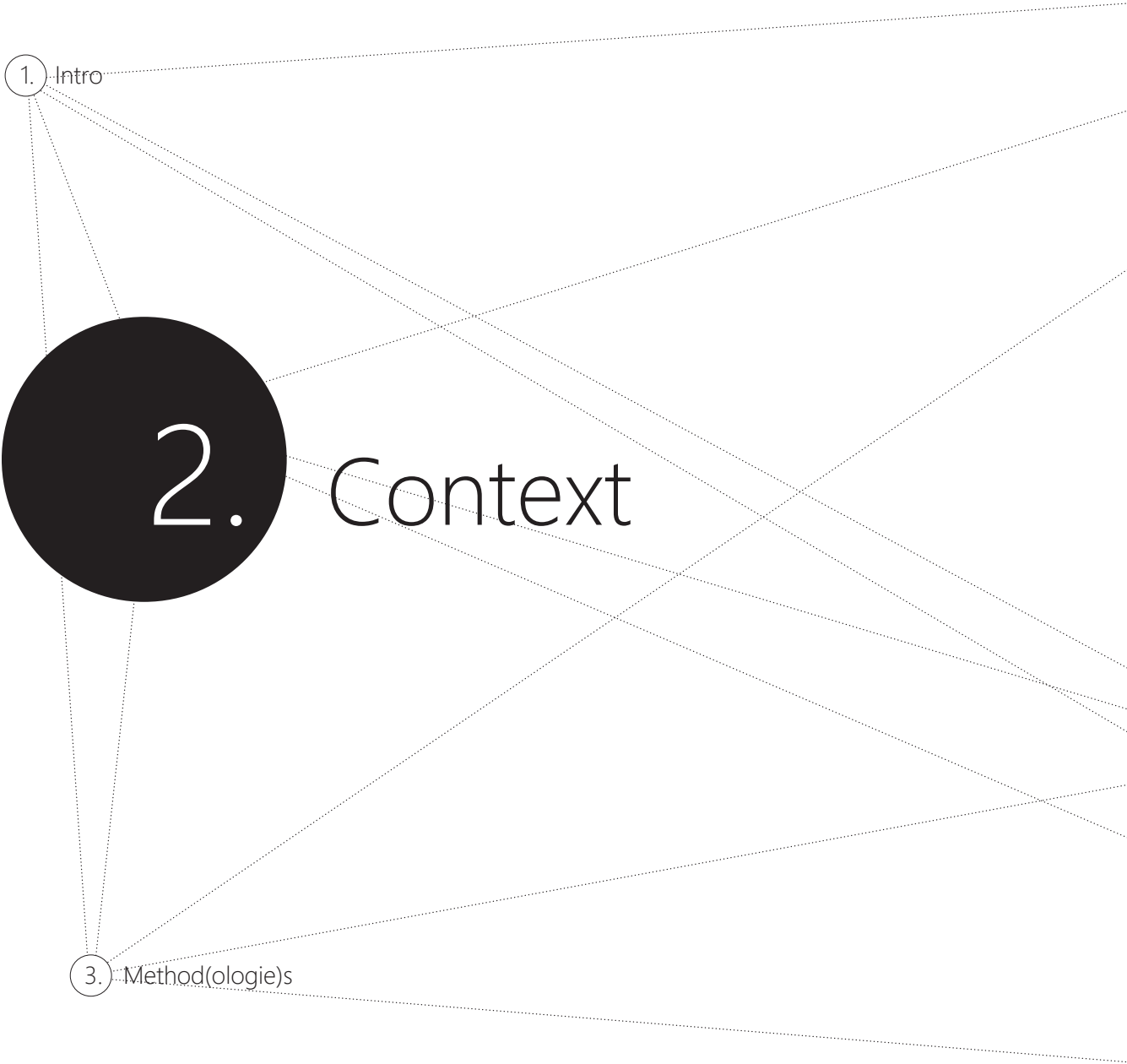
Besides empirical references, references of theory are equally handled with care. In doing justice to existing power-structures of scientific knowledge production, I consciously choose which knowledge and theory to refer to, which perspectives to reproduce and which authors to cite. Engaging with diasporic knowledge from a diverse range of authors allows me to consider and combine multiple perspectives. My collection of quoted authors encompasses Homi K. Bhabha, an Indian-born critical theorist in the field of contemporary post-colonial studies; bell hooks, a literary scholar, feminist and social activist of African American descent; Stuart Hall, a Jamaican-born British sociologist and cultural theorist; Édouard Glissant, a French philosopher, writer and poet from Martinique; Fatima El-Tayeb, German historian and professor for African American literature; Audre Lorde, African American poet, theorist and activist involved in the beginnings of the black feminist movement in Germany; and many more.

1. Intro



Context

3. Method(ologie)s



4. Empirical Analysis

5. Discussion

6. Outro

2.

Context

- 2.1 Thematic-conceptual context – ‘Diaspora’ and its meanings
- 2.2 Historical context – Eritrean and Ethiopian history through the lens of migration
- 2.3 Local context
 - 2.3.1 The (imagined) ሐበሻ [Habesha] Community
 - 2.3.2 Spatio-temporal survey of ሐበሻ [Habesha] places in Hamburg
 - 2.3.3 Diasporic urban spheres: domestic, communal, transactional

In order to approach the subject of this work, the following chapter assembles contextual knowledge on different levels as framework for the subsequent empirical analysis. The thematic-conceptual introduction provides background information on historical origins and development of the diaspora term and related concepts; the brief historical overview on Eritrean and Ethiopian history elaborates on reasons for migration in ancient as well as modern times, whilst at the same time explores historical roots of today's socio-cultural phenomena; the final part gives insights into the social and spatial circumstances of the Eritrean and Ethiopian community in Hamburg, by scrutinizing the idea of 'community' and by identifying characteristic diasporic urban spheres on the basis of a spatio-temporal mapping in the city of Hamburg.

2.1 Thematic-conceptual context –

‘Diaspora’ and its meanings

Since the colloquial as well as scientific meaning and use of the term ‘diaspora’ have strongly changed and developed through time, the following text will, on the one hand, give an overview of its historical evolution and, on the other hand, discuss selected related concepts in social and cultural studies. The theoretical explanations will be illustrated and situated by a selection of statements by interviewees as well as a poem dealing with diasporic subjectivities and experiences.

Historical development

The term Diaspora is of Greek origin (διασπορά) and literally means ‘dispersion’ as well as ‘distribution’ or ‘diffusion’ and is thus of neutral and descriptive nature, holding no negative connotation (Dufoix 2018:13). The history of the term dates back to the 3rd century BC and was originally used in order to describe the scattered Jewish population, its meaning being closely connected to this very specific experience (Mayer 2005:37). Later on, in the 20th century, it got used in a broader sense detached from religion and including other populations like Armenians or Greeks, and herewith started entering academic discourses. A milestone of the term’s historical evolution is Simon Dubnow’s scientific definition in the ‘Encyclopedia of the social science’ from 1931: “Diaspora is a Greek term for a nation or part of a nation separated from its own state or territory and dispersed among other nations but preserving its own culture” (Dubnow in Dufoix 2018:16). Here, the idea of the nation state as standard of reference and ordering power is still prevalent and the connotation is clearly a negative one since it is associated with involuntary displacement and sometimes second-class citizenship (Tölölyan 2018:23). Already in the beginning of the 1970s, the increasing mobility of populations suggested diasporic experiences to no longer remain an exceptional phenomenon, but to become a new global reality: “[...] world-wide diasporas, rather than local national states, look like ‘the wave of the future’. The transformation of the world into a cosmopolis favours social organization on a non-local basis” (Toynbee 1972 in Dufoix 2018:17).

Other historical emblematic cases for diasporas, each with its unique conditions and implications, are Sinti and Roma, Kurds and the large number of Africans residing outside the continent starting with the transatlantic slave trade in the 16th century. The notion of ‘African Diaspora’ was first noted in 1964 at the Pan-African conference in Dar es Salaam by George Shepperson (Tölölyan 2018:23). This term later on became a social and political motto, assigning it with positive and empowering meaning in order to use it in contexts of political resistance and rights claiming. The diaspora concept gained wide importance in the 1970s when voluntary and politically motivated immigration got promoted in the US (‘Hart-Celler Immigration and Nationality Act’ of 1965) as well as in Western Europe from former colonies. Against the backdrop of post-colonial transnational migration, ideas of multiculturalism emerged, leading to a concept of diaspora in theoretical works which “[...] excoriated exclusion and advocated inclusion without homogenization” (Tölölyan 2018:24), acknowledging the parallelism of different cultures as new societal reali-

ties. This led to a more comprehensive and less explicit usage of the diaspora term. Whereas the historical term has been associated with certain diasporic communities with a distinct experience, it nowadays shares meanings “[...] with a larger semantic domain that includes words like immigrant, expatriate, refugee, guest-worker, exile community, overseas community, ethnic community” (Tölölyan 1991:4). The extended application of the term in various contexts results in a much vaguer but also more inclusive meaning leaving room for interpretation.

Selected concepts

Common concepts in cultural studies related to the phenomenon of migration and the underlying understandings of cultural identity started being criticised in the 1980s and 90s for retracing existing hegemonic power-structures and reproducing colonial logics of ‘us versus others’, ‘centre and periphery’ and debates of ‘integration of the deviation into the status quo’. This vocabulary for cultural and social processes of classification and identification establishes simplifying dichotomies and thereby fails to capture the complex experiences of people moving and living between national borders. Against the backdrop of increasingly diversified societies, especially in urban centres, artificial categories of ethnicity, race and cultural identity need to be questioned and (re)negotiated.

Scholars like Stuart Hall and Paul Gilroy initiated a paradigm shift by offering a performative and constructivist understanding of cultural identification, which dissolves rigid categories and moves beyond modern Euro-American concepts of distinct ethnicities and nation states as places of origin and belonging. In the case of the African Diaspora, Paul Gilroy questions the prevailing understanding of a fixed, geographical as well as cultural point of reference as a precondition for diasporas. Instead, he proposes the concept of the ‘Black Atlantic’, a space ‘in-between’, allowing for cultural identification as a process of positioning in a closely-knit network of multiple global reference points. The nationalistic focus is thus “[...]antithetical to the rhizomorphic, fractal structure of the transcultural, international formation” (Gilroy 1993:4) making the African Diaspora a complex and multi-layered experience. This idea of diasporic identification as an on-going construction is closely linked to Stuart Hall’s proposal for ‘New Ethnicities’. This does not depend on superordinate structuring concepts such as nationalism or racial theory, but acknowledges “that we all speak from a particular place, out of a particular history, out of a particular experience, a particular culture [...]. We are all, in that sense, ethnically located [...].” (Hall 1996: 448). This makes ethnicity a highly individual and situated process which accepts difference as an inherent precondition rather than denying or avoiding it. This makes the conception of identity, not only that of diasporas, one which is “defined [...] by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity [and one] which lives with and through, not despite, difference [...].” (Hall 1990:235). Bhabha’s perspective of ‘nation as narration’ deconstructs cultural boundaries and limits in a similar way when he discusses the ‘liminality of the nation-space’ where “[...] difference is turned from the boundary ‘outside’ to its finitude ‘within’” (1990:301), so that cultural difference becomes the status quo and can no longer be seen as a threat.

Fatima El-Tayeb engages with identity discourses in the European context, but develops a concept of “post-ethnic, translocal European identity” that equally counters the idea of the nation state as a container and the consecutive ambitions to place the migrant population either within or outside these boundaries. Translocal ties as a central characteristic of their identity make them neither clear insiders nor outsiders. According to El-Tayeb the concept of diaspora, in contrast to that of migration, counters the binary understanding of ‘citizen’ versus ‘foreigner’ and offers hereby “[...] the basis for a situational community of racialized subjects” (El-Tayeb 2015:145). Bhabha and El-Tayeb both emphasize the important role of urban regions and neighbourhoods as places of identification for diasporic communities. Urban space is indeed a product of national boundaries, but at the same time it provides the opportunity to overcome ethno-nationalist categories by shifting the focus of reference for identification from abstract ‘nationality’ to concrete ‘locality’. Yasemin Nuhoğlu Soysal also emphasizes the fact that advocacy of individual and groups is no longer bound to formal nationality status but can be organized independently, according to collective interests and agendas: “Rights, membership and participation are increasingly matters beyond the vocabulary of national citizenship” (Soysal 2000:12). Community building becomes, thus, a suggestible and highly strategic process which is neither predefined by given ordering parameters nor dependent on them, and therefore opens up radical alternatives of group identification and alliances beyond national borders and exclusive tendencies. These situational communities might be more fragile, but also more inclusive and adaptable than communities based on identity policy and can thus develop new forms of social and spatial (urban) agency (El-Tayeb 2015:320).

““ *Cultural identity [...] is a matter of 'becoming' as well as 'being'. It belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending place time, history and culture. Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialised past, they are subject to the continuous 'play' of history, culture and power.*

Hall (1990:225)

[→] see chapter 2.3.1:
Local context on community

Implications of diasporic experiences

The presented concepts on diaspora highlight the phenomenon’s main underlying characteristic of a complex interplay between physical locality and elusive links to global reference points. This field of tension raises central questions in life such as notions of identity, belonging, home and many more. Diasporas undergo processes of deterritorialisation and reterritorialisations producing unique subjectivities in relation to space and time which Awan calls ‘diasporic spatio-temporalities’ (2011:50). Usually, diasporic people inhabit and operate in spaces which are not defined by classic self-explanatory categories of citizenship or the nation state and its associated norms and values. Therefore, they are not ‘naturally’ and lifelong parts of (imagined) communities [→]. Consequently, they have to (re) position themselves within a multitude of contrasting or even conflicting socio-cultural, political and economic reference systems. This process of oscillation, Stuart Hall describes as “[...] a matter of ‘becoming’ as well as ‘being’. It belongs to the future as much as to the past. [...] Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialised past, they are subject to the continuous ‘play’ of history, culture and power”

(Hall 1990:225). Declaring performativity as a basic prerequisite for cultural identities opens up the possibility to create new categories of belonging and new types of identification as well as community building. Because diasporas mostly represent a numerical minority in relation to the country's population and thus possibly find themselves marginalized or underrepresented in national discourses, their capacities and agency potentials is often overlooked. By operating in self-established transnational networks, they can hardly be described as 'subaltern others' (Spivak 1988) but rather as 'stateless power' (Tölölyan 2018:25). Brah's concept of diaspora also problematizes the associated notion of 'minority versus majority' when she proposes a "multi-axial performative conception of power [which] highlights the ways in which a group constituted as a 'minority' along one dimension of differentiation may be constructed as a 'majority' along another" (Brah 1996:189). Against the backdrop of Hall's and Brah's procedural and relational understandings of identity, it becomes clear that diasporic (urban) space and agency always have to be considered in their specific situatedness within place and time.

The historical and discourse analysis around the diaspora term shows the evolution it has undergone from its beginning, standing for a clearly determined context and meaning towards a nearly complete deconstruction and arbitrary use. All the discussed concepts try to overcome the idea of the state and national citizenship as identity-creating parameters and instead define the process of cultural identification as a constructivist and performative act that manifests itself in concrete localities and their translocal relations. These very identity creating, (trans)local practices are the subject of my research looking at the specific case of the Eritrean and Ethiopian community in Hamburg.

These interviewed members of the Eritrean and Ethiopian community have their very own and distinct perspectives and opinions on what it means to move the centre of one's life to another country and thus on how the diasporic or translocal experience and its implications on cultural identity, a sense of belonging or home can be described:

"Ich bin seit 40 Jahren in Deutschland, aber zu Hause ist Ethiopia. Ich fahr nicht allein nach Hause, weil ich kenn mich nicht aus. Aber ich bin eben eine Äthiopianerin, obwohl ich Deutsche bin. [...] Ich denke deutsch, ich träume deutsch, ich mach das alles auf deutsch, aber wenn das etwas über Heimat ist, dann irgendwie schickt mich da... irgendwie, ich weiß nicht warum. Ich weiß nicht warum, das ist eben so.

[I am in Germany for 40 years now, but home is Ethiopia. I don't travel home alone because I am not familiar with it. But I am an Ethiopian, even though I am German [...] I think in German, I dream in German, I do everything in German, but if it is something about home, it draws me there... somehow, I don't know why. I don't know why, it is just like this]."
(Interview 4)

*"We should connect to make a bond between two countries, between two cultures... if you are healthy, if you want to be safe, if you want to be part of the people with whom you live. [...] So I myself try all the time to feel like home. [...] The place where we live is our Heimat. We should accept that."
(Interview 1)*

"Ich bin so lange hier in Deutschland, ich spreche deutsch, ich träume deutsch... alles. Trotzdem bin ich bisschen was anderes. Ich hab den deutschen Ausweis, aber trotzdem hab ich nicht das Gefühl Deutscher zu sein.

[I am in Germany for so long, I speak German, I dream German... everything. Still I am a little different. I have the German passport, but still I don't feel German]."

(Interview 9)

"Ich glaube ich bin auf der Erde geboren und da wo ich jetzt bin (Hamburg) Zuhause und lebe mit alle Menschen in Hamburg zusammen.

[I believe I was born on earth and home is where I am now (Hamburg) and I live together with all people from Hamburg.]"

(Answer via text message on an interview request, 01.06.21).

Poetry

Arts are a powerful medium to negotiate both rational and emotional aspects and thus offer a platform to express perspectives that might not be expressed otherwise. Alpha Abebe researches on the role of arts in the particular context of diasporic identities and highlights their capacity to “[...] offer insight into the ways that people negotiate and interpret diasporic identities [...]” (2018:56). Thus, they serve as an intuitive key to knowledge beyond ‘rational’ or ‘scientific’ explanations. Audre Lorde describes the particular role of poetry as mediator for sharing emotional knowledge: “A poem grows out of the poet’s experience, in a particular place and a particular time, and the genius of the poem is to use the textures of the place and time without becoming bound by them. Then the poem becomes an emotional bridge to others who have not shared that experience. The poem evokes its own world” (Lorde in Piesche 2018:101).

The following poem about diasporic experiences takes up the above discussed implications of positioning oneself between territories, between cultures, between temporalities and hereby addresses fundamental questions of human life.

ገጽ ፩ ግጽ ፩

ገጽ ፩ ላይ ስለ፡ ከፍተኛ ግርም ዝቅርባ
ፍቅር ማድረግ ፡ ግራም ምስ ተገንጠን
ከንተ ከተተካላለ፡ ከንተ ከተተካላለ፡
ተተካላለ ገጽ ፩ ፡ ማህተ ማህተኛ

ገጽ ፩ ላይ

ማህተ ማህተ ፡ ማህተ ማህተ
ማህተ ማህተ ፡ ማህተ ማህተ
ገላ ሳይ ማህተ ፡ ገላ ሳይ ማህተ
መጠን ማህተ ፡ ማህተ ማህተ

ግጽ

ከገጽ ግጽ ፡ ማህተ ማህተ
ከገጽ ግጽ ፡ ማህተ ማህተ
ከገጽ ግጽ ፡ ማህተ ማህተ
ከገጽ ግጽ ፡ ማህተ ማህተ

ግጽ ማህተ ማህተ?

ከገጽ ማህተ ፡ ማህተ ማህተ
ግጽ ማህተ ፡ ማህተ ማህተ
ግጽ ማህተ ፡ ማህተ ማህተ
ግጽ ማህተ ፡ ማህተ ማህተ

ግጽ ማህተ ፡ ማህተ ማህተ
ግጽ ማህተ ፡ ማህተ ማህተ
ግጽ ማህተ ፡ ማህተ ማህተ
ግጽ ማህተ ፡ ማህተ ማህተ

ግጽ ማህተ ፡ ማህተ ማህተ
ግጽ ማህተ ፡ ማህተ ማህተ
ግጽ ማህተ ፡ ማህተ ማህተ
ግጽ ማህተ ፡ ማህተ ማህተ

ግጽ ማህተ ፡ ማህተ ማህተ
ግጽ ማህተ ፡ ማህተ ማህተ
ግጽ ማህተ ፡ ማህተ ማህተ
ግጽ ማህተ ፡ ማህተ ማህተ

ግጽ ማህተ - ማህተ ማህተ (ግጽ ማህተ)



Living in Harmony

the things about human beings, that make you wonder
when you wake up, after a long night sleep
if you pause, and think about it
there are so many things, that puzzle you

why is that

sometimes you fall down, sometimes you get up
sometimes you sow, sometimes you harvest
sometimes you give, sometimes you withhold
you forget, that you are mortal

but

as there is giving, there is also receiving
as there is scarcity, there is also abundance
as there is sickness, there is also health
as there is life, there is also death

but do we think about that?

abroad, where you are
if you want to live, as you dream it
you can challenge life, if you believe in yourself
if you embrace love, and if you share it

appreciate time, and you will be respected
from other cultures, take what you need
share your culture, with those interested
so that you will live in harmony and respect

remember yesterday, and think about tomorrow
give thanks for today, be content with what you have
be positive, and abandon the negative
get educated and skilled, to reach your goals

for those who are close to you, and love you
give them respect, before they distance themselves
for those who are not close to you, and do not know you
show them who you are, so they will appreciate you

Simon Okbamichael

2.2 Historical context –

Eritrean and Ethiopian history through the lens of migration

The very brief overview of Eritrean and Ethiopian (shared) history provides basic, and therefore partially superficial, information in order to comprehend the political and cultural background the diasporic community of today emerges from. On the one hand, it examines the historical development of the two countries in terms of reasons for migration, highlighting the constitutive role of migration processes in the formation of ancient empires and modern states. In doing so, the fluid and constructivist nature of territorial and cultural boundaries as they exist today becomes apparent. On the other hand, it gives insights into the historical emergence of certain socio-cultural and political factors impacting present every-day lives of Ethiopians and Eritreans inside and outside the country. Thus, the selective yet interrelated retrospect reveals historical continuities as well as lasting fractures.

The territory of present Eritrea and Ethiopia looks back on a politically and culturally long and rich history. This seems to be less present though in the countries' internationally circulating narratives than the humanitarian crisis of their recent history. Not only is their territory considered the cradle of humankind, it is also said to be one of the powerful civilizations in the first centuries of the Christian calendar next to Rome, China and Persia (Henze 2000:22). It is one of the first regions to officially adopt Christianity during the 4th century, origin of the ancient script 'Ge'ez', home of many ancient heritage sites, including nine UNESCO world heritage sites such as monolithic churches dating back to the 13th century, and the place where the coffee plant was discovered around the 9th century. Ethiopia is the only African country that successfully fought back colonization, is a founding member of the United Nations, strongly supported the decolonization process of Africa and the growth of Pan-African cooperation and became thus the seat of the Organisation of African Unity in 1963, today's African Union (Assefa 2021).

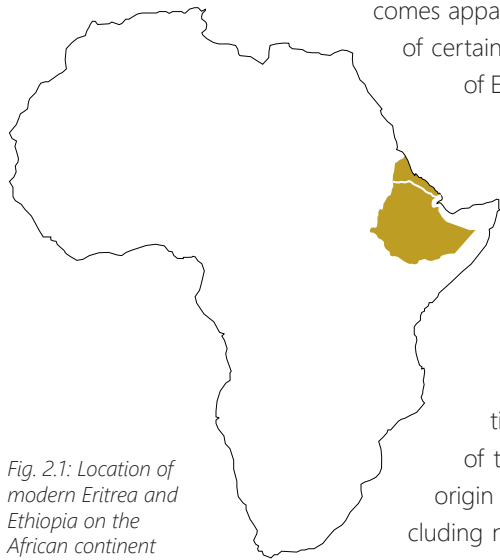


Fig. 2.1: Location of modern Eritrea and Ethiopia on the African continent

Beginnings and early history – Internal and imperial migration

On the territory of today's Eritrea and Ethiopia migration flows due to economic, religious or political reasons played a crucial role for the region's development in the early years as well as later on, enabling exchange of goods and ideas but also causing conflicts. The first Kingdom was founded in the highlands of the region and through internal migration and imperial expansion gradually included a plurality of peoples. This ethnic heterogeneity characterises the countries' cultural and political landscape until today. External contacts with ancient civilizations such as Egypt, South Arabia, Israel and the Greco-Roman World date back to 1000 BC and before. Early Semitic immigration across the Red Sea (see Fig. 2.2), for instance, had large influences on the development of the northern parts in terms of architecture, agriculture, political organization, religion and language, which are recognizable until today (Sellassie



Fig. 2.2: Semitic settlements and migration BC from South Arabia across the Red Sea
 Source: Sellassie (1972)

1972:29). Due to its strategic position for trade routes the Red Sea coast of today's Eritrea was fought over also later on by the Turks, Arabs, Portuguese and Italians (Lausberg 2021:149). The ancient and flourishing civilization of Aksum emerging in the first century BC was thus "[...] an amalgam of the indigenous culture and external influences [...]" (Zewde 1991:8). The introduction of Christianity in the 4th century by a Syrian bishop from the Egyptian Coptic Church was the starting point for the long and dominant tradition of Christian Orthodox religion in the nevertheless multi-religious region including Islam and Judaism.

The Empire of Abyssinia, how the area was used to be called, was ruled by different Emperors and dynasties until the mid of the 18th century when monarchical power declined and was replaced by the rule of regional lords known as the 'Era of the Princes' ('Zemene Mesafint') (Zewde 1991:10). Mid 19th century, with the coronation of Emperor Tewodros II in 1855, started what is named the modern history of Ethiopia, Abyssinia at that time. During the time of expansion and unification in the middle of the 19th century under Emperor Menelik II (1889-1913), the boundaries of today's Ethiopia were drawn and finally determined after the 'Battle of Adwa' in 1896 stopping the Italian colonial conquest. The victory was internationally acknowledged as "counter-current to the sweeping tide of colonial domination in Africa" (Zewde 1991:81), but at the same time established a border separating the Empire's territory. Its Northern part, today's Eritrea, became an Italian colony leading to a very different development of the Northern and Southern part which hitherto had shared the same history. This newly established border came to be the point of contention in the upcoming and long-lasting armed conflicts between Ethiopia and Eritrea. The existing infrastructure of the young country Eritrea was rebuilt under Italian rule according to modern European standards, offering a new home for 'colonial migrants'. They called the capital Asmara 'la piccola Roma' due to its newly constructed buildings in the style of Western architectural modernism, which exist nearly unchanged up to this date. Immigration and emigration in Ethiopia during the 19th and 20th century, however, were a singular phenomenon. It was mainly driven by education matters initiated by missionaries or trade matters including the dissemination of ideas and ideologies (Zewde 1991:109). Before 1935, a total of 200 students left the country for education purposes, predominantly going to France but also to Britain and the US (ibid.). One of them is Alaqa Tayya who joined a diplomatic mission and migrated to Berlin in 1905 where he taught Ge'ez (ibid. 106).

Ethiopian international relations and diplomatic as well as educational exchange were considerably extended under the long reign of the last Emperor of Ethiopia. Haile Selassie ruled from 1930 until 1974 with a short interruption of five years due to another attempt of Italian 'imperial migration', which Eritreans were forced to support, leading to a period of occupation between 1936 and 1941. Emperor Haile Sellasie enjoyed an excellent international reputation and maintained diplomatic relations. For instance, he was the first foreign head of state to officially visit the young federal republic of Germany in 1954 (Lausberg 2021:140). To the inside however, Ethiopia had become a centralized state under his absolutist monarchy.

During World War II, the Italian colony Eritrea was conquered by British troops in 1941 and under British military administration until 1950. Among the Eritrean pop-

ulation irreconcilable positions existed on their future fate. The 'Unionists' wanted to reunite with Ethiopia, which strongly requested the "restoring [of Eritrea] to the mother country" (Zewde 1991:181), whereas the 'Independence Bloc', a conglomeration of different groups, claimed the formation of an independent state. A UN Resolution from 1950 decided on a federation under the sovereignty of the Ethiopian Emperor and administrative autonomy on domestic affairs for Eritrea as "golden mean" (ibid. 183). Haile Sellasie, however, gradually restricted the region's power and eventually annexed Eritrea in 1962 by dissolving the parliament. This was the beginning of the Eritrean War of independence which would last 30 years. Selassie's repressive rule and inability to tackle internal issues in the country, such as the famine 1973 in the Northern provinces, led to the rebellion of peasants and mass demonstration by Ethiopian students receiving support from students in the diaspora (Zewde 1991:225). The resulting revolution in 1974 was essentially an urban phenomenon involving students, factory workers, civil servants, soldiers and religious minorities creating a general narrative of "the low rising against the high and mighty" (ibid. 231).

Recent history – Forced and diversified migration

The popular upsurge ended with the assumption of power by the socialist 'Derg' regime under Mengistu Haile Mariam, suspending the constitution and dissolving the parliament. Ethiopia became a close ally of the former Eastern bloc and implemented the nationalization and redistribution of land under the motto of 'land to the tiller'. What followed were two decades of brutal conflicts, called the 'Red Terror', between the new military government against pro-monarchist parties, left extremist groups as well as the forces fighting for Eritrean independence (Lausberg 2021:144). These consisted of the ELF (Eritrean Liberation Front) founded in 1960 and the later dominating spin-off EPLF (Eritrean People Liberation Front) founded in 1970, whose rivalry led to two internal civil wars from 1972-1974 and 1980-1981. Growing ethno-nationalist organizations emerged to challenge the 'Derg' government criticising the regime's ineffective economic policy, particularly in face of the great famine in 1984/85 affecting nearly eight million and killing about one million people (Zewde 1991:263). Due to the famine as well as on-going conflicts, compulsory military service, economic crises and political repression hundreds of thousands started to leave the country in the 1980s to neighbouring countries and other continents building an Ethio-Eritrean diaspora for the first time (Lausberg 2021:147).

The socialist period ended when the EPLF entered Asmara and the EPRDF (Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front), consisting of the dominating TPLF (Tigray People's Liberation Front) and other ethno-nationalist groups such as the OPDO (Oromo People's Democratic Organization), entered Addis Ababa in 1991. Meles Zenawi became interim president and the political system was democratised and federalized leading to nine ethnic based regions with their own working language, own constitution and institutions (Lausberg 2021:165). This ethnic based federalism was the starting point for an official entanglement of culture and politics and has become the origin for many following ethnic based conflicts throughout Ethiopia.

The EPLF pushed the agenda of independence for Eritrea which was officially implemented by a nearly unanimous referendum in 1993. Isaias Afewerki became the first and up to date only president of the country for close to 30 years now. The relations between Eritrea and Ethiopia remained tense throughout the years. Economic disputes and disagreement on the course of the border caused another two years of war in 1998. After the liberation of Eritrea and the ratification of the Eritrean Constitution in 1997, the hopes for an ascending political and economic development were of short duration because the indications for a dictatorial reign of the president became quite clear. In 2001, all independent publications were shut down by the Minister of Information and the editor-in-chief and journalists of the privately-owned newspaper and other intellectuals were imprisoned (Chen et al. 2021:5). One year later, the national party PFDJ (People's Front for Democracy and Justice) used the 'Warsai Yekalo Development Campaign' in order to justify an indefinite national service comprising state-dictated forced labour for men and women starting from the age of 18 (Hirt 2016:1). In the following years, the educational system, including universities, was replaced by military schools and training. Since current circumstances do not allow for young Eritreans to develop future perspectives in their own country, a large number decides to emigrate risking life-threatening journeys on the way.

On-going ethnic based conflicts characterized the term of Meles Zenawi and the following Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn who resigned after recurring protests in the country. In 2018, when Abiy Ahmed became the first president of Oromo descent, the largest ethnic group in the country, hopes for fundamental change were high. His course of reforms included lifting the country's state of emergency, releasing political prisoners and redistributing ministerial posts appointing half of them to women. Moreover, he initiated the 'Joint Declaration of Peace and Friendship' between Eritrea and Ethiopia which officially ended the twenty years of conflict, which had forced many people to flee. About one million Eritreans have left their country, which represents one third of the total population; around 350.000 fled from Ethiopia (Lausberg 2021:169). When borders between the two countries reopened many families got the chance to see each other after long years of separation. But also, Eritrean refugees took the opportunity to flee to Ethiopia arriving in thousands every month (Chen et al. 2021:5).

After recently re-arising ethnic based tensions however, a new civil war in the Northern Tigray region has broken out. The humanitarian situation and the political agendas of the different actors, the TPLF being one of the driving forces of this war, are complex and so far the outcome is unpredictable and the end is not yet in sight. Nevertheless, Abiy Ahmed got re-elected with large majorities in June 2021.

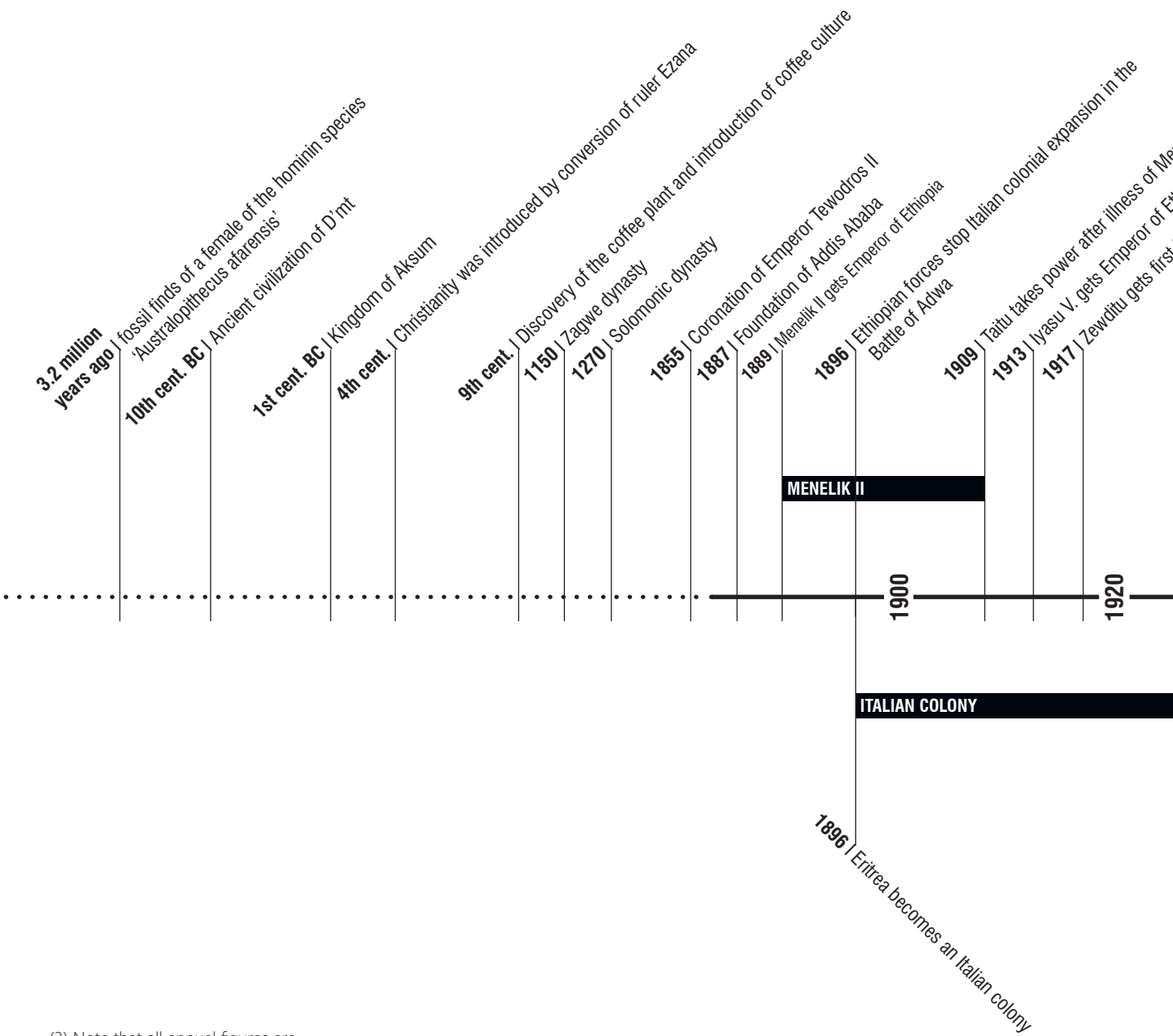
To conclude, emigration flows from the two countries in modern times can be categorized according to three major chapters: Up to the beginning of the 1970, during the reign of Haile Selassie, the very little emigration was dominated by elites going abroad for professional or educational purposes with strong motivation to return (Tasse 2004 in Kuschminder & Siegel 2010:4). 1974 no more than 300 Ethiopians

were registered in Germany representing 5% of the Ethiopian community in Germany (Schlenzka 2009:10). The second chapter from 1974 to 1991 is characterized by forced migration, people fleeing from the 'Derg' and resulting family reunifications abroad (Tasse 2004 in Kuschminder & Siegel 2010:4). By 1991 around 20.000 Ethiopians lived in Germany including Eritrean refugees representing 20-30% who have acquired a secure residence status or German citizenship in the meantime (Schlenzka 2009:10). The largest group accounting for 65-70% came after 1991 (ibid.), the final chapter which continues until today with diverse motivations for emigration including refuge from war and political oppression, working or educational matters as well as family reunification. In contrast to a predominantly forced migration from Eritrea in the past years, migration in Ethiopia is rather economically driven with minimal refugee flows (Kuschminder und Siegel 2010:2).

The diaspora today

The size of the global Ethiopian diaspora is estimated to be more than 2 million with the largest population in the United States of about 250.000. Regarding the large size of the country with 112 million inhabitants, the emigration rate is less than one percent with 950.000 emigrants in 2020 (UN 2020b). In contrast, up to half of Eritrea's population is living scattered across the world. The approximate 800.000 emigrants last year (UN 2020b) in relation to the country's estimated population remaining in the country ranging between 3.5 and 4.5 million depicts the "[...] immense exodus that threatens to destroy the social fabric of the country" (Hirt 2020). Paradoxically, it is exactly the diasporic people who stabilize the political system because the government has introduced a so-called 'diaspora tax'. Citizens living abroad are obliged to pay 2% of their income as precondition to receive bureaucratic services from the Eritrean embassies. The tax is estimated to account for one third of the country's budget (ibid.). In contrast to the forced and restricted ties of the Eritrean diaspora to their country of origin, the Ethiopian diaspora is animated in more subtle ways to support and engage in the country's future. The Ethiopian government established the 'Ministry of Expatriate Affairs' and the 'Diaspora Coordinating Office of the Ministry of Interior' in 2002 with the objective to attract diaspora investment and engagement, being a key resource for the country's development (Kuschminder und Siegel 2010).

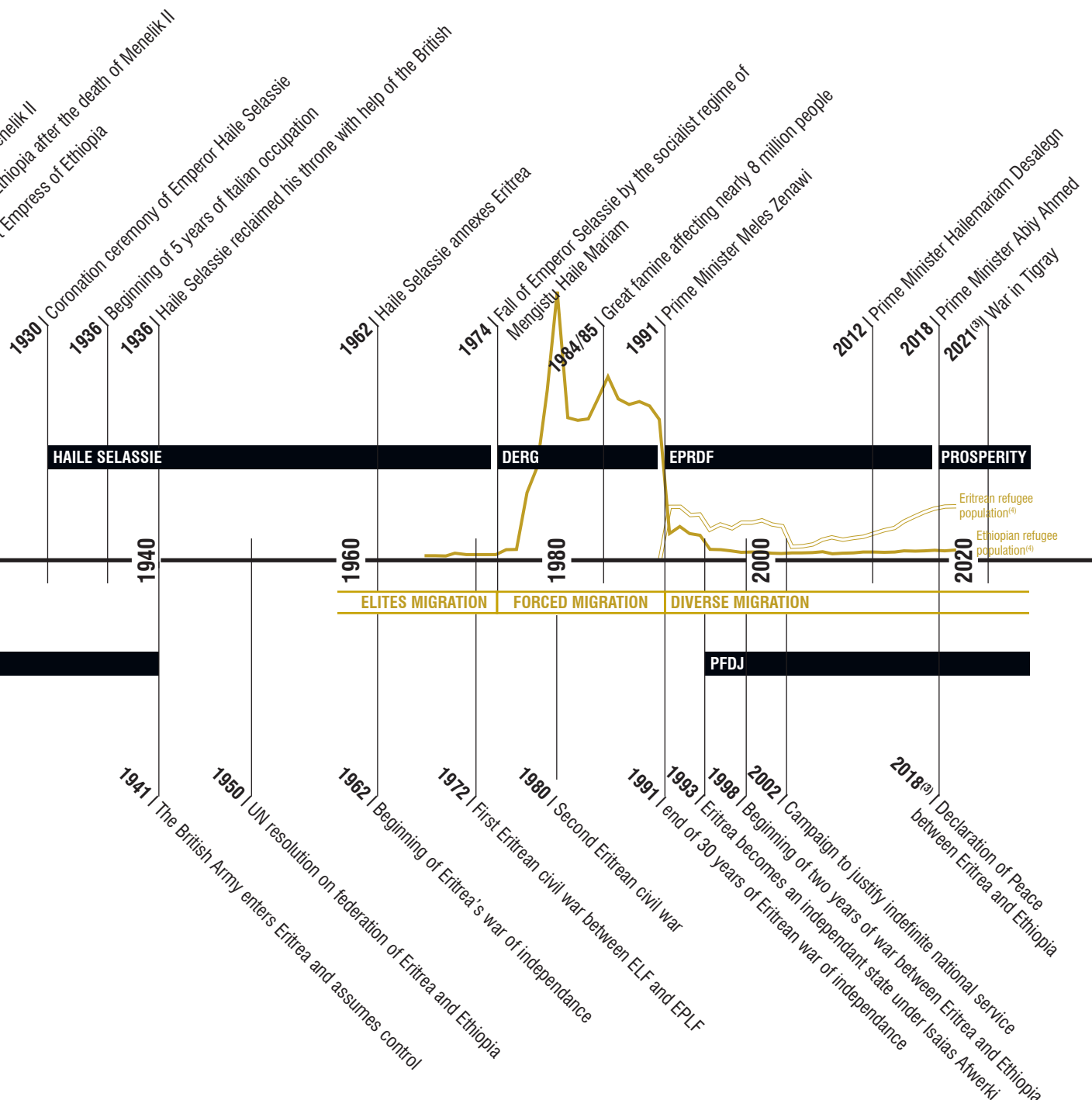
The diasporas of both countries find themselves in a highly strategic and influential position. On the one hand they are a possible connection to foreign resources and on the other hand they hold the potential to represent the Eritrean and Ethiopian government's interests within different countries. The diaspora is sometimes even considered as 'the long arm of the regime'. They thus become powerful actors navigating between financial as well as political interests. The politics of the diaspora is not the object of this study but must be kept in mind since they are reflected within people's activities and the structures they establish.



(3) Note that all annual figures are according to the Gregorian Calendar; there is a gap of seven to eight years with the Ethiopian calendar.

(4) Source: World Bank Group (2021)

Fig. 2.3: Timeline of milestones in Ethiopian [top] and Eritrean [bottom] (shared) history



2.3.1 The (imagined) ሐበሻ [Habesha] Community

The present work uses the term 'ሐበሻ [Habesha] Community'⁽⁵⁾, a self-designation, in order to describe a group of individuals of Eritrean and Ethiopian descent that are part of Hamburg's civic society. The term refers to the uniting character of a shared origin, but clearly does not imply a homogeneous group of people which can be subsumed under a holistic logic. The people referred to are just as diverse as any other society due to identity-forming features like gender and age, educational background and class, political views, religion, ethnic background, mother tongue and many more. Personal reasons for leaving one's country of birth vary greatly. Some moved for study or working experiences, others fled from a dictatorial regime or political persecution. The wide range of individual circumstances contributes to a highly diverse landscape of the Community. Avtar Brah describes this inherent paradox of diasporic communities as follows: "All diasporas are differentiated, heterogeneous, contested spaces, even as they are implicated in the construction of a common 'we'" (1996:183f). The simultaneity of unifying and dividing ideas evokes a field of tension that the Community members negotiate in their daily practices.

Imagined communities

Benedict Anderson addresses the constructivist nature of nations when describing them as 'imagined political communities' which are based on historical and cultural projections: "It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (Anderson 1983:6). Since it is neither actual similarities nor physical closeness forming the basis for an understanding of community, people refer to more abstract binding qualities when using the notion of the commonness. Both the geographical closeness at the moment of one's birth as well as a shared nationality indicated in one's passport, do not imply an automatic affiliation to a person sharing the same attributes. It thus remains an active and individual decision whether to identify with a national community and if so, to define the meaning the term conveys for oneself. The same is true for the ሐበሻ people in Hamburg and their differentiated views on the scope and definitions of their Community.

(5) From now on, the general term 'community' will be capitalized when it refers to the specific 'ሐበሻ Community'.

(6) The presented statistics only depict registered people with Ethiopian and Eritrean nationality and do not include naturalized persons or people of Ethiopian and Eritrean descent born in Germany and holding the German citizenship. The figures are thus only a convergence and do not represent the actual size of the ሐበሻ Community in Germany.

Approaching the ሐበሻ [Habesha] Community in Hamburg

The Community comprises of a first generation, who immigrated to Germany, and a second and meanwhile partially even third generation, who were born and have grown up in Germany. In my research I will concentrate on the first generation since they are the driving forces in terms of establishing facilities for the Community in the city. Usually, it is them who maintain the traditional socio-cultural and economic practices on a daily basis. The second and third generation might deal with comparable issues such as the question of identity, but from a completely different perspective which demands further investigation and would exceed the scope of this research.

Left alone, the first generation of አብዮታዊ people in Hamburg differs greatly in terms of the above mentioned identity-forming features. This is enforced by the fact that Eritrea and Ethiopia are so-called multi-ethnic societies with nine different languages spoken in Eritrea and more than 80 languages in Ethiopia. Moreover, both countries do not have a clear majority of population belonging to only one religion. The implications are expressed in the following statement:

"Wir haben sehr unterschiedliche Interessen, Herkunft, sag ich mal auch Status und so. Da sind wir schon differenziert. Es ist nicht schön, ich weiß das. Aber so läuft das einfach, weißt du. [We have very different interests, origins, status let's say, we do differentiate. It is not nice, I know this. But that's the way it is, you know]" (Interview 1).

Differing push and pull factors for migration contribute to further distinction. Based on the experiences of my interviews and the historical context of the countries [→], in recent times, Ethiopians mostly emigrate for reasons of education or working experiences whereas the majority of Eritrean people are in search of political asylum. Thus, the comparatively higher number of Eritreans in Germany in the past years mostly includes young refugees due to the on-going difficult political situation in the country. The number of Eritreans and Ethiopians living in the city of Hamburg has continually grown over the past years but is yet much smaller than in other German metropolis like Frankfurt where the number of registered Ethiopians for instance is seven times higher than in Hamburg (Bürgeramt Stadt Frankfurt a.M. 2021).

Regarding the Eritrean diaspora, there can be made a clear distinction between a first generation of immigrants from the 1980s during the war for independence and a second larger generation, mainly arriving to Germany between 2013 and 2017 (see Fig. 2.4) during the time of the so-called 'wave of refugees', a term which was coined by German media and politics. An interviewee from the older generation describes the two generations as "two different worlds" (Interview 11) since they have significant differences regarding age, refugee experiences and political opinions. The combination of the above mentioned separating factors within the Community fosters internal social division:

*"Es fehlt bei der [C]ommunity die Einigkeit, ein Halt.
[The [C]ommunity lacks unity, emotional support]" (Interview 1).*

The lack of unity manifests itself also in spatial segregation; certain places are predominantly frequented by homogeneous groups, members of only one ethnic group, only one generation or only one religion. An interviewee observes that this goes at the expense of networking activities and mutual support, especially when compared to other nationalities. Several interviewees stress the need to overcome the existing religious, ethnic, political, generational differences and establish places where all members of the Community feel welcome.

[→] see chapter 2.2:
Historical context

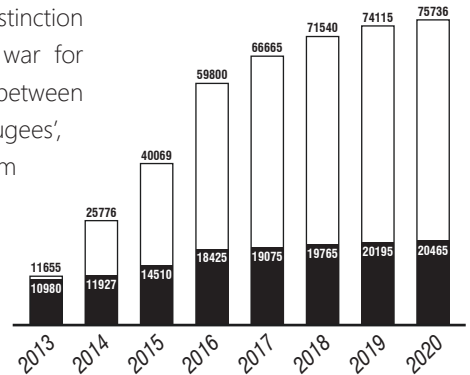


Fig. 2.4: Eritrean [white] and Ethiopian [black] population in Germany, 2013-2020⁶⁹
Source: Statistisches Bundesamt (2021)

[→] see chapter 4.2:
Cataloguing socio-cultural
and economic practices

Community as notion of empowerment

Despite factual differences, the terms 'ሓበኛ' and 'community' are commonly used by the people and hold great importance for some. Since the ሓበኛ Community represents a minority in number compared to the entire population in Hamburg, the term offers the opportunity to refer to common knowledge and experiences that the majority of the surrounding does not share, including daily socio-cultural practices [→]. So despite the inherent contradictory nature of the actual and theoretical concept, the construction of the community meaning and the term itself hold a strong potential for empowerment, as it creates a sense of togetherness in opposition to a group of many individuals. This enables emotional refuge and mutual support to the inside, on the one hand, and demonstrates collective agency to the outside, on the other hand. Even in German speaking contexts the English term community is used, both in literature as well as in a colloquial way by the communities themselves because the German translation of 'Gemeinde' or 'Gemeinschaft' does not convey the inscribed potential of collective resistance (Piesche 2018:10).

The agency and power of the term becomes apparent when it is used in strategic ways. It allows individuals to assign themselves to different communities depending on the context, pursuing different intentions and attaching distinct meanings to it. This again proves the 'imagined' aspect to the notion. Family and friends as well as like-minded people are the smallest, concrete unit of a reference group in daily life, whereas nations and continents are more abstract references which can be useful in other contexts. Thus, the different references of community offer different layers of identification. This is reflected when people state:

„Ich kenne fast alle die Eritrean Leute in Hamburg [I know almost all Eritrean people in Hamburg]" (Interview 6);

"Ich bin eine Afrikanerin aus Ethiopia [I am an African from Ethiopia]" (Interview 4).

Audre Lorde expresses the intersectional layers of identification and connected potential of empowerment by proclaiming: "I am [...] part of the international community of people of colour. I am also part of the Black women's community. I am part of many communities" (Lorde in Piesche 2018:102). These statements reveal the narrative and fluid character of the term. They demonstrate that "[...] the identity of the diasporic imagined community is far from fixed or pre-given. It is constituted within the crucible of the materiality of everyday life; in the everyday stories we tell ourselves individually and collectively" (Brah 1996: 180).

By listening to the stories of selected members of the ሓበኛ Community and analysing three concrete ሓበኛ locations in the city, I try to uncover social and spatial facets that (un)build a sense of community, without claiming to represent a comprehensive image of the whole ሓበኛ Community. Over the course of my research, I talked to a middle-aged Ethiopian student and father of two girls; an Eritrean mechanic and association's founder who came as refugee; a PhD holder and priest of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church; a young Eritrean shop and bar owner; an elderly woman with three apprenticeships and active member of the Ethiopian Evangelical

(7) The survey does not include mosques because ሓበኛ Muslims do not establish their own mosques, but use existing ones all around the city which were established by other Muslim communities.

(8) Respective data for Ethiopian citizens are not available.

Church who has lived in Germany for forty years; a partial shop owner who carries out additional wage labour and who came to Germany in the early 80s as a child; a pensioner engaged in refugee aid and 'first generation' Eritrean immigrant; a young Eritrean woman and mother of two who came as a refugee; a long term shop-owner, mother and grandmother, who came to Germany from Eritrea in the beginning of the 80s; an Ethiopian university professor; and many more people that I had informal conversations with.

2.3.2 Spatio-temporal survey of

ሓበሻ [Habesha] places in Hamburg

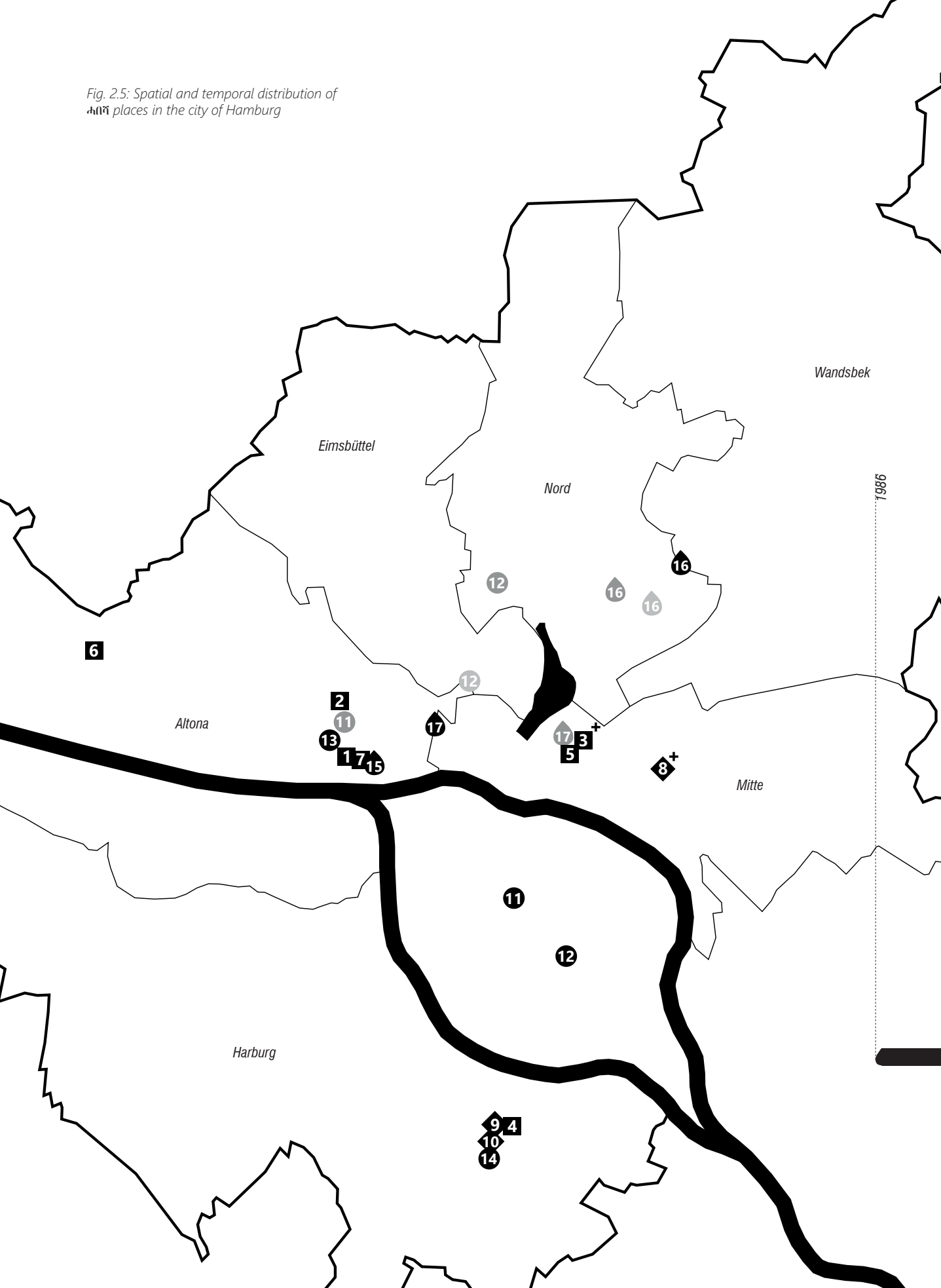
The survey of social, cultural and economic places in Hamburg that have been established by members of the ሓበሻ Community offers an overview of their spatial and temporal distribution which in turn provides information about the Community itself, their (im)material needs as well as their development through time. The survey encompasses restaurants, cafés and a bar; shops which are often combined with an additional function like a hair salon or a tailor; different Christian churches⁽⁷⁾; and non-profit associations which were founded by members of the Community offering educational as well as social activities and support including bureaucratic matters. Most of these places are frequented by members of the Community themselves except the restaurants which are visited by a large number of non-ሓበሻ visitors.

The spatial distribution of facilities shows a concentration in the Western district of 'Altona' as well as the area around the city centre. In several interviews the neighbourhood of 'Altona' as well as the area around 'Hauptbahnhof', the main station of Hamburg, were mentioned as important locations in the city for the ሓበሻ Community. This does not necessarily correlate with an accumulation of ሓበሻ residents: 27% of Eritrean residents in Hamburg are registered in the district of 'Wandsbek', followed by 17% in 'Altona', 16% in 'Mitte' and 14% in 'Harburg' (Statistikamt Nord 2020)⁽⁸⁾. The importance of the mentioned areas must thus be based on existing facilities as well as their strategic position as hubs of public transportation. Furthermore, smaller accumulations of ሓበሻ places can be found in more peripheral districts on the South side of Elbe River, such as 'Wilhelmsburg' and 'Harburg'. Both places are well connected to public transport as well.

The indicated removals (see grey numbers in Fig. 2.5) reveal that particularly social and non-profit institutions such as churches and associations are affected by unstable accommodation and temporary spatial arrangements. The Ethiopian Orthodox congregation, for instance, was forced to move numerous times in the first seven years after they had established:

"Wir hatten keinen eigenen Treffpunkt. Wir sind zu sieben oder acht verschiedenen Kirchengemeinden gegangen für Räumlichkeiten [...] Also das war wirklich sehr sehr kompliziert für uns. [Wie did not have our own meeting place. We went to seven or eight different parish churches for premises [...] This was really really complicated]" (Interview 1).

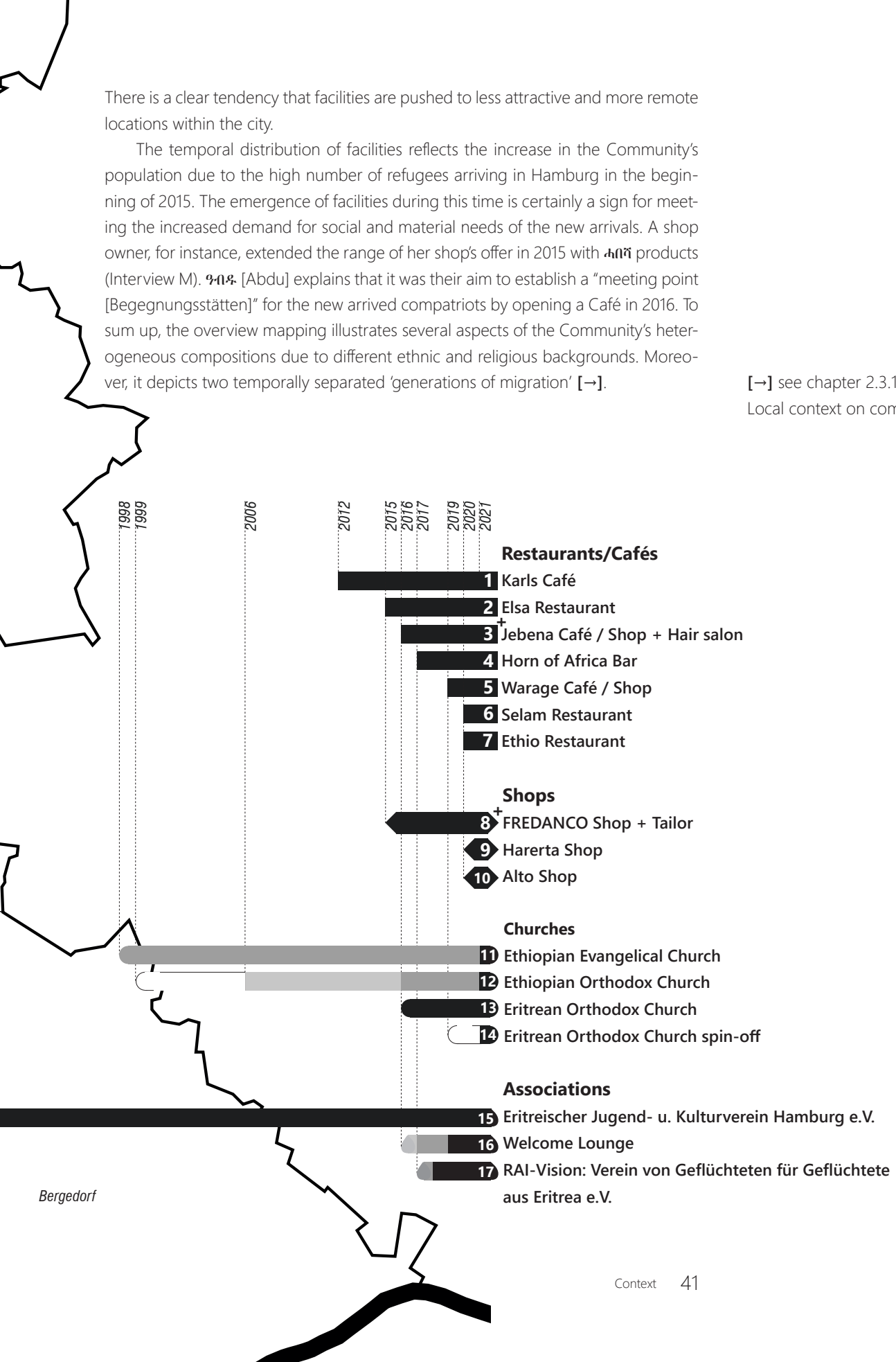
Fig. 2.5: Spatial and temporal distribution of **hifi** places in the city of Hamburg



There is a clear tendency that facilities are pushed to less attractive and more remote locations within the city.

The temporal distribution of facilities reflects the increase in the Community's population due to the high number of refugees arriving in Hamburg in the beginning of 2015. The emergence of facilities during this time is certainly a sign for meeting the increased demand for social and material needs of the new arrivals. A shop owner, for instance, extended the range of her shop's offer in 2015 with **ሐበሻ** products (Interview M). **ሓብዳ** [Abdu] explains that it was their aim to establish a "meeting point [Begegnungsstätten]" for the new arrived compatriots by opening a Café in 2016. To sum up, the overview mapping illustrates several aspects of the Community's heterogeneous compositions due to different ethnic and religious backgrounds. Moreover, it depicts two temporally separated 'generations of migration' [→].

[→] see chapter 2.3.1:
Local context on community





ካርልስ ምግብ ቤት/ቤት ምግብ

1 Karls Café und Weine

Keplerstraße 17a
22763 Hamburg



አልሳ ምግብ ቤት/ቤት ምግብ

2 Elsa Restaurant

Bahrenfelder Steindamm 99
22761 Hamburg



ጀበና ካፌ ትራቅ ት ደወንዶች ሀገር ቤት

ጀበና ካፌ ት ሹቅ ት ናይ ኣወዳት እንዳ ጨጉሪ

3 Jebena Café, Shop + Hair Salon

Lindenstraße 16
20099 Hamburg



ጉራጌ ካፌ ት ሹቅ / ሹቅ

5 Warage Café and Shop

Böckmannstraße 1
20099 Hamburg



ፍሬድንኮ ሐበሻ ሹቅ ት የልብስ ሰፊት

ፍሬድንኮ ሐበሻ ሹቅ ት ሰፋይ

8 FREDANCO Shop + Tailor

Kreuzbrook 17
20539 Hamburg

Fig. 2.6: Assembly of facades of ሐበሻ restaurants, cafés and shops



ሰላም ምግብ ቤት/ቤት ምግብ.

6 Selam Restaurant

Simrockstraße 186
22589 Hamburg



ኢትዮ ምግብ ቤት/ቤት ምግብ.

7 Ethio Restaurant

Rothestraße 38
22765 Hamburg



ካረርታ ካበሻ ሰቅ/ሾቅ

9 Harerta Shop

Großer Schippsee 20
21073 Hamburg



ኣልቶ ካበሻ ሰቅ/ሾቅ

10 Alto Shop

Harburger Rathausstraße 41
21073 Hamburg

Fig. 2.6: Assembly of facades of ሐበሻ churches and associations



የቤቴል ወንጌላዊት ቤተ ክርስቲያን

11 Ethiopian Evangelical Church

Weimarer Straße 10
21107 Hamburg

የኢትዮጵያ ኦርቶዶክስ ተዋሕዶ ቤተ ክርስቲያን

12 Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church

Wehrmannstraße 7
21109 Hamburg



ማሕበር ባህሉን መንእሰያትን ኤርትራውያን

የኤርትራ ወጣቶች የባህል ማዕከል

15 Eritreischer Jugend- und Kulturverein Hamburg e.V.

Eritrean youth and cultural association
Bahrenfelder Straße 7
22765 Hamburg



ሕብረተሰብአዊ ምክሮች በአማርኛ

ሕብረተሰባዊ ምክርታት ብትግሪኛ

16 Welcome Lounge

Schlicksweg 39
22307 Hamburg



ተዋህዶ ቤተ ክርስቲያን ኤርትራ

13 Eritrean Orthodox Tewahedo Church

Hohenzollernring 78a
22763 Hamburg



ራዕይ ማሕበር ካብ ናብ ኤርትራውያን ሰደተኞታት
ራዕይ የኤርትራ ሰደተኞቹ ማህበር

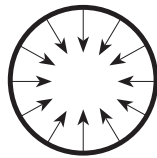
**17 RAI - Vision: Verein von Geflüchteten für
Geflüchtete aus Eritrea e.V.**

RAI - Vision: Association from refugees for refugees from Eritrea
Bernstorffstraße 118
22767 Hamburg

2.3.3 Diasporic urban spheres:

Domestic, communal, transactional

The overview of places that have been established throughout the years by **ሕዝብ** people in Hamburg provides insights into what types of urban spaces are central to a diasporic community in order to fulfil their material as well as socio-cultural needs. Since they do not coincide with the demands of the dominant surrounding society, the arrangements follow different rules which cannot be classified along common urban categories such as 'private' versus 'public'. Practices that, in another country's setting, are usually performed in the 'public' sphere get displaced to the 'private' home, a hair braiding business for instance. Or a church, which might have been a highly frequented public space for almost half of the country's population, turns into an exclusive place dedicated for and known by only a small number of people. The socio-cultural and economic practices of the Community are rather determined by what I call *domestic, communal and transactional sphere*.



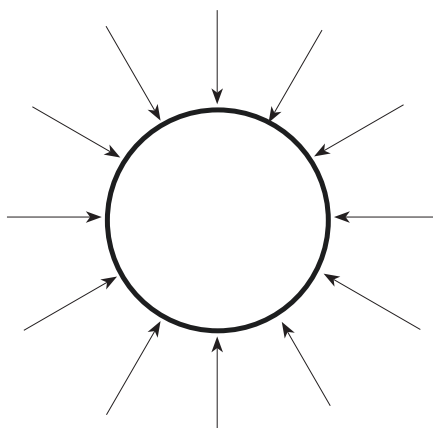
DOMESTIC SPHERE

The *domestic sphere* implies all places which do not appear on the spatio-temporal mapping but probably are the most important ones for the Community members: people's own four walls. They represent the most exclusive and restricted sphere since they are reserved for an individually selected group of people mostly consisting of close family and friends.

It represents the most protected sphere and thus functions as a safe space where neither form of explanation nor justification is required [→]. Nevertheless, in contrast to the common understanding of a private sphere, the diasporic home hosts highly sociable and economic practices, such as a coffee ceremony, a hair braiding business, or a traditional **ዕቁብ** [Equb]. By moving between the two poles of 'private' and 'public', the domestic sphere opens up the opportunity to accommodate a multitude of differentiated overlaying usages [→].

[→] see chapter 5.2:
Diasporic place-making

[→] see chapter 5.2:
Diasporic place-making

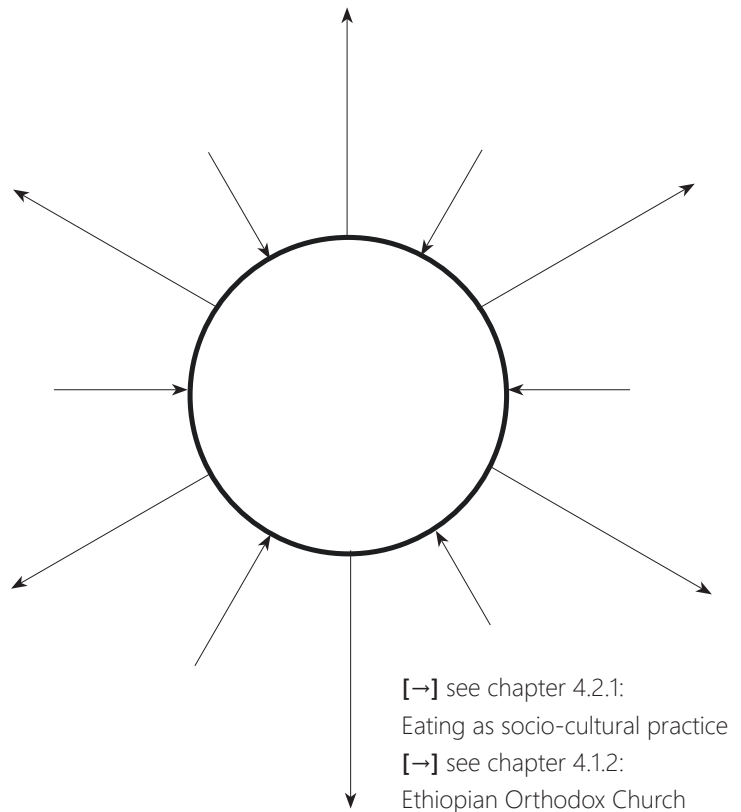


COMMUNAL SPHERE

The *communal sphere* encompasses places for gatherings of larger groups of people for certain social and cultural purposes. This could typically be a church of a particular denomination or non-profit associations. These places are characterized by a rather homogeneous group of people meeting on a regular basis because of strong similar needs, interests and motivations. These places are of great importance for the community's well-being since they create opportunities to meet and exchange with like-minded people. Similar to the domestic sphere they provide emotional refuge and support. But as much as they can undertake the role of catalysts for cohesion, (un)spoken rules of (not) belonging due to religion, language, ethnic background or political views can create exclusive spaces fostering social divide.

The *transactional sphere* describes places whose main functions are of economic nature. They are characterized by the incoming and outgoing of products and people as a basic necessity for the on-going performance of socio-cultural practices of the Community. Typical places for this sphere include shops, restaurants and hair salons. Compared to the other spheres, they are the ones with the highest fluctuation of people and probably the most accessible for people outside the Community. Therefore, they also function as meeting points enabling social exchange for the Community as well as for others. Besides the mapped places on the spatio-temporal survey, there exist numerous additional informal formats for the transaction of goods at people's homes, such as the transport of spices between countries through acquaintance [→], as well as in the communal sphere, a shop in the basement of a church for instance [→].

The preceding descriptions show that a conclusive allocation of places to respective spheres is not always possible due to the simultaneity of different activities the places host. Even though typical places for each of the spheres might be assigned, all above mentioned places fulfil more than one of the sphere's characteristics. This reflects the complexity of multiple, overlaying uses and functions of diasporic spaces in the city. They conflate distinctive categories such as 'domestic, communal and transactional', 'private and public' as well as 'local and global' which will be further elaborated in the following chapters of empirical analysis and the theory-based discussion.



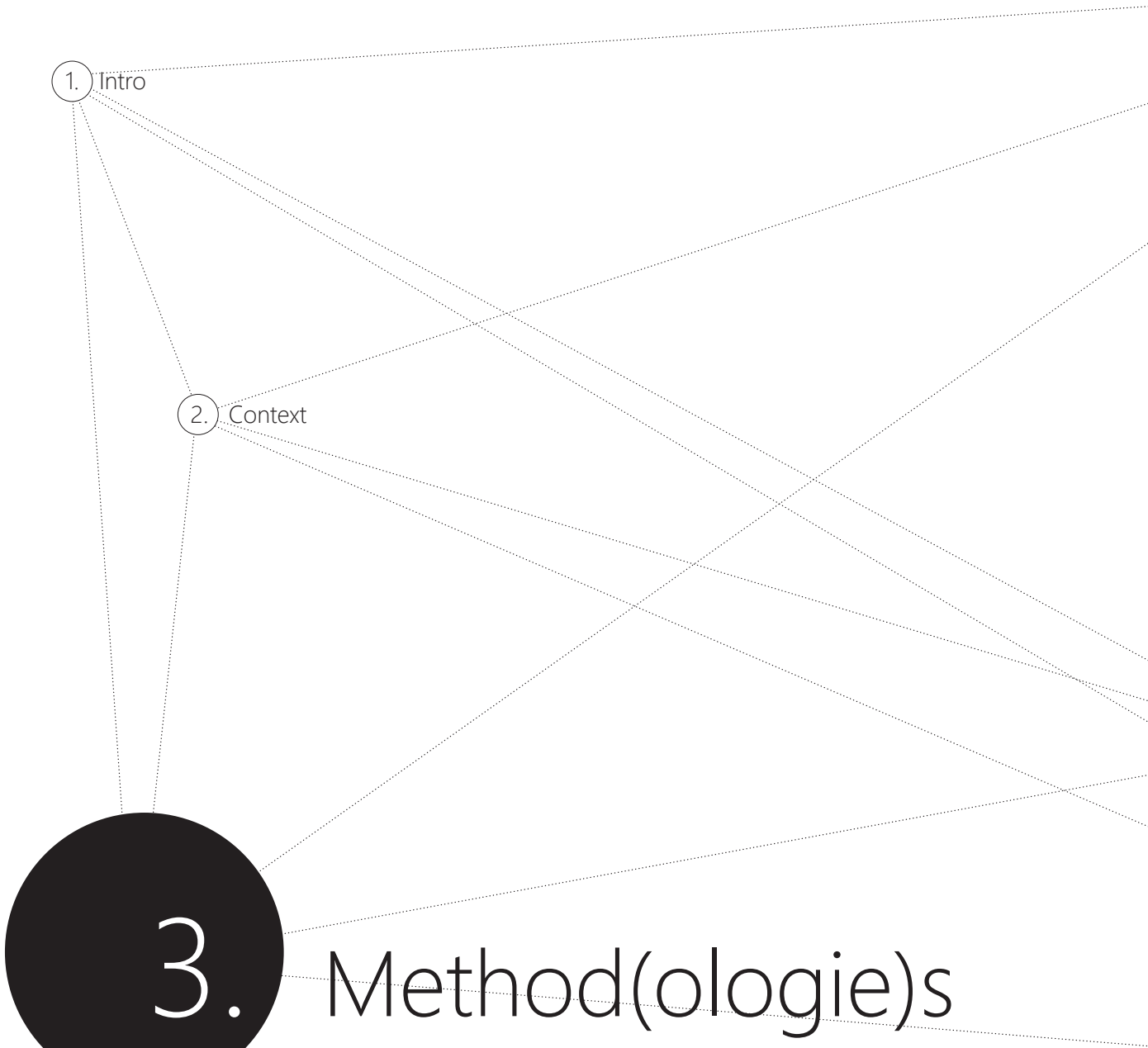
TRANSACTIONAL SPHERE

1. Intro

2. Context



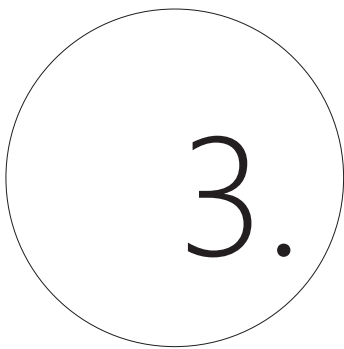
Method(ologie)s



4. Empirical Analysis

5. Discussion

6. Outro



Method(ologie)s

3.1 Method selection and application – Crossing disciplinary boundaries

3.2 Research process – Inductive and iterative reasoning

Subsequent to the social and spatial contextualization of the ሕዝብ [Habesha] Community in Hamburg, the method(ological) chapter introduces the procedure of my empirical analysis. It elaborates on the selection of methods in collecting, documenting and evaluating the data explaining the chosen tools and their application. The description of the research process reflects its characteristics in retrospect.

3.1 Method selection and application – Crossing disciplinary boundaries

The choice of methods shall reflect the multi- and interdisciplinary approach of Urban Design (Dell et al. 2017) as well as a fundamental understanding that considers (urban) space not as three-dimensional material container but as socially constructed (Lefebvre 1991). Hereby, disciplinary boundaries shall be crossed in combining architectural as well as qualitative sociological and anthropological methods. With my disciplinary background in architecture, my view on the research field focuses on spatial arrangements and details. Yet, the in depth analysis of materialities will be complemented by observed embodied practices and narrated knowledge. Thus, I consider and interweave different qualities of information in order to represent the manifold dimensions that constitute the urban reality of the ሓበቻ Community in Hamburg. I will show circumstances of small-scale place-making, encompassing the adaption and appropriation of places considering material and performative aspects, as well as their embeddedness in the city context. Hereby, I take a close look at the interplay of the locality and its integration in translocal cross-scale networks, in accordance with Smith who states that “[...] a fruitful approach for research on transnational urbanism would start with an analysis of sociocultural, political and economic networks situated in the social space of the city” (2001:174). The empirical data gathered will be analysed regarding local and translocal, social and spatial, visible and invisible aspects of diasporic socio-cultural and economic practices. Thus, my aim is to create a multi-faceted representation of the research field, though this can only remain an attempt to capture its full complexity.

Open data collection

As entry to the research field, I started my data collection with the spatio-temporal survey of existing places created by people from the ሓበቻ Community in the city of Hamburg [→]. Throughout the whole research process the overview was continually extended and completed, by information gathered in official as well as unofficial conversations with members of the Community. On this basis, I gradually selected interview partners from within the Community who are currently actively involved in the creation, usage and maintenance of ሓበቻ places in Hamburg, and who were willing to talk to me after I explained my intentions. The final group of ten interviewed people included shop and restaurant owners, members of different church congregations and association's founders, comprising descendants of both nationalities (4 Ethiopians, 6 Eritreans), different age groups (6 persons between 20 – 40 years, 4 persons between 40 – 70 years), both gender (3 female, 7 male) and a broad range of biographical backgrounds and professions [→]. Eight out of ten interviews were carried out in person, usually at the place that was subject of the conversation, in accordance with Corona regulations; two interviews were carried out on the phone. Six main interviews were completely transcribed, one was documented in a verbatim of memory, because the interviewee did not consent to the recording, and three interviews were partially transcribed for missing information.

[→] see chapter 2.3.2

[→] see chapter 2.3.1:
Local context on community

During the interviews my main aim was to motivate the interviewees to share their knowledge and experiences in their own ways inspired by the concept of 'narrative interviews' (Schütze 1983), which is dominated by an invitation for narration and by listening actively (Hopf 2007:352). The outline of the interview was guided by open, narrative-generating questions and subordinate key points that I expected to be covered with the question, which I prepared in advance. The main structure follows the logic of spatial scales asking for aspects of local place-making, Community places in the city and translocal links. Questions related to social aspects of the Community and notions of identity were supposed to invite the interviewees to share stories that they considered important for them personally. Despite a similar guideline, the course of the interviews varied greatly regarding the order of questions during the interview, the number of questions and their degree of specificity, as well as the overall scope. In some interviews the free narration was inhibited by partial insecurities on the side of the interviewee about the relevance of the shared information because it was considered as banal; as well as language barriers on both sides, which sometimes led me to put words into the mouth of the interviewee that he or she would not have used otherwise.

Focused data collection

The spatio-temporal overview as well as knowledge from my interviews allowed me to identify relevant places and activities for ለብሽጭ people in the city which I then categorized according to three superordinate 'spheres' representing major characteristics of diasporic urban life [→]. In order to approach the complexity of the research field I, subsequently, chose three case studies, each of them representing one of the spheres as focal points for my empirical analysis. These are places of every-day socio-cultural or economic activities from which diasporic agency can be traced on different scales: a café, a church and a home place [→]. For each of the cases, the information gathered from an interview with a key actor was complemented by a 'thick participation' (Spittler 2001), which was conducted simultaneously or successively at another day. According to Spittler, a thick participation implies "[...] apprenticeship and practice, natural conversation and observation, lived experience and sensuous research" (2001:1). In my case, this meant observing the activities happening in a place while actively taking part in them; for instance, as consumer in the café place, as participant of a church service or a guest at a private gathering at someone's home. This involved leading conversations with different people, listening to conversations, being attentive to gestures, tastes, sounds and odours and last but not least observing myself, my role in the events as well as my arising emotions. The sensory experiences I took into particular account since they play an important role for the performance of socio-cultural practices. In addition, I took pictures, after asking for permission, that helped me to remember the situations and as basis for drawings later on.

[→] see chapter 2.3.3

[→] see chapter 4.1



The challenge is to develop an optic and a language capable of representing the complexity of transnational connections, the dynamics of cross-border networks, and the shifting spatial scales at which agency takes place.

Smith (2001:174)

Data documentation

The information on local place-making activities of the Community is visually represented in mappings on various scales and degrees of detail. Besides the spatio-temporal overview on city-scale, the three chosen case studies were documented and transferred to paraphrased condensed retellings of the interviews, scaled 'enlivened' architectural drawings depicting the spatial and material constitution of the place as well as the observed activities including sounds and odours. The method of 'Architectural Ethnography' (Kajijima et al. 2018) explores the hybrid representation of standard architectural drawings and the appropriation of space by its users. Similar to Nishat Awan, who researches on 'mapping otherwise' by inventing 'diasporic diagrams', I tried to create "[...] situated maps that are embodied and performed" (Awan 2011:121) moving beyond traditional cartography. Textual documentations in the form of thick descriptions reflecting sensual and emotional experiences underpin the representation of spaces and help bring them to life.

For the analysis of the Community's translocal activities my aim was to develop, what Smith phrases as, "[...] an optic and a language capable of representing the complexity of transnational connections, the dynamics of cross-border networks, and the shifting spatial scales at which agency takes place" (2001:174). I approach this task by following the idea of the 'Actor-Network-Theory', which traces human and non-human actors and the networks they establish. It highlights aspects which are central characteristics of diasporic realities such as 'heterogeneity' and 'inter-objectivity' (Latour 1996:380). Network drawings originating from the three case study localities in Hamburg represent the existing (trans)local connections in terms of people, information, goods and money on different scales. The connections of the networks are qualified by explanations or direct citations of the interviewees.

Based on the empirical data from the three case studies, selected socio-cultural and economic practices were extracted from the abundance of material and are presented in a compact catalogue [→]. Their cultural significance and (trans)local embeddedness are further elaborated since they constitute the central element of my research question.

[→] see chapter 4.2

Data evaluation

An open coding of the main interviews was the starting point of the data evaluation process. Hereby, many 'In-vivo-Codes' (Böhm 2007:478) were used, including 'native' words which reappeared frequently throughout the research process [→]. Through several rounds of reading and coding of the graphical and textual analysis, code families were assembled revolving around key thematic categories such as 'socio-cultural and economic practices', 'notions of identity and home', as well as challenges and strategies in the Community's organization and place-making. The latter were rearranged and condensed to conclusive findings that are discussed and contextualized in the last chapter consulting suiting theoretical concepts [→].

[→] see Glossary

[→] see chapter 5: Discussion

3.2 Research process – Inductive and iterative reasoning

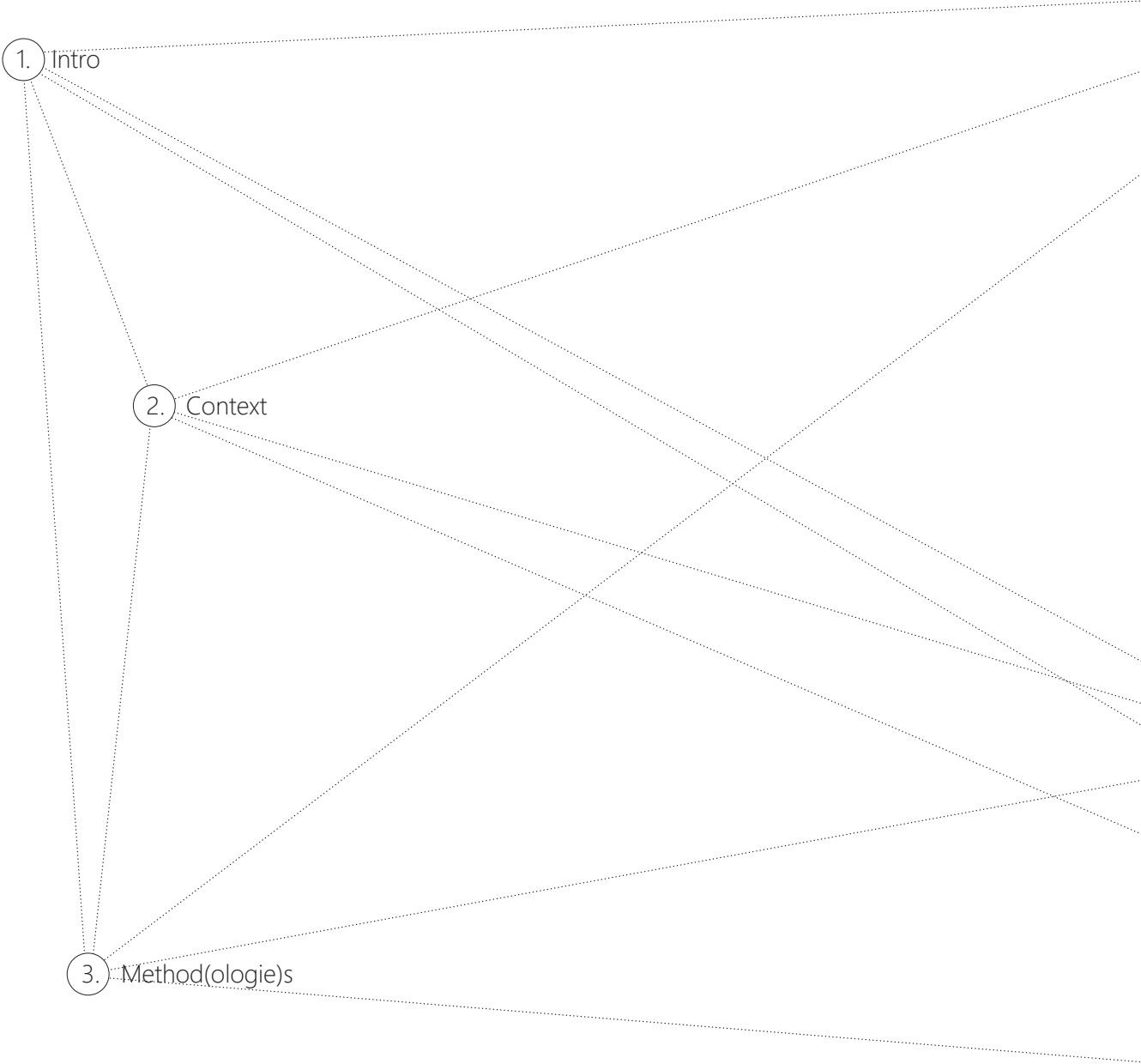
The research is strongly characterized by its inductive reasoning. By following the empirical based and theory generating approach of the 'Grounded Theory' (Corbin & Strauss 1996), I took the research field as starting point for my analysis in order to develop significant and generalizable findings. Theoretical concepts do not get reviewed in the beginning in order to be proved empirically. Instead, the decision on the theoretical framework was placed after the evaluation of the empirical data and was used to back up the empirical findings as the research's completion. For the grounded approach characteristic iterative loops of data collection, evaluation, verification and recollection guided me through the research process. In doing so, interim findings pointed out the further direction of research and main focus points and thematic categories emerged along the way.

In a first step, my aim was to gain an overview of the theoretical and empirical scope the chosen topic opened up. An extensive yet superficial literature review in the very beginning allowed me to become acquainted with related theoretical concepts. Keeping them in the back of my mind, I fully dedicated myself to the field research, collecting and evaluating data. Preliminary findings after a first and open data evaluation were supplemented and verified in an additional round of empirical data collection. Finally, the conclusive findings were interweaved with selected supportive theory and rearranged according to the major outcomes of the research interest.

1. Intro

2. Context

3. Method(ologie)s





4.

Empirical Analysis

5. Discussion

6. Outro

4.1 Tracing and mapping diasporic agencies

The empirical analysis is focused on three case studies, each representing one diasporic urban sphere, from which (trans)local diasporic agencies can be uncovered: The **ጃቤና** [Jebena] Café as part of the transactional sphere, the Ethiopian Orthodox Church as part of the communal sphere, and **ሉዋም** [Luwam]'s home as part of the domestic sphere.

On the one hand, my aim is to understand how the Community embeds their socio-cultural and economic practices in the local urban context by analysing their place-making activities: How are the selected urban places used and appropriated? How are practices performed bodily and sensually? On the other hand, my aim is to trace less tangible translocal links and references originating from the situated localities: What kinds of connections exist between the local place and other places within and beyond national and continental borders? How are flows of people, information, goods and money organized? These questions shall be answered via multi-faceted textual and graphical portraits of the three case studies.

4.

Empirical Analysis

- 4.1 Tracing and mapping diasporic agencies
 - 4.1.1 **ጆባና** [Jebena] Café
 - 4.1.2 Ethiopian Orthodox Church
 - 4.1.3 **ሉዋም** [Luwam]'s Home
- 4.2 Cataloguing socio-cultural and economic practices
 - 4.2.1 Eating
 - 4.2.2 Preparing coffee
 - 4.2.3 Dressing traditionally
 - 4.2.4 Styling hair
 - 4.2.5 Playing music and dancing

Case Study 1

ጅብና [Jebena] Café



SÖRDEL & BUNSEN

Gerüstbau GmbH

Rosenstraße 11 · 19077 Rastow OT Fahrbinde

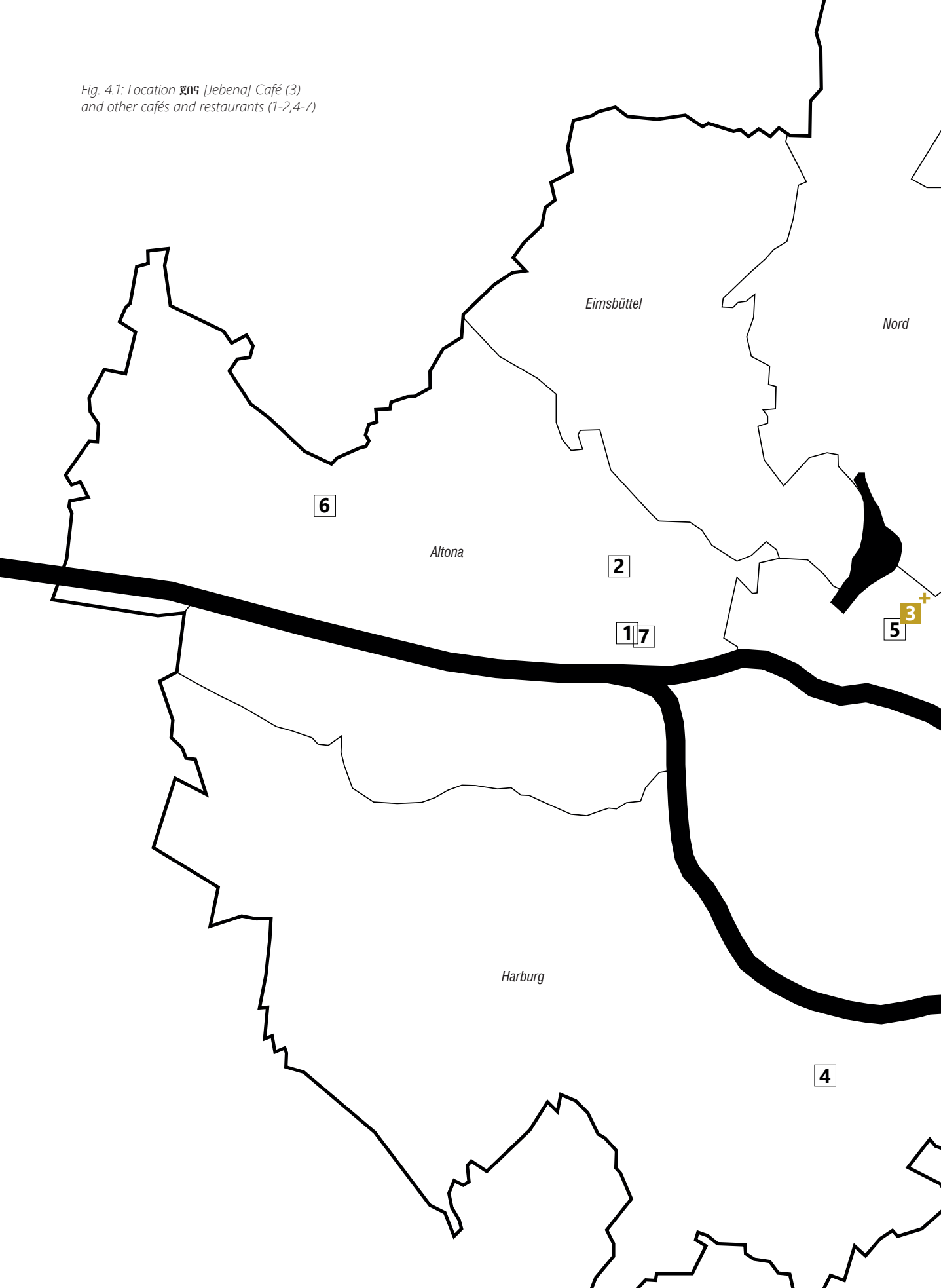
☎ 038753 - 8300

www.sb-geruestbau.de

• JEBENA •
- CAFE -



Fig. 4.1: Location of [Jebena] Café (3) and other cafés and restaurants (1-2,4-7)





Wandsbek

Mitte

Bergedorf

The **ጃቡና** [Jebena] Café is located in the inner-city of Hamburg, in ten minutes walking distance to 'HBF' and 'ZOB', the main train and bus station, as well as public spaces such as 'Hansa-Platz', 'Lohmühlenpark' and the 'Alster' lakeside. The surrounding is a densely built, mixed-used quarter including dwellings, small and big scale commercial uses as well as institutions such as the University of Applied Science (HAW). The Café is part of a heterogeneous perimeter block and is accessed from a side road which connects two main transport axes. It is situated in the raised ground floor; the sidewalk and a narrow parking strip with trees represent a buffer zone towards the street.



Alster

Lohnmühlpark

Steindamm

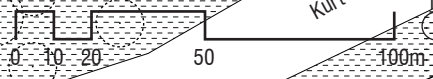
Linderstraße

HBF

Hansa-Platz

ZOB

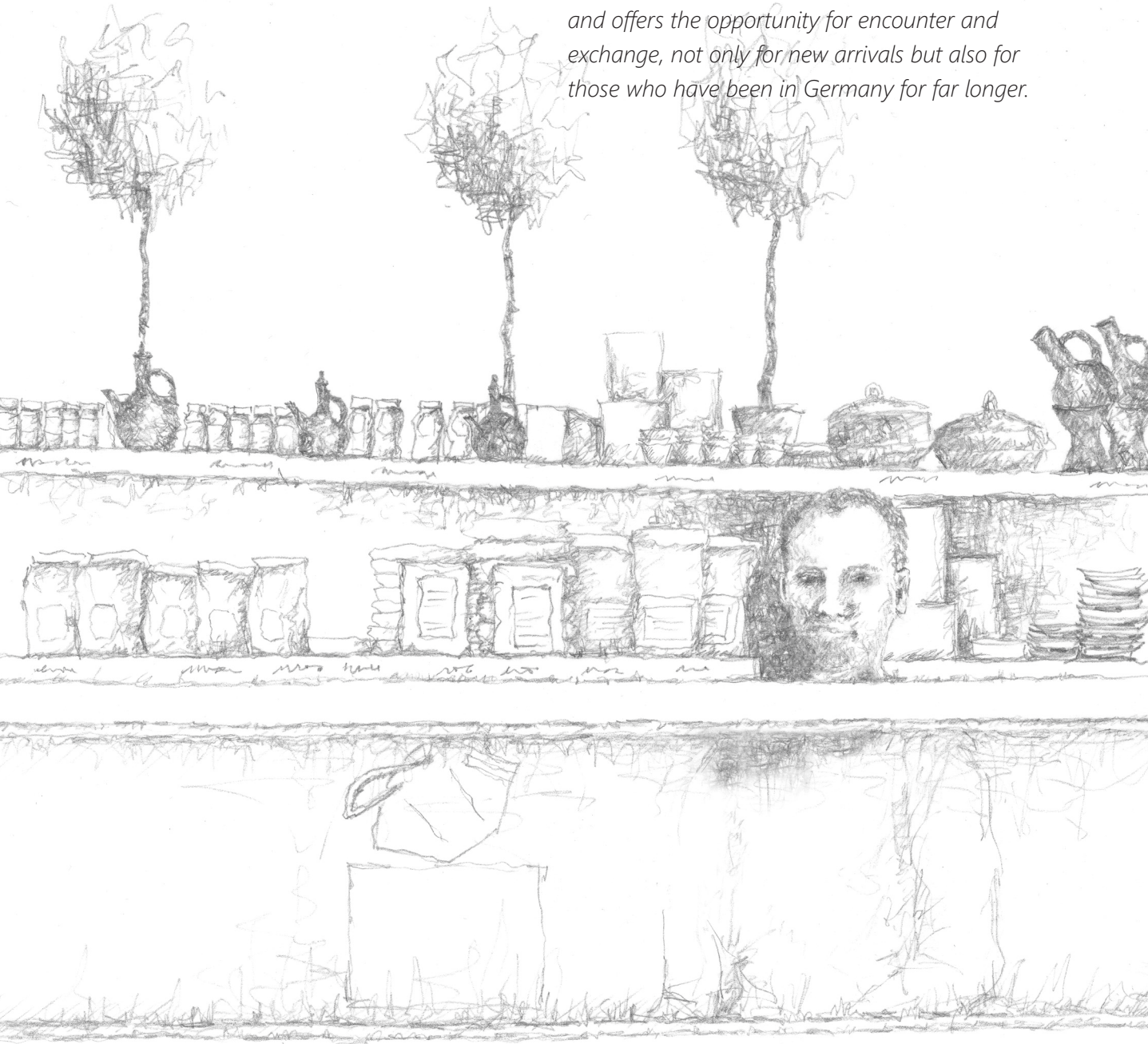
Kurt-Schumacher-Allee



ዓብዱ [Abdu] opened the ጃቤና [Jebena] Café in the beginning of 2016 together with his brother and cousins. At that time the supply of public locations for the ሓበሻ [Habesha] Community in Hamburg was very low. Since he and his family had been in Germany for more than thirty years back then, they felt responsible for providing a meeting point for the high number of recently arriving compatriots. Even though renting a place outside the city centre would have been cheaper they decided to open a Café in a central location in order to reach more people who hung out in public places nearby. Because the place had been in a bad condition, he and his family invested a lot of time and money for renovation. Besides selling portafilter coffee, imported products, ranging from food supply like different sorts of flours, spices and unroasted Sidamo coffee to traditional cooking utensils like the ጃቤና, can be purchased. In the basement a small room is arranged as a hair salon for men. In pre-corona times the rear part used to be a small restaurant for Habesha food with few tables, but nowadays the space temporarily serves as extension for the hair salon. Some walk-in customers grab coffee or bottled drinks on the way; the majority of clients are male Eritreans who come for a haircut, buy local food products, or just drink coffee and have a chat with their friends.

According to ዓብዱ, the Café serves, until today, as a social platform [Begegnungsstätte] and offers the opportunity for encounter and exchange, not only for new arrivals but also for those who have been in Germany for far longer. He emphasizes that, in contrast to other places, all members of the community are welcomed here regardless of their religious or ethnic backgrounds. In his opinion there are not enough places which allow for mutual exchange and support within the community. Looking at other international communities, the communication and networking activities could be improved for instance by founding an association welcoming all members of the community. The positive social impact of ጃቤና Café convinces the owners to continue the business even though it is not profitable for them, particularly in times of Corona restrictions.

“ According to አብዱ [Abdu], the Café serves, until today, as a social platform [Begegnungsstätte] and offers the opportunity for encounter and exchange, not only for new arrivals but also for those who have been in Germany for far longer.



አብዱ [Abdu]

is a partial owner of the አብዱ [Jebena] Café, a coffee place, restaurant, shop and hair salon for men.

The big glass front of the Café facing the street is covered with a translucent foil depicting a traditional Eritrean and Ethiopian coffee pot, **ጸባና**, giving the Café its name. Around the image the Café's name is written in German, **ቲግሪኛ** [Tigrigna] and Arabic. In front of the stairs leading to the entrance, on a small strip between sidewalk and street next to parking cars, three people are sitting on temporarily arranged chairs in the shade of a big tree and chat holding coffee cups or bottled water in their hands. When entering the narrow space the first thing to see is a counter with a row of shelves in the back that are packed with a variety of small-scale products. One quickly notices that the place's function has been changed recently since chairs and tables have been temporarily pushed to the side, in the front as well as in the back. Due to Corona the place no longer invites its visitors to linger; instead, the space is bustling with the coming and going of guests. The only stable point is the staff behind the counter who calmly carries out all the required tasks.

From time to time mostly young, male Eritrean guests walk in and greet the people in the room in German or **ቲግሪኛ**. Some either buy coffee or water to go at the counter, others walk through to the back part or the basement in order to get a haircut right away or wait for their turn. The medical mask and the background noises make it hard to lead a relaxed conversation. The whir of the razors from the back mix with the rush of the milk frother in the front and the **ቲግሪኛ** music, which is played via youtube on the TV hanging on the wall.

There are only two non-Eritrean customers I encounter during my stay. The first one is a man asking the owner to fill his empty bottle with tap water. The latter quickly gives up trying to convince the guest to buy bottled water for one euro and resignedly fills his bottle. One can see that this is not the first time he was doing this today. Shortly after, another customer enters in order to buy a Latte Macchiato to go. After noticing us, he quickly joins our conversation and, without being asked, shares his expertise on the African continent. After having visited different countries, he explains to us that the serious character of an Ethiopian is quite different from that of an ordinary joyful African. The owner kindly waves him off giving me a meaningful smile. I shake my head in disbelief and try to imagine the rich variety of encounters one must have accumulated here over the years.

(Description of thick participation on June 18, 2021)

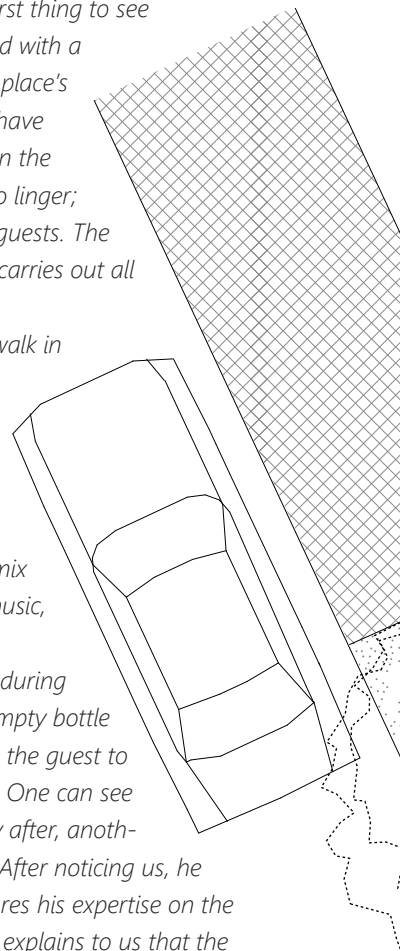
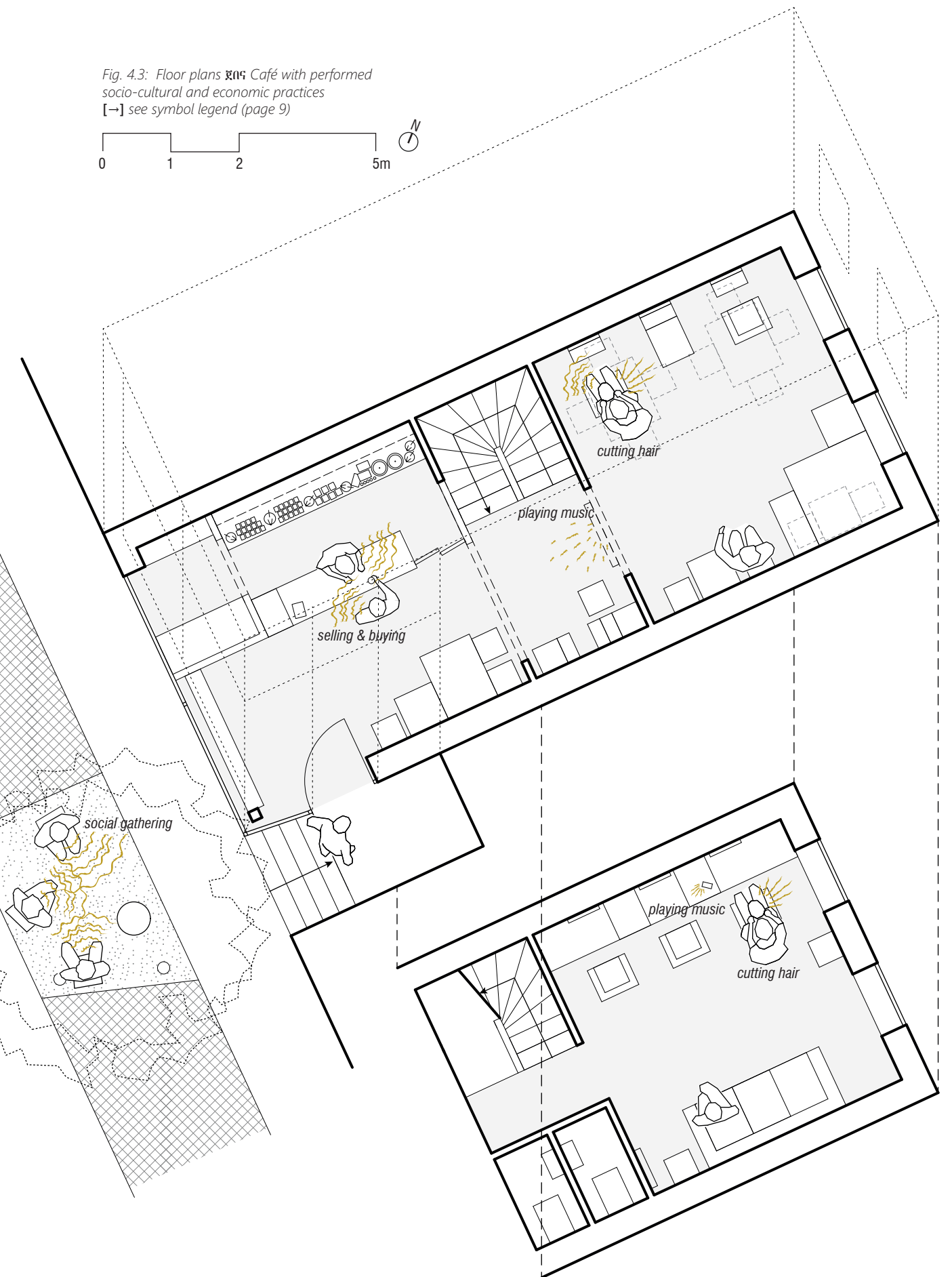
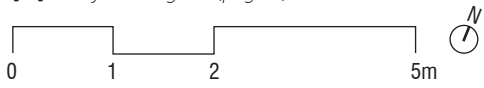


Fig. 4.3: Floor plans of Café with performed socio-cultural and economic practices
[→] see symbol legend (page 9)



WORLD

HAMBURG

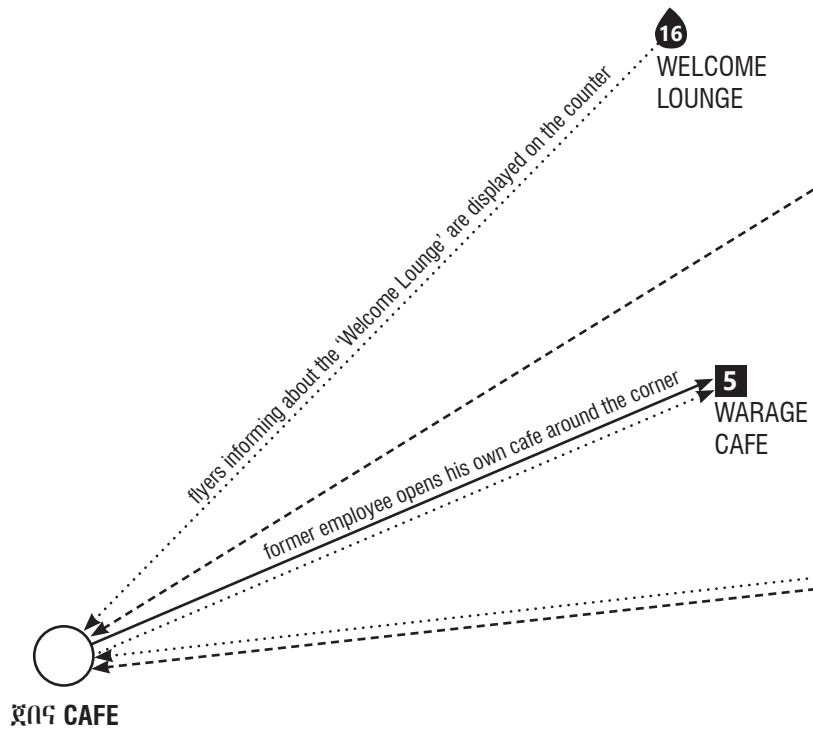


Fig. 4.4: (Trans)local links of Café
[→] see symbol legend (page 9)

the products for sale get imported from Ethiopia by a private company

● ETHIOPIA

Tigrigna music from youtube is played on the screen hanging on the wall

decoration with traditional motifs from Eritrea

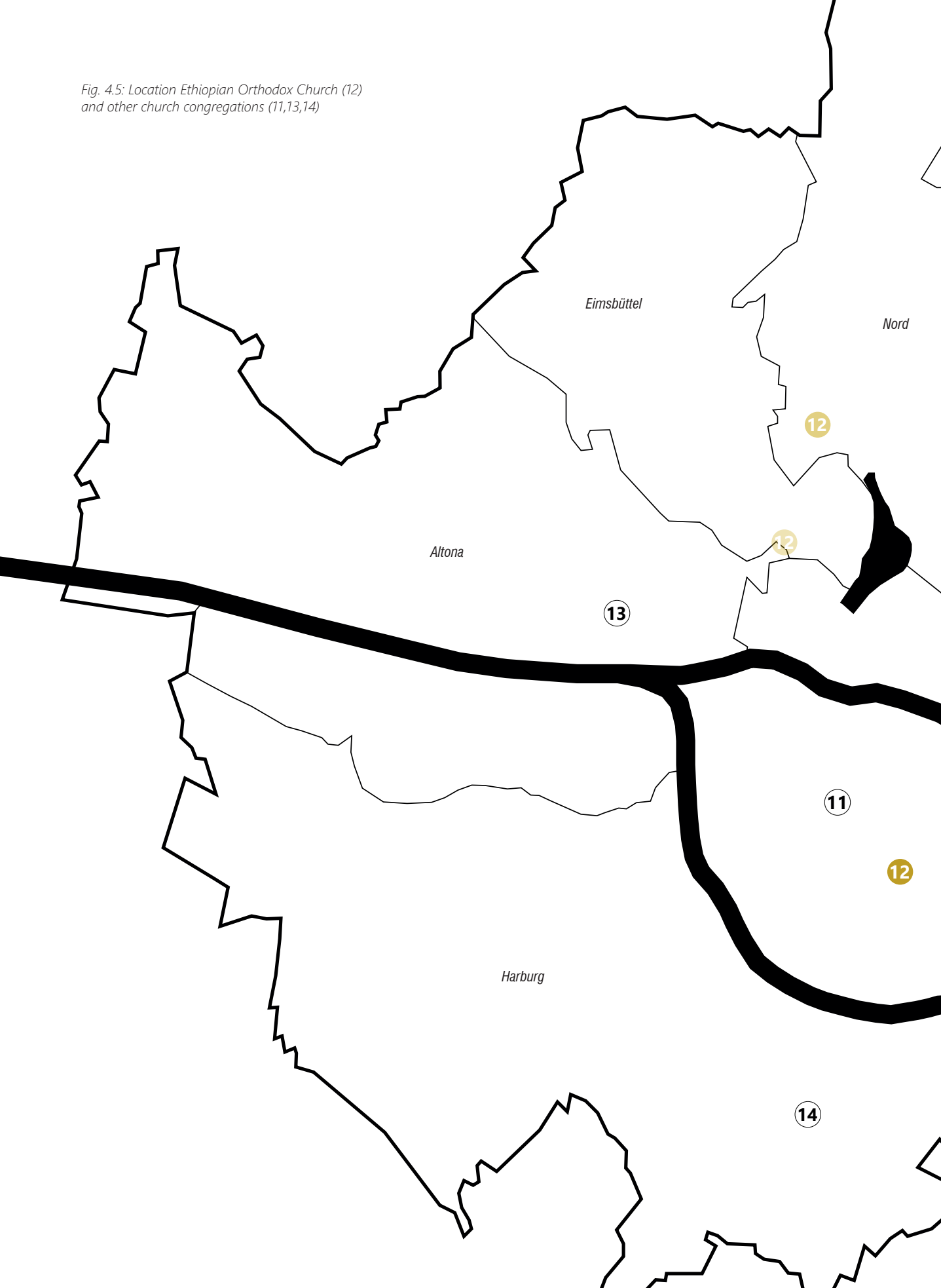
● ERITREA

Case Study 2

Ethiopian Orthodox Church



Fig. 4.5: Location Ethiopian Orthodox Church (12) and other church congregations (11,13,14)



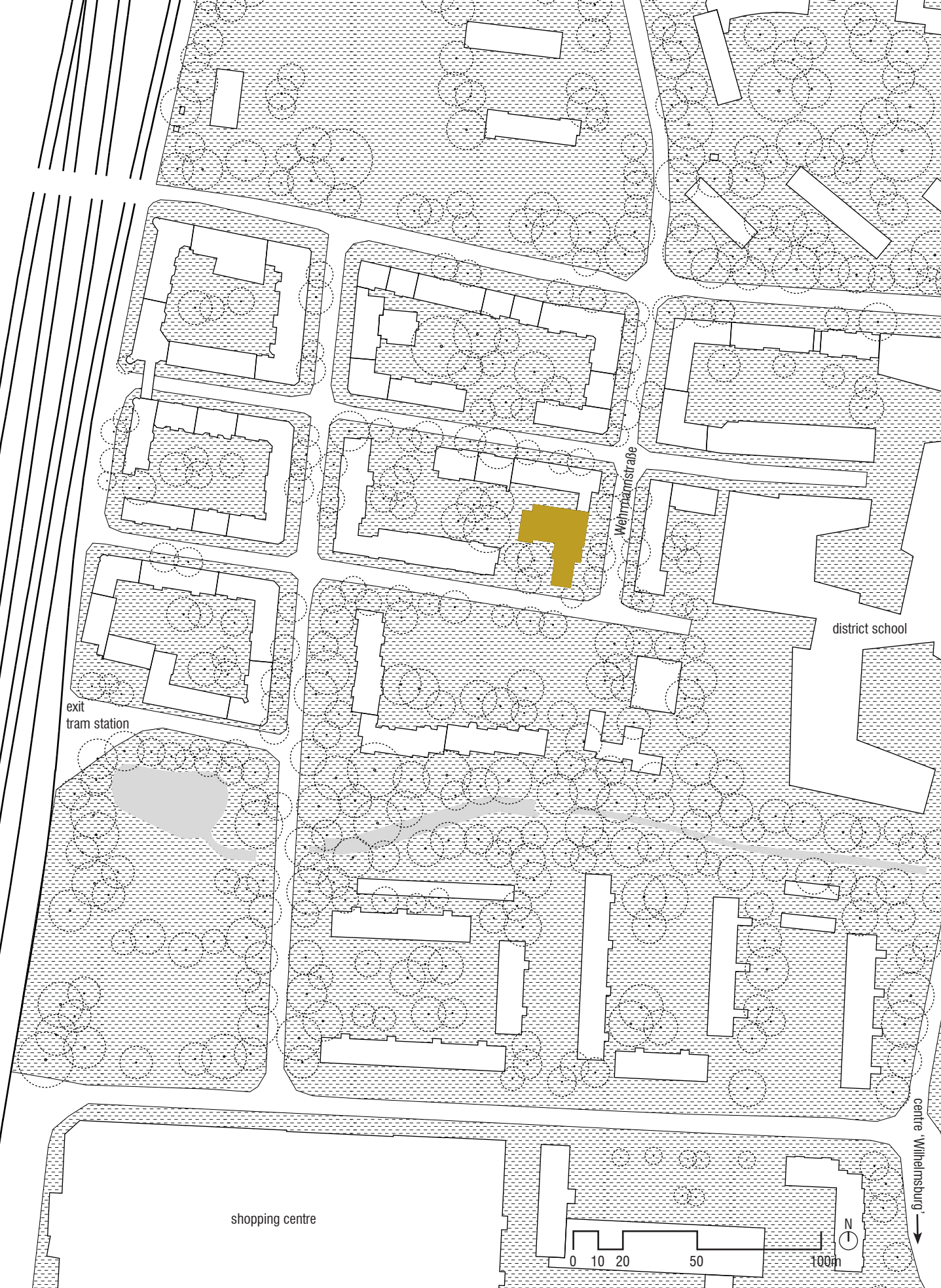


Wandsbek

Mitte

Bergedorf

The church building is located in 'Wilhelmsburg', an island between the two arms of Elbe river, and in five minutes walking distance to the eponymous tram station, which offers a connection to the main station and transportation hub in ten minutes. The neighbourhood is characterized by small scale and larger scale residential buildings, next to a commercial centre and a district school, and green recreational areas including water bodies. The area around the church is designated for 'Integrated Urban District Development [Fördergebiet der Integrierten Stadtteilentwicklung]' since 2019 and will be redeveloped in the upcoming years based on designs from an 'urban and open space planning workshop procedure [städtebaulich-freiraumplanerisches Werkstattverfahren]' held at the end of 2020 (Bezirksamt Hamburg Mitte 2021). In an evaluation report on the area's potentials and problems published by the district's 'Department for City and Landscape Planning [Fachamt Stadt- und Landschaftsplanung des Bezirksamts Hamburg Mitte]' in 2019, a "special need for development and support due to the weak socio-economic situation that has persisted for many years" is constituted, which is traced back, inter alia, on the "high proportion of population with migration background", as well as the "bad image and difficult housing conditions in the recent past" (ibid.:52).

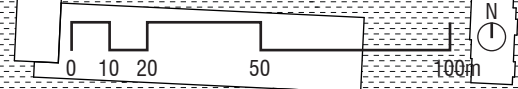


exit tram station

Wehmannstraße

district school

shopping centre

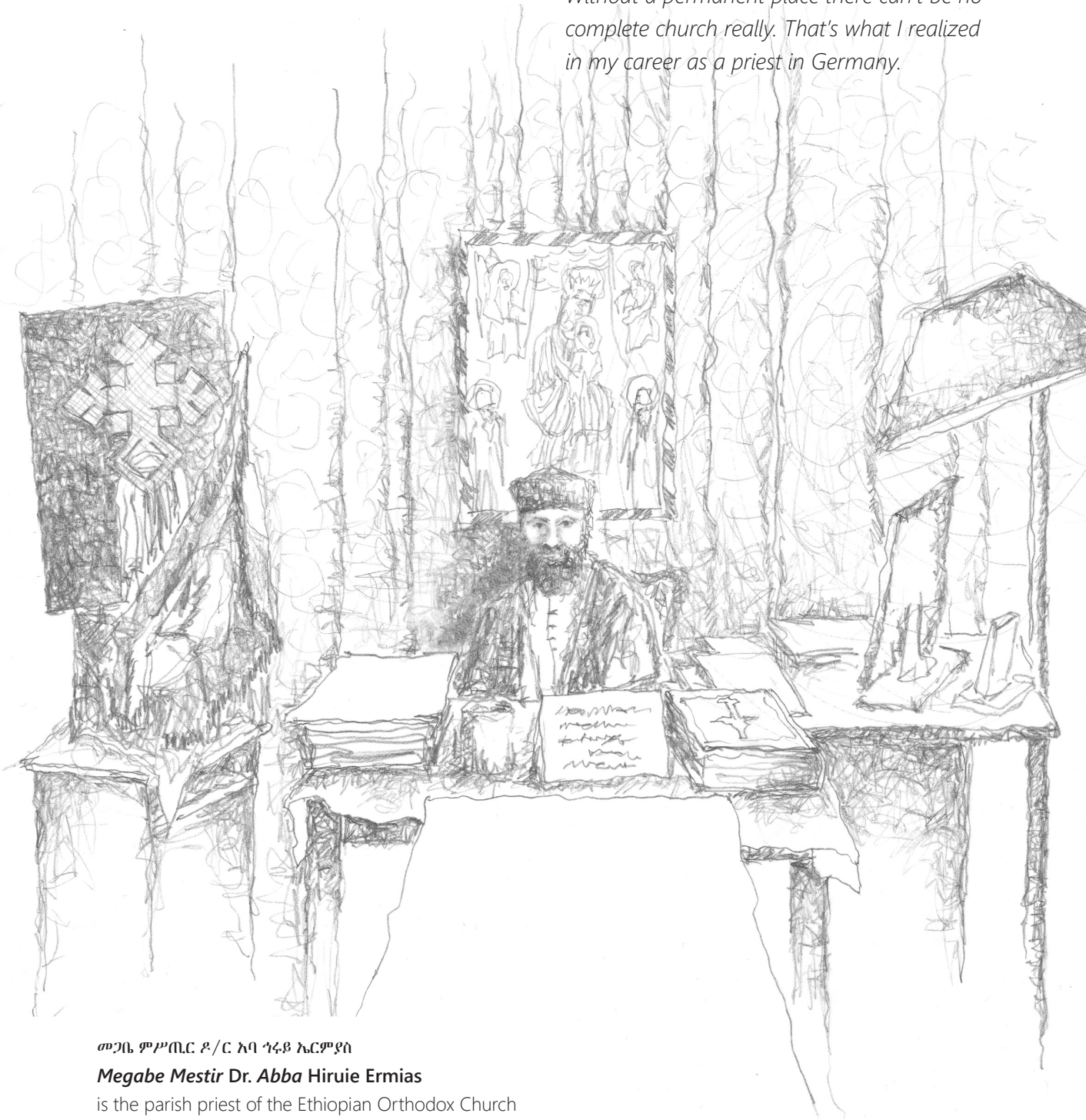


centre 'Wilhelmsburg'

The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church in Hamburg was officially inaugurated in 2010 but has been existing since 1999. አባ ገፋይ [Abba Hiruie] joined the church in 2013 and is their main parish priest for four years now. After finishing his PhD in Ethiopian Studies at the 'Hiob Ludolf Centre for Ethiopian and Eritrean Studies' of the University of Hamburg in 2019, he serves the congregation in Hamburg as well as in Kassel as a regular priest and fully devotes his time for church related activities. The present congregation consists of one hundred families as registered members and additional frequent visitors. The members gather every Sunday to celebrate the liturgy starting in early morning hours until midday. The remaining days of the week the church doors remain open during daytime for individual visitors. In addition, the church members meet for the celebration of annual feasts. Some of them are celebrated with processions in public space by blocking streets in the city. አባ ገፋይ supports the culture's visibility in the urban space: "Is it not a good chance to see the Ethiopian tradition without making flights to Ethiopia?" Besides the religious activities, አባ ገፋይ emphasizes the important role of the church in social engagement for disadvantaged people of the Habesha Community in Hamburg and the need to apply for public funds in order to be able to continue this work: "We bought a car to visit people from house to house, from hospital to hospital, from 'Altenheim' [retirement home] to 'Altenheim'. [...] Everybody expects some helps from the church in addition to the spiritual services. Not only the liturgy or the preaching of gospel... this is not enough."

Since its existence the Ethiopian Orthodox Church owns no permanent place for their activities and thus was forced to move several times using premises of close to ten different local churches on an interim basis. In the beginning of 2021, after one and a half years of negotiation, they started using the premises of St.-Raphael-Church in 'Wilhelmsburg'. Since the Protestant-Lutheran congregation of the local German parish has been shrinking in the past years, one out of two existing church buildings became redundant. The Ethiopian Orthodox church received a contract for an interim use for a limited time of five years and has to come up only for all operating costs. The further procedure is still unclear since the district's 'Department for City and Landscape Planning [Fachamt Stadt- und Landschaftsplanung des Bezirksamts Hamburg Mitte]' plans to redevelop the area in the upcoming years. አባ ገፋይ emphasizes the negative implications of having no long-term perspective and planning security for the congregation: "Without a permanent place there can't be no complete church really. That's what I realized in my career as a priest in Germany. [...] because if the pastor wants to kick [us] out, then he has a full right. He needs only to call. [...] We have many times suffered of such problems. No security, no stability. We don't have right. Our stay depends on the will and the goodness of the pastor. That's why... if we want to have a church in Hamburg, we should fight, we should sacrifice to have a permanent place." Since moving into the St.-Raphael-Church, the members of the congregation arranged the existing spatial setting of the Protestant church building for their purposes: "We had to make the church look like our church. So that's why we decided to rebuild some stuffs, some elements. [...] Whenever I get to the church I feel like I am inside Bole Medhane Alem [Ethiopian Orthodox cathedral in Addis Ababa]. I am very satisfied."

“ We had to make the church look like our church. So that's why we decided to rebuild some stuffs, some elements. [...] Without a permanent place there can't be no complete church really. That's what I realized in my career as a priest in Germany.



መጋቤ ምኞጢር ዶ/ር አባ ኅፋይ ኤርምያስ

Megabe Mestir Dr. Abba Hiruie Ermias

is the parish priest of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church which moved into the premises of St.-Raphael-Church in Wilhelmsburg in the beginning of 2021.

The St. Raphael Church in Wilhelmsburg, built in the middle of the 20th century, is a typical North-German brick church. It comprises of a nave covered by a simple saddleback, an adjacent rectangular tower and a two-storied parish hall. Besides the main hall for church services, the building complex holds different functions which are important for the Ethiopian Orthodox Church congregation. Besides the main hall for church services, the basement offers room for gatherings, a mini library, a shop for church utensils, a small kitchen and a room that can be used as workshop in the future. The parish building hosts an apartment for refugees, a small and open secretariat at the entrance, the priest's office and a room for administrative matters. The priest's modest one-room apartment as well as guest rooms can be found in the thirty meters high bell tower.

Despite the Corona restrictions for the services, አባ ኅዳይ [Abba Hiruie] is very satisfied with the current spatial circumstances of the Ethiopian Orthodox congregation in 'Wilhelmsburg' and wishes to be able to continue like this: "To be honest... this place, this church, this organization is so fine for us, for our church. Nothing here is problematic for our tradition, to exercise our Christian tradition."

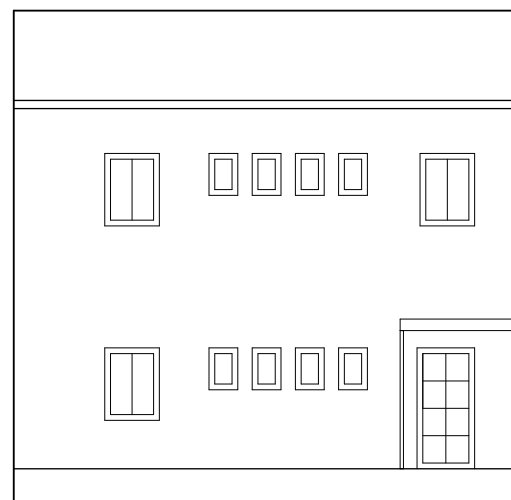


Fig. 4.7: East elevation church

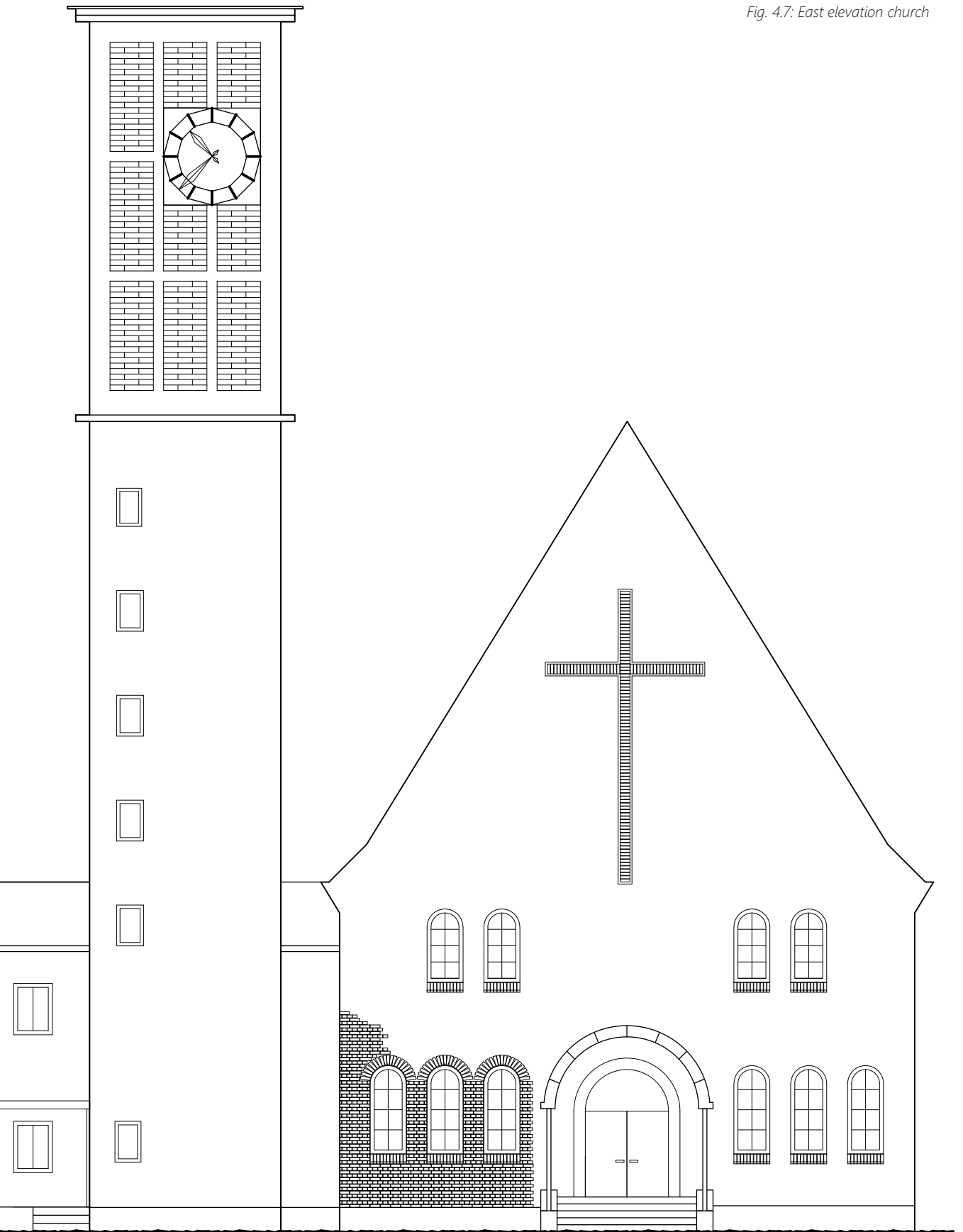


Fig. 4.8: Church hall interior view
photo source: sl in Elbe Wochenblatt

When entering the church room through the arched entrance, one cannot help but notice the stark contrast of the rather discreet exterior to its colourful and versatile interior decoration which was retrofitted into the large sunny space. The spacious room is divided for different functions. Before entering the church hall everybody leaves their shoes in the entrance area before stepping on the red carpet, marking the area for the faithful to take a seat. The space in front, elevated by two steps, is lavishly and festively decorated and reserved for the priest and two deacons. The area behind the red curtain is not observable from the hall. Warm candlelight and the smell of incense create a festive mood.

About forty people are sitting on rows of chairs with an aisle in the middle for the service. Everybody is dressed in white with a light cotton cloth wrapped around their shoulders. Women have also used it as a head scarf. The similar clothing creates a unified image of the congregation members. Even though the service lasts between four to five hours, people do not seem to be tired. They listen intently both to the sermons of the priest and the chants of the priest and the deacons, which are amplified via a loudspeaker. According to the program the position of the participants alternates from sitting, kneeling and bowing the forehead to the ground, standing or moving their bent forearms to the sides while clapping and singing to the rhythm of a big drum which is played by one of the deacons. All age groups are present, including many young children who make their own program by walking around and talking to each other; except when they are included in the official program and get special attention by the priest. One can sense that the arrangements imposed by Corona; with a limited number of people, the registration check in the beginning, the medical face masks and the placement of the chairs with 1,5 metres distance from each other, disrupt the communal and contemplative atmosphere of the space.

With my long white robe and a thin scarf loosely covering my hair, I visually disappear in the group of people all in white. Nevertheless, it becomes quite obvious that I do not belong here. I do not know the course of the service, the separated seating arrangement for women and men, the lyrics and melodies of the chants, the rhythms of the clapping, the sequences of movements. Although the setting is not familiar to me and I cannot follow the contents of the service, I enjoy the calmness and contemplative, almost meditative, ambience of the place. After the long service the atmosphere is relaxed and joyful. Everybody seems to enjoy the intimate gathering with traditional Ethiopian bread, tea and coffee in the basement space. People greet each other warmly, have small conversations and browse the items in the small shop.

(Description of thick participation on June 13, 2021)



Description of the church's premises in the words of the priest:

- 1** *This is where I live. It's small, but has everything.
[In the bell tower], every floor there is one room like this, for guests. The fifth one is the room for the bell.*
- 2** *This [office] is where I spend most of the time. I leave it always when I am hungry.*
- 3** *This is the chair for the secretary. He is a deacon, he comes on the weekend, on the week he works.*
- 4** *This is the finance bureau of the church, to pay alms, tributes and incidental expenses.*
- 5** *The main door is always open until 19 o'clock. As long as I am here, it is always open. People can come.*
- 6** *If there is no service they stand here praying. Especially for woman with menstruation, they should stay here.*
- 7** *We built the front part. It was empty before. Behind the wall [the apse] only the priests and deacons can enter the room and celebrate the services. But the faithful stay here [in the church hall].*
- 8** *It's a small kitchen, but complete kitchen... has everything. They prepare the food here.*
- 9** *We have here a small shop. For icons and church elements.*
- 10** *We plan a small workshop. In the future we want to produce some church things like ... also Habesha dresses, we plan to do that.*
- 11** *The hall. Its not well organized because we are not using it at the moment. With green boards. For children, for young people, to teach Amharic or Tigrigna or Oromiffa.*
- 12** *This is our small library. It is used mainly for reading books, magazines, etc... but there is also the possibility of using it as a meeting room.*

“ So as I have told you, if we get to stay here permanently, this building and this place is fitting our church really. We are satisfied living here.

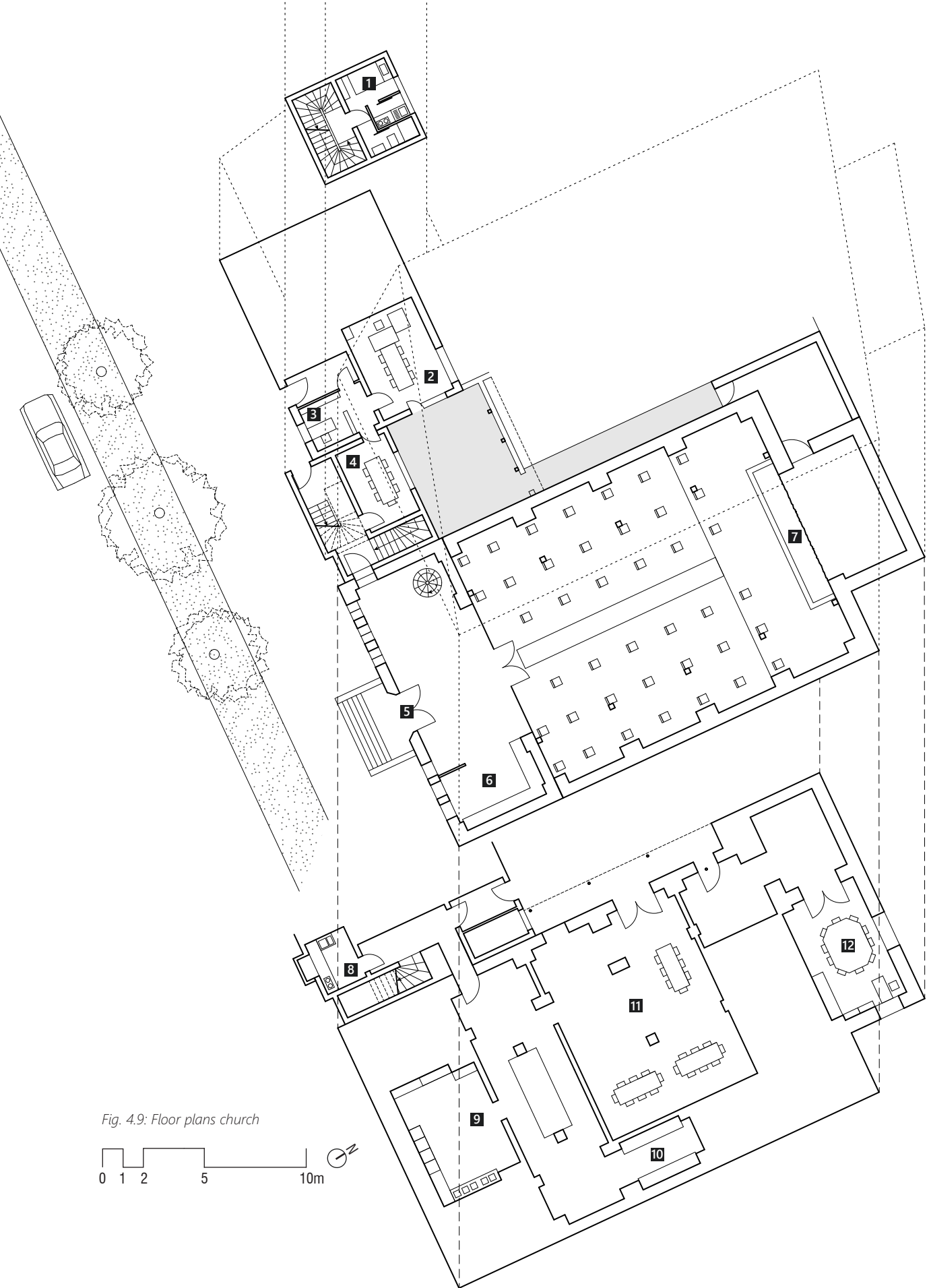


Fig. 4.9: Floor plans church



PARISH CHURCH
BREMEN



PARISH CHURCH
KASSEL

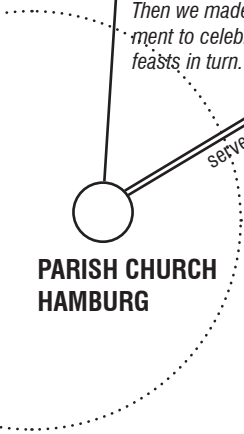


*"We organized a small
group of parish churches.
Then we made an agree-
ment to celebrate annual
feasts in turn."*

served by the same priest

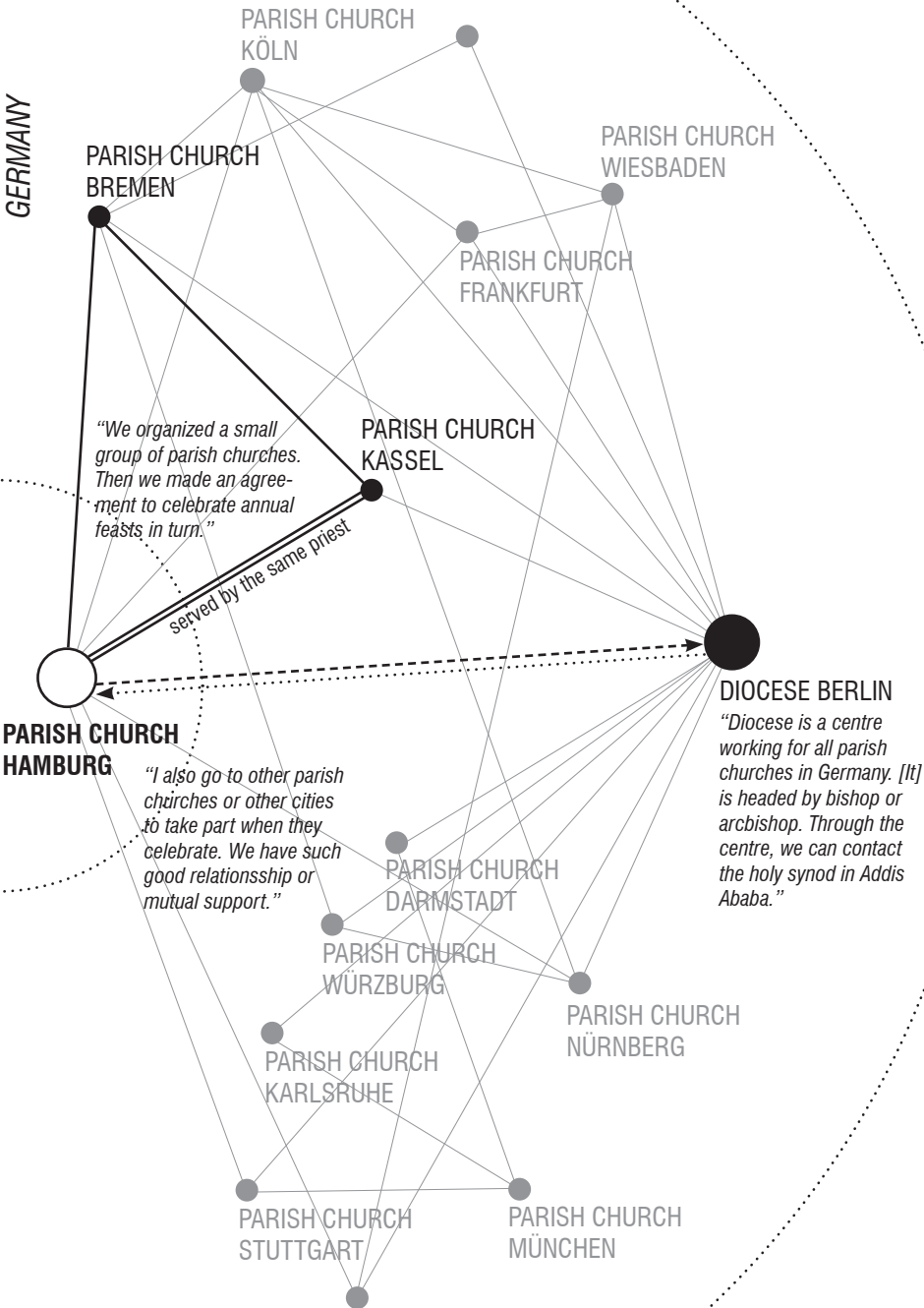


PARISH CHURCH
HAMBURG



The parish church in Hamburg is part of a growing global network of diasporic Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Churches as አባ ገፋይ describes: “Now our church is spreading throughout the whole world”. All offshoots of the Orthodox Church are organized within a hierarchical order under the Holy Synod in Addis Ababa, the spiritual head of the church. The priest explains that all parish churches in Germany are in close exchange and, for instance, organize annual feasts together in turn. Through the diocese in Berlin, all of them they stay in regular contact with the Holy Synod. For instance, they pay a small contribution once a year or receive canons and orders.

GERMANY



EUROPE

DIOCESE NORWAY

DIOCESE FINLAND

DIOCESE BELGIUM

DIOCESE NETHERLANDS

DIOCESE SWITZERLAND

GERMANY

PARISH CHURCH
KÖLN

PARISH CHURCH
BREMEN

PARISH CHURCH
WIESBADEN

PARISH CHURCH
FRANKFURT

ARCIDIOCESE LONDON

PARISH CHURCH
KASSEL

"We organized a small group of parish churches. Then we made an agreement to celebrate annual feasts in turn."

served by the same priest

Icons and church elements are imported and sold in the parish church

"The diocese collects all this monthly payments and forwards it partially to the parish church"

PARISH CHURCH
HAMBURG

"I also go to other parish churches or other cities to take part when they celebrate. We have such good relationship or mutual support."

DIOCESE BERLIN

"Diocese is a centre working for all parish churches in Germany. [It] is headed by bishop or archbishop. Through the centre, we can contact the holy synod in Addis Ababa."

PARISH CHURCH
DARMSTADT

PARISH CHURCH
WÜRZBURG

PARISH CHURCH
NÜRNBERG

PARISH CHURCH
KARLSRUHE

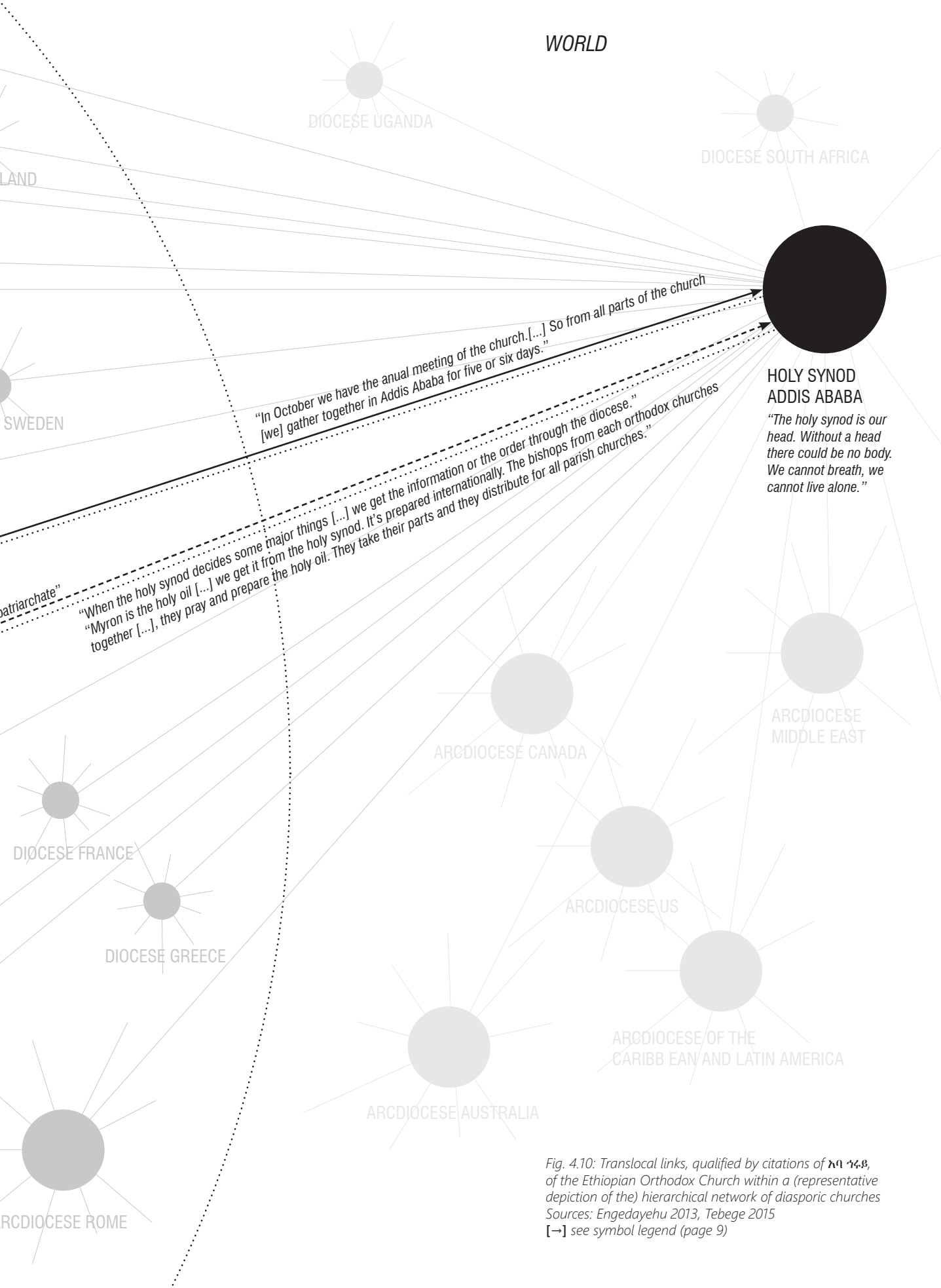
PARISH CHURCH
STUTT GART

PARISH CHURCH
MÜNCHEN

DIOCESE SPAIN

DIOCESE AUSTRIA

WORLD



"In October we have the annual meeting of the church. [...] So from all parts of the church [we] gather together in Addis Ababa for five or six days."

"When the holy synod decides some major things [...] we get the information or the order through the diocese."
"Myron is the holy oil [...] we get it from the holy synod. It's prepared internationally. The bishops from each orthodox churches together [...], they pray and prepare the holy oil. They take their parts and they distribute for all parish churches."

**HOLY SYNOD
ADDIS ABABA**
"The holy synod is our head. Without a head there could be no body. We cannot breathe, we cannot live alone."

Fig. 4.10: Translocal links, qualified by citations of አባ ገሩፆ, of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church within a (representative depiction of the) hierarchical network of diasporic churches
Sources: Engedayehu 2013, Tebege 2015
[→] see symbol legend (page 9)

Case Study 3

ሉዋም [Luwam]'s Home



(9) For reasons of privacy, this photography is a representative image and not the actual home of A.P.P.

ሉዋም [Luwam] is a young mother of two children and has lived in Hamburg since 2017. She receives female customers from the Community at her home and braids traditional hairstyles for them. They do not come on a regular basis but many of them visit her when festivities such as children's baptisms are coming up. ሉዋም explains that it was her mother who taught her how to braid hair and how she insisted on teaching her as a child. The mother told her that braiding was good work that could generate income. She laughs when telling that back in the days she was not interested and bored by the activity but quickly adds in a more serious tone that she is really happy and sincerely thankful for this skill now: "Meine Mutter hat schon gut gemacht für mich. [My mother did well for me]". As soon as both her children are in day-care, ሉዋም plans to undergo a formal training with the aim to open her own hair salon for both men and women. According to her, a self-employed and good job as well as an own apartment are basic requirements in order to be able to build a future for herself and her family.

Looking back on her life journey so, she acknowledges she has been very lucky compared to others. Nevertheless, she describes her life without a permanent residence permit in Germany as hard and stressful. She emphasizes the positive and comforting impact of the Community and how she likes to spend time with ሓበጎ [Habesha] friends: "Wir machen Spaß und Kaffee like this. [We have fun and make coffee like this]". She provides herself with Eritrean products through personal connections to family and friends as well as from shops in Hamburg in order to prepare Eritrean food and coffee at her home. ሉዋም has family members in other German cities and they visit each other for important occasions. She regularly calls her mother in Eritrea and expresses the deep mutual wish to see each other as soon as circumstances permit.

“ Here in the neighbourhood I have a lot of Habesha friends. We make fun and coffee like this.



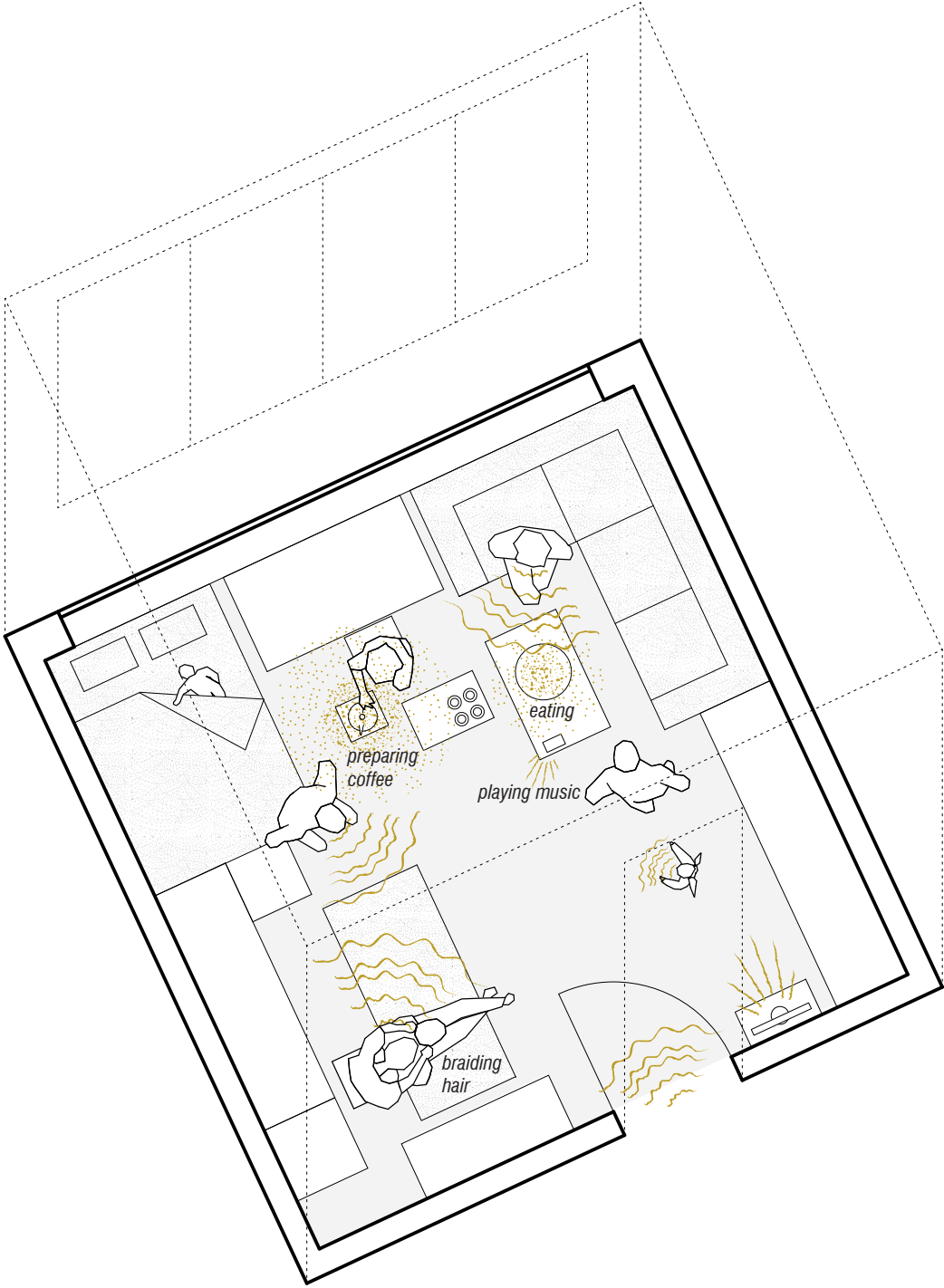
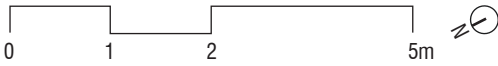
ሉዋም [Luwam]

braids women's hair at her home.

The 25 square meters room hosts a wide range of bustling, simultaneous activities each with its very own sounds and odours filling the air and blurring into one big cloud. The adults in the room are having animated conversations in alternating constellations mixing four different languages in order to overcome the language barriers. The oft improvised communication frequently causes loud laughter. While people are talking and moving through the room, ሉዋም sits on the same stool, continuously pursuing her work. Her hands move quickly and skillfully over the head of the woman sitting on a thin mat on the floor in front of her. In no time, half of the woman's head is covered with gossamer braids. The braiding does not seem to be unpleasant or painful for her. With one hand she calmly holds the loose part of her hair out of the way to facilitate the work of ሉዋም, while silently observing the surrounding events.

The leftovers of the meal, ኦነጃራ [Injera] with ሸሮ [Shiro] and salad, that we all shared from the same big round plate is still on the small coffee table. By now every adult has a small cup of coffee in his or her hands sipping on it while continuing the conversation. The coffee pot, ጃቡና [Jebena], is still on the movable electric hotplate, boiling the coffee for the second round. The smell and warmth of the previously freshly roasted and ground coffee beans is still in the air. Unimpressed by the background sounds and smells, the baby sleeps peacefully on the family bed, a friend of the family having lulled her to sleep. The other child sits on the floor, animatedly talking into an unplugged multiple socket, which serves her as a phone. The television in the corner plays a children's program without anybody paying attention to it. The sounds jostle with the ትግርኛ [Tigrigna] music that the phone is playing on the table. Someone's favourite song plays and he shows off his skills in traditional dancing by moving his shoulders to the rhythm of the beat, his hands resting on his hips. The door is open the whole time and now and then neighbours or their children enter the room and join the group for a while before they continue pursuing their own business. The cosy atmosphere, the comforting warmth of the room and the many impressions for my eyes, ears and nose make me pleasantly tired and woozy. (Description of thick participation on April 21, 2021)

Fig. 4.11: Floor plan of ሌዋዎ [Luwam]'s home with performed socio-cultural and economic practices [→] see symbol legend (page 9)



GERMANY

HAMBURG



ሉዊምስ HOME

"Ich gehe auch manchmal in die Kirche [...] Kreuzkirche in Altona.
[Sometimes I go to church, Kreuzkirche in Altona.]"

13
ERITREAN
ORTHODOX
CHURCH
IN ALTONA

"Habesha Sachen ich kaufe in Afroshop in Altona. Und auch in Harburg und Hammerbrook in Habesha shop.
Ich kaufe Shiro, Berbere, Kaffee, Jebena, ... alles. Ich habe alles dort gekauft. Gibt es auch Habesha Kleidung.
[Habesha things I buy in the Afro shop in Altona, and also in Habesha shops in Harburg and Hammerbrook. I
buy Shiro, Berbere, Kaffee, Jebena, ... everything. I bought everything there. There are also Habesha clothes.]"

AFROSHOP
ALTONA

8
FREDANCO
SHOP

9
HARERTA
SHOP

"Meine Tante wohnt in Mannheim und mein Cousin wohnt in Berlin. Wenn ich hab Taufe
oder Geburtstag, eine große Party, dann kommen sie. Ich war auch zweimal gegangen
mit den Kindern. [My aunt lives in Mannheim and my cousin in Berlin. When there is a
baptism or birthday, a big party, they will come. Two times, I went there too.]"

BERLIN

MANNHEIM

"In der Nähe ich habe viele Habesha Freunde... wir machen Spaß und
Kaffee like this. [Here in the neighbourhood I have a lot of Habesha friends..
we make fun and coffee like this.]"

NEIGHBOURHOOD

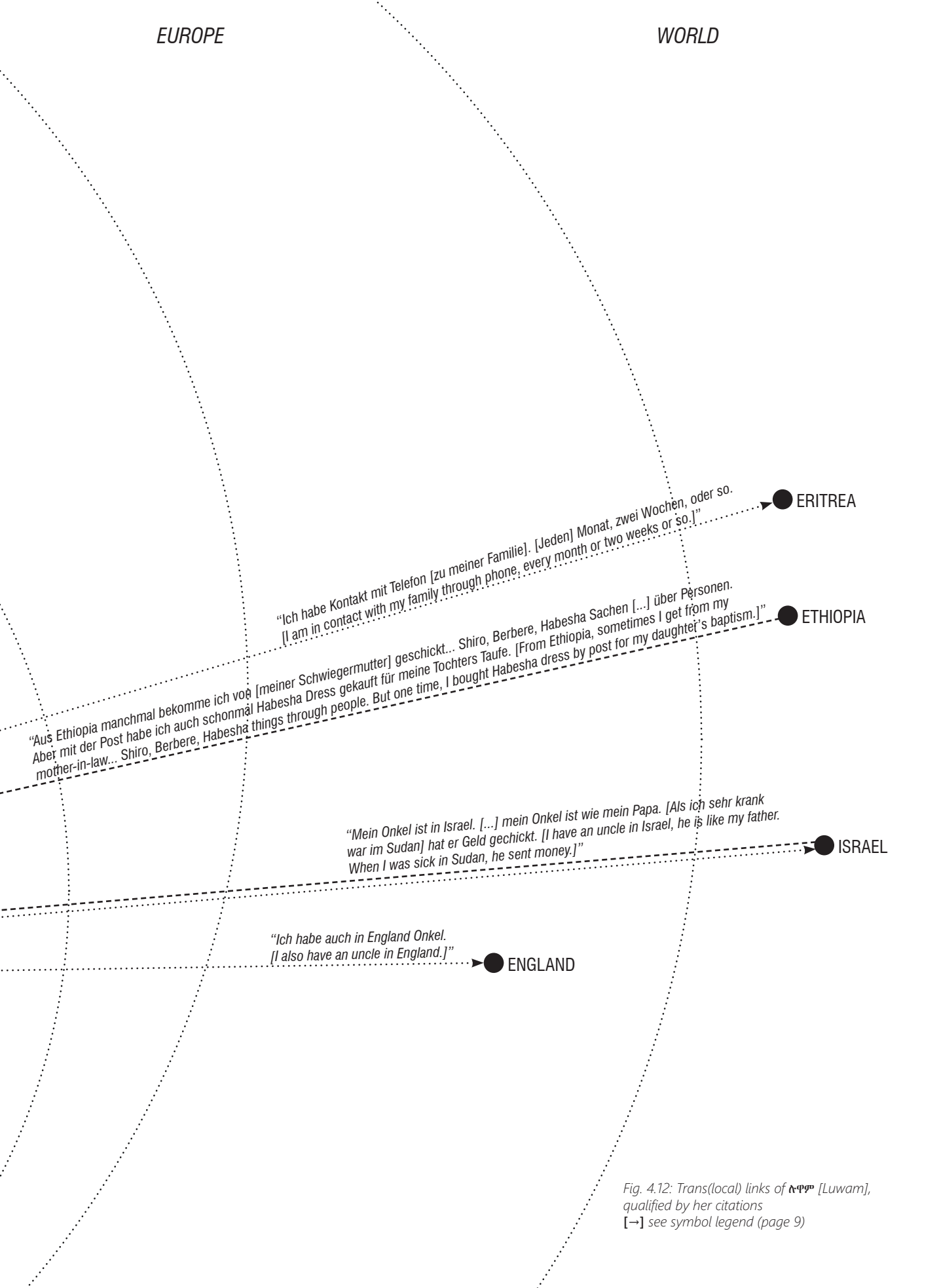


Fig. 4.12: Trans(local) links of ሊዊም [Luwam], qualified by her citations
[→] see symbol legend (page 9)

4.2 Cataloguing socio-cultural and economic practices

During my interviews and observations, I encountered a range of typical socio-cultural and economic practices which are important components in the daily lives of አበቻ [Habesha] people in the diaspora. They appear in various contexts and transcend previously mentioned classifications of spheres: global and local; private and public; domestic, communal and transactional [→].

[→] see chapter 2.3.3:
Diasporic urban spheres

The origins and traditions of these practices reach far back into history and therefore represent a strong tool that allows connecting to cultural heritage. These activities are expressions of the Community's basic material as well as social and emotional quotidian needs. Being able to exercise them is thus a precondition for their mental and physical health. Following the idea of Alpha Abebe, I want to approach the realities of diasporic people by taking the encountered socio-cultural practices as a starting point for my analysis. This approach allows for "a glimpse behind the scene where identities are constructed and imbued with meaning, and casts a spotlight onto the ways that these identities are represented and performed" (2018:62). Instead of trying to apply abstract theoretical concepts of cultural identity, I start by observing and analysing daily activities; the ways they are performed and described by the people as well as their historical and cultural significance. I look at (trans)local social and spatial infrastructures within the private as well as public urban context of Hamburg which the Community establishes in order to be able to pursue these practices. By this, I aim to understand how the diaspora negotiates their position in the field of tension between 'here and there' and how they create their very own cultural identities.

The practices are characterized by the important role that sensual experiences play. The look, texture, taste, smell and sound are powerful carriers of memories and can easily stimulate emotions. Abebe describes this phenomenon of being able to connect due to familiar sensory impressions in the following statement: "When I travelled to Ethiopia in 1999, it felt very much like a homecoming. This was odd, because it was my first time ever being there. I was born and raised in Canada to Ethiopian parents. My first encounter with the sights, sounds and smells of Addis Ababa should have been jarring at worst, unfamiliar at best. But it felt like home instead. [...] I was walking through the very structures and landscapes that once hung as art on my wall. I had eaten all these same dishes before, just never this good" (2018:59). The notion of home here is connected to sensory impressions, in accordance with Brah's constructivist definition: "[...] home is also the lived experience of locality. Its sounds and smells [...]" (1996:188f). The powerful role of the senses in conveying a sense of home is equally expressed by an interviewee in the following statement:

*"Bei [Ethio Restaurant] von dem Geruch her, von der Servierung, da denkst du, ok, ich bin da, ich bin zu Hause... da ist man teilweise verbunden.
[At Ethio Restaurant, due to the smell and the way of serving, you feel like home and connected]" (Interview 1).*

By citing interviewees and referring to descriptions of field observations, the following catalogue provides insights into the above mentioned dimensions of selected socio-cultural and economic practices of the **hifi** Community in Hamburg: Eating, preparing coffee, dressing traditionally, styling hair as well as listening to music, playing music and dancing.

Eating is an important social and sensual experience. Everybody gathers around one circular plate and takes time to enjoy the food together. The right hand is used for eating whereby the **እንጂራ** [Injera] serves as tool to pick up the different side dishes lying on the round leaven flatbread. The variety of dishes ranges from different vegetables and stews including pulses and meat. During my research the importance of the food became clear as it is the central activity when people gather:

"So the people know that when they miss... when they want to eat Injera or to get Habesha bread, they visit the church. The food is very important thing" (Interview ጎ).

The flour from the local grain **ጤፍ** [Teff] as basis for the **እንጂራ** [Injera] as well as the mixed spices **በርበሬ** [Berbere] and **ሸሮ** [Shiro] are fundamental components of the **ሐበሻ** cuisine. These and other important ingredients in order to prepare traditional dishes are the main products which are sold in the **ሐበሻ** shops in Hamburg. In addition, they get imported through private connections:

"Berbere, Shiro das ist die Wichtige. Ich bekomme Berbere, Shiro direkt von zu Hause. Zum Beispiel da ist die eine von unsere Gemeinde die Mutter. Wir schicken Geld [...], dann bereitet sie so richtig von zu Hause aus, und dann wenn jemand da ist, dann bringt uns. [Berbere, Shiro are the most important. I get Berbere and Shiro directly from home. For example, there is this mother from a member of our congregation. We send money and then she prepares everything at home, and if somebody is there, he or she will bring for us]" (Interview ፋ).

For gatherings and festivities, some members of the Community prepare the food in advance for all participants:

"They organize [the food]. There is a small informal community, but they are women" (Interview ጎ).

On a daily basis, ingredients and prepared foods also get distributed and sometimes sold within the Community in a self-organized way:

"Es gibt ein paar Stellen, wo man telefonisch [Injera] bestellen kann und dann holst du das zu Hause ab. Es gibt Frauen, die das machen. Offizieller Markt ist das nicht, eher auf Bekanntschaft. [There are places where you can order Injera by phone and then you pick it up at the house. There are women who do that. It is not an official market, rather through acquaintance]" (Interview ጢ).

The formal and informal networks for the preparation and distribution of food allow the Community to maintain the traditional social and cultural eating practices.

ምብላሶ
መብላት
eating



The coffee ceremony is a core custom of ሕበብ culture as its tradition has long historical roots. The coffee plant was discovered around the 9th century in today's Ethiopia, in the region of 'Kaffa' which is the origin of the word 'coffee'. Ethiopia is the largest producer and exporter of coffee on the continent and among the top ten worldwide; whereas in contrast to other producing countries more than half of it is consumed domestically (USDA 2021). Besides the shared food, preparing and drinking coffee is a highly social activity performed on special occasions as well as on a daily basis. It serves as opportunity to gather and socialize for family, friends and neighbours:

"Wir machen Spaß und Kaffee like this. [We have fun and make coffee like this]" (Interview 1).

The coffee is usually prepared by women in the presence of all guests. The ceremony encompasses the roasting of the green beans in a small pan which is passed around in order for everyone to smell the coffee scent. After grinding the roasted beans, the coffee powder is boiled in the ጃብና [Jebena], and gets served in small handleless cups, usually in three rounds. The ceremony is accompanied by the smell of incense, ስጣን [Itan], and snacks like popcorn or traditional bread. The custom is appreciated for strongly involving all senses:

"Und dann röste ich Kaffee [...] nur für die Duft, dass mein Haus nach Kaffee riecht. [...] Manchmal mache ich auch Itan auf meine Balkon. Das duftet gut. [I roast coffee, only for the scent, for my house to smell of coffee. [...] Sometimes I also use incense on my balcony. It smells well]" (Interview 4).

All ሕበብ shops in Hamburg offer the required utensils for the ceremony:

"Ich kaufe [...] Kaffee, Jebena... alles. Ich habe alles dort gekauft. [I buy coffee, Jebena... everything. I bought everything there]" (Interview 1).

Similar to other products, they also get imported through acquaintance:

"Jebena habe ich, sogar gerade neue Jebena mit zwölf Sini [Tassen]. Hat meine Cousine von Äthiopien geschickt zu Weihnachten. [I got a new Jebena with twelve cups. My cousin from Ethiopia sent it for Christmas]" (Interview 4).

The ጃብና [Jebena] is often used as cultural symbol and decoration in the shops and restaurants as well as at home.

ቡን ምፍላሕ

ቡና ማፍላት

preparing coffee



For ሐበሻ people, clothing is an important instrument to express their culture. Traditional clothes are mostly worn for formal events, holidays or religious purposes. There exists a broad range of styles including contemporary interpretations but the basic style is characterized by fine white cotton with linear colourful patterns:

"Everybody is dressed in white with a light cotton shawl wrapped around their shoulders. Women also use it as a head scarf. The similar clothing creates a unified image of the congregation members" (Description of thick participation at the Ethiopian Orthodox Church in Wilhelmsburg, June 13, 2021).

A small selection is sold in ሐበሻ shops, but they as well get imported through personal connections or by post:

"Ich lasse mir eigentlich meistens Klamotten mitbringen, Habesha Klamotten. [Mostly Habesha clothes are brought to me]" (Interview ፩);

"Aber mit der Post habe ich auch schon mal Habesha dress gekauft für meine Tochter Taufe aus Ethiopia. [I once ordered a Habesha dress from Ethiopia for my daughter's baptism]" (Interview ፪).

Similar to other traditional objects they are used as decorative elements and thus serve as a visual tool for cultural identification.

ክዳን ባህሊ ምግባር

የባህል ልብስ መልበስ

dressing traditionally



In order to get appropriate hair treatment, ሕብሻ people visit only certain places in Hamburg since the supply for Afro hair care is limited. The supply is covered by public hair salons, usually for men, privately organized hairstyling from within the Community, usually for women, as well as Afroshops throughout Hamburg. It is therefore described as good business opportunity:

"Haare machen ist gut [...] du kannst Geld verdienen. [Hair styling is good [...] you can earn money]" (Interview 1).

Hair styling has a long historical tradition in Eritrea and Ethiopia with a great variety of unique, characteristic and elaborate hairstyles for both men and women. Depending on the gender, particular hairstyles can even provide information on a person's belief, the ceremonial occasion or the marital status (Madote 2011). Nowadays, the daily styling is very diverse and more elaborate traditional coiffures are mostly worn by women for special occasions.

ምቁናን

ፀጉር መሥራት
styling hair



Playing music, listening to music and dancing to music is a valued activity within the Community, in everyday contexts but particularly performed in the course of special events like religious services, holidays or festivities such as a wedding. Religious music traditions can be traced back to the 6th century when they were invented by Qdus Yared, an Axumite composer, who developed the chants of the Eritrean and Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Churches as well as the Ethiopian musical notation system. During my research, I encountered music and dancing in different forms and settings: In a devotional way at the church where people

"move their bent forearms to the sides while clapping and singing to the rhythm of a big drum which is played by one of the deacons" (Description of thick participation at the Ethiopian Orthodox Church in Wilhelmsburg, June 13, 2021);

in an incidental way when

"ትግርኛ [Tigrigna] music [...] is played via youtube on the TV hanging on the wall" (Description of thick participation at the Jebena Café, June 18, 2021);

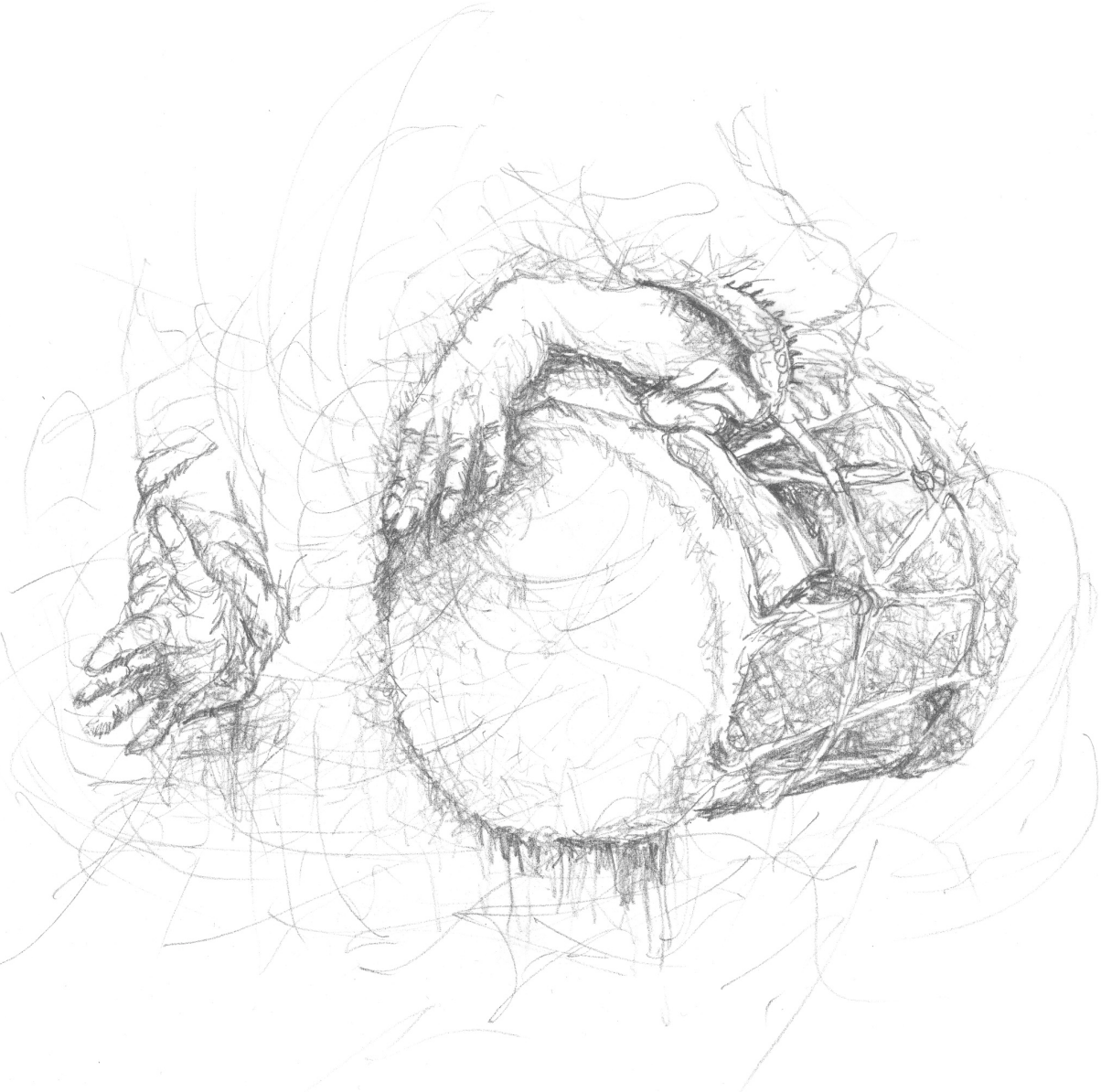
or in an animated way when somebody is

"showing off his skills in traditional dancing by moving his shoulders in the rhythm of the beat, the hands resting on his hips" (Description of thick participation at ሎዋም [Luwam]'s home, 21 April, 2021).

ደርፊ ምድራፍን ምስሶሳ

መዚቃ መጫወት እና መደነስ

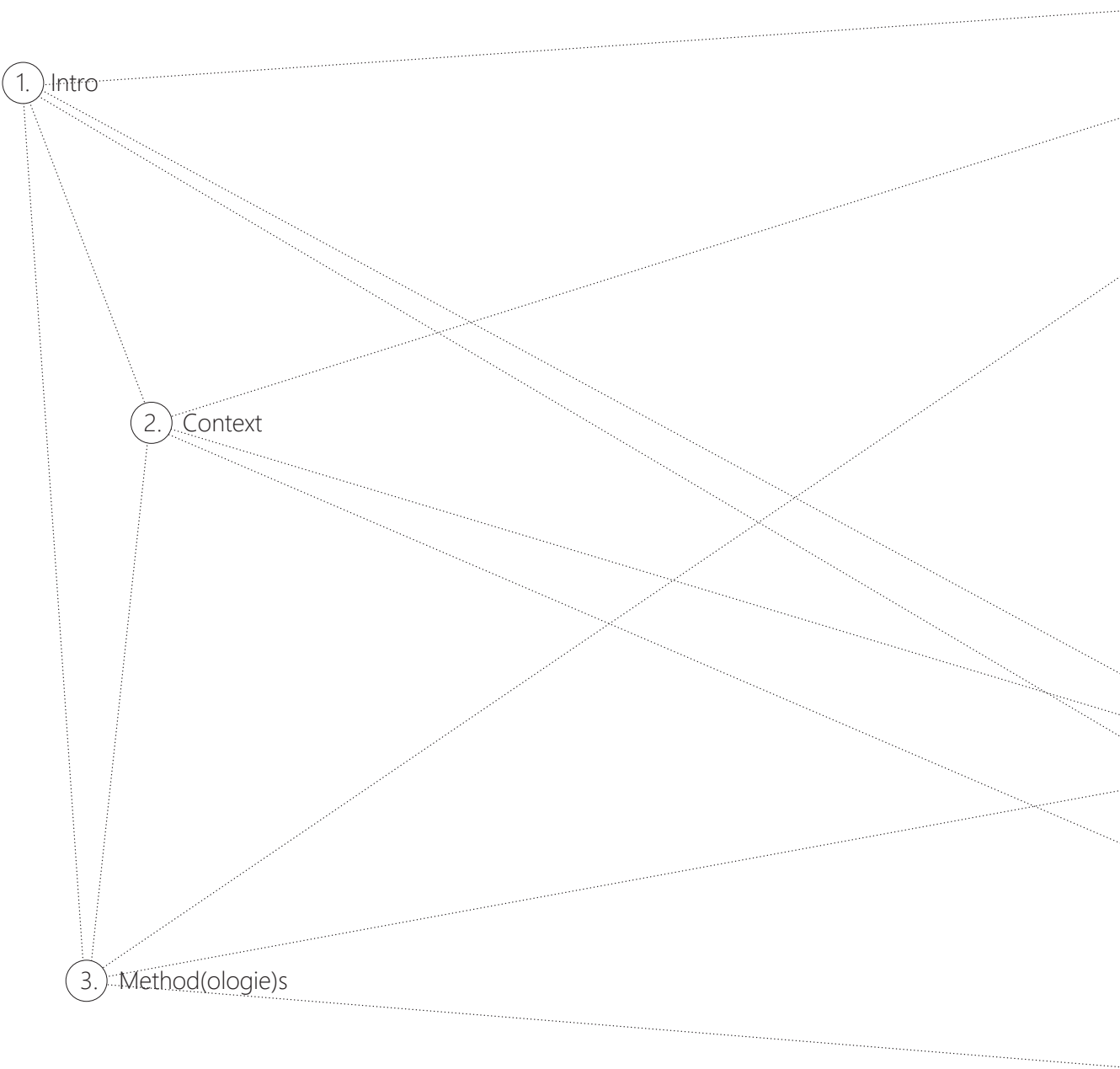
playing music and dancing



1. Intro

2. Context

3. Method(ologie)s



4. Empirical Analysis

5.

Discussion

6. Outro

Diasporic Space and Agency

The ሐበሻ [Habesha] Community is characterized by its specific circumstances of being embedded in the local context of Hamburg on the one hand, and moving within and between different spatial scales in terms of political, economic and socio-cultural references on the other hand [→]. Brah describes this phenomenon as “[...] processes of multi-locationality across geographical cultural and psychic boundaries” (Brah 1996:191). The multiple systems of reference require an active (re) positioning that produce particular types of multi-scale, social and spatial spaces which Awan calls “[...] own subjectivities and new types of spaces within the contemporary metropolis” (2011:7). These specific configurations of diasporic space then materialize themselves in concrete places in the urban setting. The conducted empirical research at three exemplary case studies in the city of Hamburg documents and analyses how diasporic space is established, enlivened and maintained on a daily basis. By means of narrative interviews, thick participations and ethnographic mappings, I tried to capture not only the place-constituting elements but also the variety of agencies people unfold. Both Awan and Smith consider an agency-oriented theoretical perspective as central for the analysis within the field of translocal urbanism since it is capable of capturing scale-transcending realities by analysing not only the spatial urban setting, but also “[...] the people who occupy these spaces, their gestures and bodily practices, the networks and objects that are located within different spatio-temporalities” (Awan 2016:2). As described by Awan, I traced embodied and performed diasporic agency, including sensory aspects, and the ways it manifests itself within (trans)local settings by taking the socio-cultural and economic practices of the Community as a starting point.

The following text will discuss the empirical findings on diasporic space and agency of the ሐበሻ Community in Hamburg focusing on diasporic organizational structures as well as place-making activities, highlighting emerging challenges and coping strategies. Since the specific infrastructural needs of the Community are not foreseen in the explicit and implicit surrounding frameworks of the city of Hamburg or the country of Germany, the Community is confronted with specific obstacles and thus develops responding tactics and strategies in order to pursue the implementation of their projects. The situated findings will be reflected and discussed in relation to theoretical concepts from urban and cultural studies, such as ‘Transnational Urbanism’ (Smith 2001), ‘Rhizomatic Identity’ (Glissant 1997), ‘Cultural Hybridity and Mimicry’ (Bhabha 1994) and ‘Homeplace’ (hooks 1990).

[→] see chapter 2.1:
Thematic-conceptual context



Discussion

- 5.1 Diasporic organizing
- 5.2 Diasporic place-making

5.1 Diasporic organizing

In my textual and graphical analysis I tried to uncover the interplay of the 'local' and the 'translocal' as a fundamental characteristic of diasporic organization. Diasporas establish social networks differing in size and design that operate within and between different spatial scales in order to enable flows of people, goods, money and information which in turn are a precondition for their socio-cultural and economic activities. In order to make these complex and versatile connections tangible, translocal links that originate from concrete locations or persons in Hamburg were traced, showing that global networks can only exist in their local small-scale groundedness. In doing so, my aim is to highlight what Smith calls the "transnational practices 'from below'" (2001:12). Hence, the narration of globalization as an abstract process 'from above' gets deconstructed, by showing how globalized realities are (re)constructed and (re)negotiated on a daily basis in contemporary cities.

Trans-Networks

Translocal networks go beyond, what Smith calls, the 'binary thinking' in modernist urban analysis of 'global versus local' or 'universal versus particular' and 'economic versus cultural' (2001:2). Throughout my research I came across several types of networks of the Community that operate exactly within the space between the mentioned binaries. The different church congregations in Hamburg, for instance, are all part of highly formal, institutionalised, hierarchical networks that ensure on-going exchange of people, money and information. Similar to the Ethiopian Orthodox Church [→] other diasporic churches are organized all over the world with hubs in different countries and continents that maintain the connection with each other and their spiritual head in the country of origin. Like other congregations, the Ethiopian Evangelical Church established parish churches in every major city in Germany that are embedded in a wider global network:

[→] see chapter 4.1.2

"[...] in Deutschland haben wir einen [gemeinsamen Verein] und die haben sie Kontakt nach Ethiopia [...] Das ist erstmal Deutschland und danach haben wir auch nochmal in Europa die ganzen Freikirchen. Machen wir auch Konferenz in Deutschland oder auch in London, oder Holland oder Belgien [...] Wir sind ganz gewaltig vernetzt, ganz gewaltig. [In Germany we have a common association which is in contact with Ethiopia [...] Besides Germany we have more parish churches in Europe. We do conferences in Germany but also London, Holland or Belgium [...] We are very much networked, very much" (Interview 4).

Besides these vast and formally organized networks, numerous smaller self-organized and more flexible networks exist for everyday occurrences, such as the supply of foods and other goods. Since the existing formal structures, which operate according to the logics of national boundaries, do not meet the requirements of the Community, because they are either too expensive or not fast enough, people establish their own structures based on personal ties:

"Ich kenn dich, du kennst jemand, der kennt irgendjemand, der nach Ethiopia reist... dann: 'Kannst du mir bitte mal Klamotten mitbringen?' [I know you, you know someone who knows someone who will travel to Ethiopia... then: 'Can you please bring me clothes?'" (Interview ❹).

In addition to individual and occasional transactions, more reliable and regular yet informal structures have established through time due to the high demand for financial transactions:

"Wenn du heute das Geld schickst, morgen ist das im Land. [...] Du kannst jederzeit anrufen. [...] Das ist voll Vertrauen. Das funktioniert vollkommen. [...] Über Bank ist das richtig kompliziert. Dauert länger und ist auch teurer [If you send money today, it will arrive tomorrow. [...] You can call anytime. [...] It is complete trust. It works perfectly. [...] By bank it is very complicated. It takes longer and is more expensive]" (Interview ❹).

Intra-Networks

As much as the Community is part of the mentioned transnational networks, as much they depend on networks that are limited to the national, city or communal level in order to pursue their socio-cultural and economic activities on a daily basis. They ensure the exchange of necessary information and the distribution of resources within the Community and thus hold a strong social value. This includes the organization of foods or money for special occasions:

"There are some persons who organize the food. Especially for the feasts or fasting days [...] They bring together some foods, prepared foods [...] There is a small informal community but they are women" (Interview ❶);

"Zum Beispiel wenn jemand stirbt wird das Geld gesammelt und den Leuten geholfen. Das ist nicht wenig Geld [...] Das zahlt jeder. Hochzeiten bezahlt auch jeder immer irgendwas. [For example when somebody dies, money is collected for helping the people. This is not little money [...] Everybody pays. For weddings everybody pays something too]" (Interview ❹).

Assistance for refugee matters in terms of legal, physical and psychological matters is organized from within the Community as well:

"Ich bin sozusagen Mädchen für alles, ehrlich jetzt ich mach alles [...] Ich bekomme Anrufe von überall... Stuttgart, München, Berlin, Krefeld, Dortmund... [Leute] die gar keine Hilfe bekommen, aber Beziehungen mit den anderen Geflüchteten haben hier in Hamburg und dann: 'Ruf doch mal [❶] an, der kann dir helfen!' [I take care of everything, honestly, I do everything. I get calls from everywhere... people who don't get help at all, but they have relations with other refugees here in Hamburg and then: 'Call [❶], he can help you!'" (Interview ❶).

The illustrated examples show the manifold purposes of established networks and their essential role in the organization of diasporic life. Since the infrastructure of the nation state does not cover the needs of the communities for different reasons, they create their own infrastructures that are based on ramified networks. By this means, they establish alternative organization principles which are less rigid and hierarchical and more resilient, solidary and flexible in their nature. A useful refer-

““ *The notion of the rhizome maintains, therefore, the idea of rootedness but challenges that of a totalitarian root. Rhizomatic thought is the principle behind what I call the Poetics of Relation, in which each and every identity is extended through a relationship with the Other.*

Glissant (1997:11)

[→] see chapter 2.1:

Thematic-conceptual context

ence here is Édouard Glissant's notion of 'rhizomatic identity' derived from the philosophical concept by Deleuze and Guattari of rhizome as a metaphor for postmodern organizational models. This concept emphasizes the power of individual relations with one another over that of a singular "universal controlling force" (Glissant 1989:14). For diasporic communities a 'rhizomatic urbanism' would be more appropriate than Smith's concept of 'Transnational Urbanism' that does not cover intra-national and intra-communal connections, but which are equally important for the communities. The notion of a 'rhizomatic urbanism' reflects the local and translocal networking processes of diasporas in the urban realm and acknowledges at the same time their specific identity that cannot be captured by the distinctions of national boundaries and ethnicities [→], because it allows to maintain "[...] the idea of rootedness but challenges that of a totalitarian root" (Glissant 1997:11). To conclude, diasporic organization depends on on-going processes of relating and being related to other people and places, crisscrossing various scales: the immediate vicinity, the neighbourhood, the city, the country, the continent and beyond.

5.2 Diasporic place-making

The above described organizational activities perform highly social functions, on the one hand, but are a fundamental precondition for the materialization of diasporic space, on the other hand. Smith also claims their place-constituting role in transnational urbanism: "[...] social interactions and processes at multiple spatial scales [...] constitute the complex politics of place-making [...]" (2001:122). Similar to organization forms, diasporic localities move between several, sometimes contesting systems of reference and thus require an active positioning. "These 'in-between' spaces provide the terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood – singular or communal – that initiate new signs of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration, and contestation [...]" (Bhabha 1994:1f). What Bhabha formulates here for social identities is equally true for diasporic spatial configurations that negotiate their existence in "in-between spaces". Thereby, particular typologies of urban places emerge and specific place-making or place-taking strategies are developed from within the Community, which are illustrated by the three selected case studies.

Social and spatial flexibility and resilience

While carrying out their activities in the urban setting of Hamburg, the Community is confronted with manifold challenges revealing exclusionary effects in the

structures of society as well as city-making processes. Major obstacles are difficult German bureaucracy processes and a lack of certain resources, which in turn impede place-making agency. An interviewee describes the difficulties he faced when founding a non-profit association:

"Weil für normale Leute geht das gar nicht. [...] Das ist richtig kompliziert. [...] Du musst die ganzen Anträge schreiben können, oder das ganze System verstehen können, damit du das Geld kriegst. [...] Aber ohne Kontakte kommst du nirgendwo ran. Du musst richtig aktiv sein... richtig viel Zeit. Ja, vor allem wir brauchen viel Zeit, weil wir das nicht verstehen, weil das kompliziert ist. [Because for normal people it is not possible. It is very complicated. You have to know how to write all the proposals, or understand the whole system, in order to get the money. But without contacts you get nowhere. You have to be very active... a lot of time. Especially us, we need a lot of time, because we don't understand it, because it's difficult]" (Interview 9).

Opening a business is equally tied to difficulties:

"Diese alle über Papier arbeiten, diese mit Steuer [...] alles mit Finanzamt. [...] Ja, zu kompliziert für mich. Habe ich auch viele Fehler gemacht... aber trotzdem geht, aber diese Sache ist richtig schwer für uns. [Everything about the paperwork, about taxes... everything connected to the tax office. Yes, too complicated for me. I made a lot of mistakes... but I manage, but this thing is really difficult for us]" (Interview 6).

Currently existing legal (urban) frameworks reinforce the already prevalent imbalance of power due to the Community's small size and limited (financial) resources. For instance, the zoning plan ['Flächennutzungsplan'] provides areas designated to "[...] structural facilities serving the public interest such as schools and churches [...] [der Allgemeinheit dienenden baulichen Anlagen und Einrichtungen des Gemeinbedarfs wie mit Schulen und Kirchen]" (§5 BauGB). If this and other legal frameworks such as building requests ['Bauanträge'] consider and include diasporic facilities or not rests, in most cases, upon the decision-making power of individuals and local actor constellations (Kaplan 2004 in Alpermann & Hillmann 2018:93). The spatial insecurity is reflected in the high numbers of removals that 400 places in Hamburg were forced to carry out [→]. An interviewee explains:

"[Von dem ersten Standort des Vereins] wurden wir dann uns rausgeschmissen. [...] Wir haben in der Zwischenzeit ein bisschen gestoppt, weil wir keinen Raum gefunden hatten. [From our first place we got kicked out. We stopped a while in the meantime because we didn't have a place]" (Interview 9).

[→] see chapter 2.3.2:
Spatio-temporal survey

Another association as well as two church congregations are equally affected by unstable spatial circumstances. This dependency of international communities is a result of the fact that it is the “[...] values and norms of the dominant culture [that] are reflected in plans, planning, codes and bylaws, legislation, and heritage and urban design practices [...]” (Sandercock 2000: 14). The unequal distribution of negotiation power, due to inscribed biases in supposedly neutral regulations, can be summed up with the words of the interviewed priest:

“No security, no stability. We don't have right. Our stay depends on the will and the goodness of the pastor” (Interview 1),

or other individuals in other cases. Another interviewee addresses the unequal structural prerequisites for diasporic people compared to ‘natives’ as follows:

“Hier in Deutschland die Leben ist richtig schwer. Wir können nicht gleiche wie Deutsche hier sein. [Here in Germany, life is really tough. We cannot be the same as Germans]” (Interview 6).

Bhabha's postcolonial view on the entanglement of governing structures and unequal power relations helps to frame these (in)visible biases: “[...] strategies of hierarchization and marginalization are employed in the management of colonial societies. [...] the visibility of colonial power [...] is a form of governmentality in which the ‘ideological’ space functions in more openly collaborative ways with political and economic exigencies” (1994:83). Thus, it becomes a necessity to question forms of governmentality with regard to their continuities in privileging certain perspectives.

Due to the stated facts above, diasporic facilities as well as institutions are prevented from building up stable and long-term structures which in turn would allow them to generate economic, social and cultural resources. This gap compared to ‘native’ institutions is compensated by a high amount of voluntary commitment of Community members. The diasporic churches, for instance, are dependent on the financial and physical support of their members besides their personal and professional lives. This encompasses administrative tasks: a deacon is responsible for the church's secretariat (Interview 1), or a church member undertakes the task of accounting (Interview 4); but also practical works such as building the spatial arrangement of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church:

“There are many people with different talents and professions [...] Many youngsters were eager to do something. There are wood workers, metal workers, engineers, there are constructors. So we have two or three people from the society who bought materials and covered all the costs. Then our people, our youngsters do everything, they built everything” (Interview 1).

Hence, the existence of these places depends on the willingness and ability of key actors from within the Community (Warnecke 2015:6). The illustrated examples reveal

the existing biases in urban place-making processes. This demands a high amount of physical and mental flexibility and resilience on the part of the Community as a precondition to unfold and carry on their urban agency nevertheless; task-sharing as well as unpaid work and care-taking being one major coping strategy.

Appropriation and multi-use of space

The most obvious challenge is the discrepancy of the Community's spatial needs and the existing spatial urban setting which is primarily designed according to the norms and values of the dominant culture. In order to be able to properly perform their socio-cultural and economic purposes, the existing spatial surrounding is adapted and transformed. Probably the most descriptive example here is the appropriation of the premises of a formerly Protestant brick church building by transforming the interior space for the purposes of the Ethiopian Orthodox congregation:

"We had to make the church look like our church. So that's why we decided to rebuild some stuffs, some elements. [...] Whenever I get to the church I feel like I am inside Bole Medhane Alem [Ethiopian Orthodox cathedral in Addis Ababa]" (Interview 4).

Also the Jebena Café adopted the narrow commercial area for their multiple purposes by rearranging the basement, during Corona times the back part as well, as a hair salon. From the outside both places are visually blending with the neighbouring environment by appearing like a common inner-city café or suburban parish church. They are in fact, but the inside does not follow the common expectations of the surrounding. This ambivalence between inside and outside can be seen as a strategy for securing their existence. Bhabha defines precisely this cultural strategy as 'mimicry', or the effect of 'camouflage', defined as harmonizing with the background cover-wise but not content-wise. It is "a discourse uttered between the lines and as such both against the rules and within them" (Bhabha 1994:89). Blending in visually secures a certain degree of acceptance which in turn allows implementing usages which would not be accepted otherwise. The strategy of 'mimicry' is thus a very subtle mode of appropriation and resistance against the rules of the dominant culture.

The interior adaption of space involves in all three case studies the combination of a multitude of usages: A church hosts not only religious services but also social gatherings, a mini kitchen, a shop, a prospective workshop as well as a library; a café is not only a site for consumption, but also a social meeting point [Begegnungsstätte], a shop as well as a hair salon; a home place is not only a private place of retreat but also a site for social gatherings and ceremonies as well as a small-scale business (see Fig. 5.1). This dense superimposition of different usages creates hybrid typologies of space which emerge from the Community's specific position in what Bhabha calls the 'in-between' space. He further describes the concept of cultural hybridity as one which overcomes, similar to Smith's concept of 'Transnational Ur-

“ “ *To that end we should remember that it is the 'inter' – the cutting edge of translation and negotiation, the in-between space – that carries the burden of the meaning of culture. [...] And by exploring this Third Space, we may elude the politics of polarity and emerge as the others of our selves.* Bhabha (1994:38f)

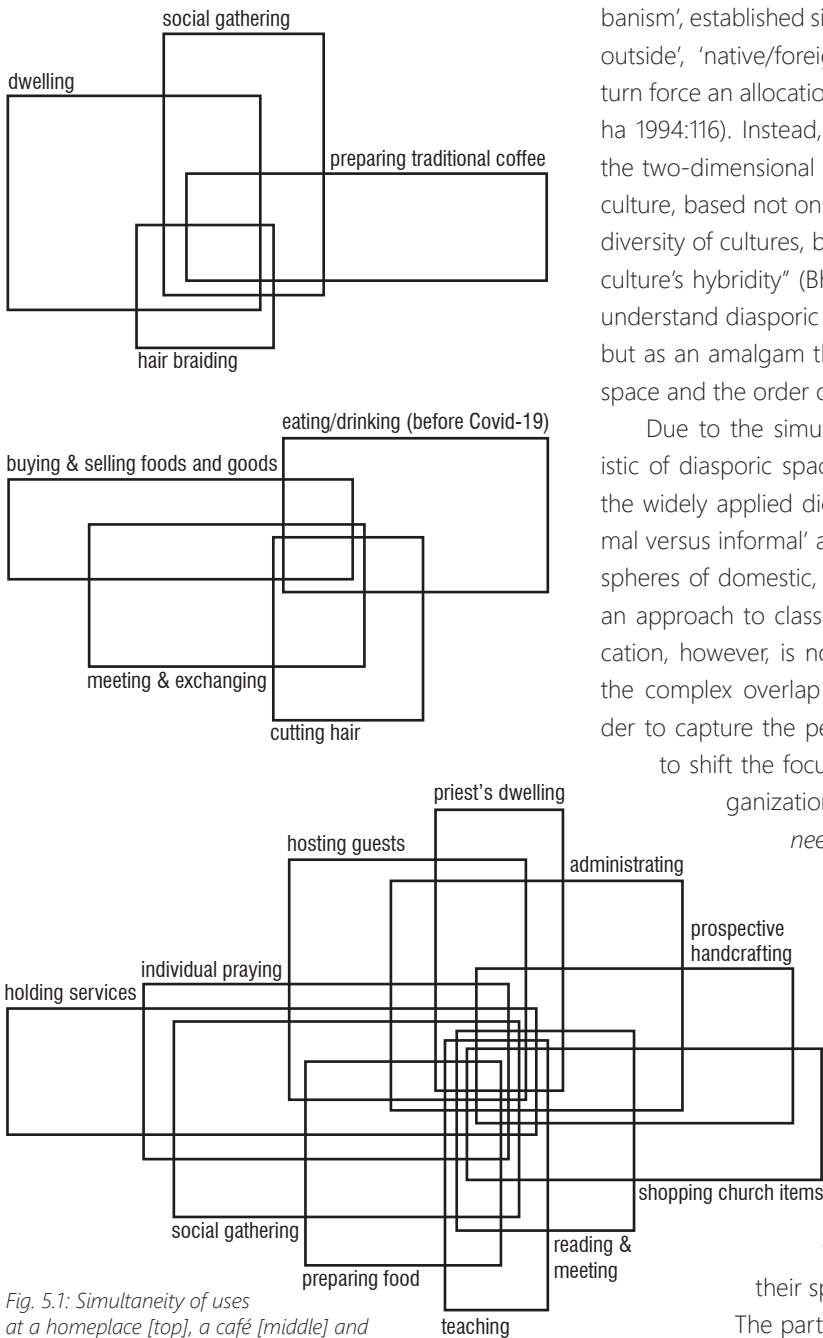


Fig. 5.1: Simultaneity of uses at a homeplace [top], a café [middle] and a church [bottom].

banism', established simplifying binaries of 'self/other', 'inside/outside', 'native/foreign', 'normal/different', which would in turn force an allocation to either one or the other side (Bhabha 1994:116). Instead, he proposes a 'Third Space' to elude the two-dimensional logic by conceptualizing "inter-national culture, based not on the exoticism of multiculturalism or the diversity of cultures, but on the inscription and articulation of culture's hybridity" (Bhabha 1994:38). This notion is useful to understand diasporic places not as 'exotic' or different places but as an amalgam that opens up the possibility of thinking space and the order of usages in different ways.

Due to the simultaneity of uses as a central characteristic of diasporic space, it cannot be classified according to the widely applied dichotomy of 'private versus public', 'formal versus informal' and 'global versus local'. The introduced spheres of domestic, communal and transactional represent an approach to classify observed activities. A sharp demarcation, however, is not feasible in reality and cannot reflect the complex overlap of scale-transcending activities. In order to capture the peculiarity of diasporic places, I propose

to shift the focus on concrete needs that diasporic organization and place-making activities fulfil: *the*

need for retreat, the need for communality and the need for exchange. All three case studies, the home place, the church as well as the café, are able to host all three needs. Non-diasporic subjects might also have similar needs; for diasporic subjects, however, accommodating and meeting these needs is of vital importance, as they address emotional and physical necessities which cannot be taken for granted in their specific position.

The partially exclusive and introverted nature of the places with varying degrees depending on the sphere, allows providing a space of physical and emotional refuge. This function is of particular importance against the backdrop of cultural differences with the dominant culture and emerging experiences of discomfort or exclusion as well as openly discriminatory incidents. Five of the interviewees shared personal experiences of open racism on the streets in informal conversations besides the official interviews, retelling their partly quick-witted, partly helpless reactions. I thus argue that diasporas rely on the existence of places in the city that are able to meet the need for exchange,

communality and, most importantly, retreat as preconditions for developing a sense of home, not in a territorial way, but in a spiritual way. bell hooks stresses the role of the 'homeplace' as 'safe space', which I understand here in a broader sense that can also include a church or a café as well. As they are spaces of healing and source of resistance from which strategies against the above mentioned challenges are developed, hooks points out their "radical political dimension" (1990:384). Thus, they offer the possibility to question existing (urban) structures and norms due to their particular point of view and, furthermore, stimulate a "counter hegemonic discourse" (hooks 1989:20).

“ [...] it was there on the inside, in that "homeplace" [...], that we had the opportunity to grow and develop, to nurture our spirits. hooks (1990:384)

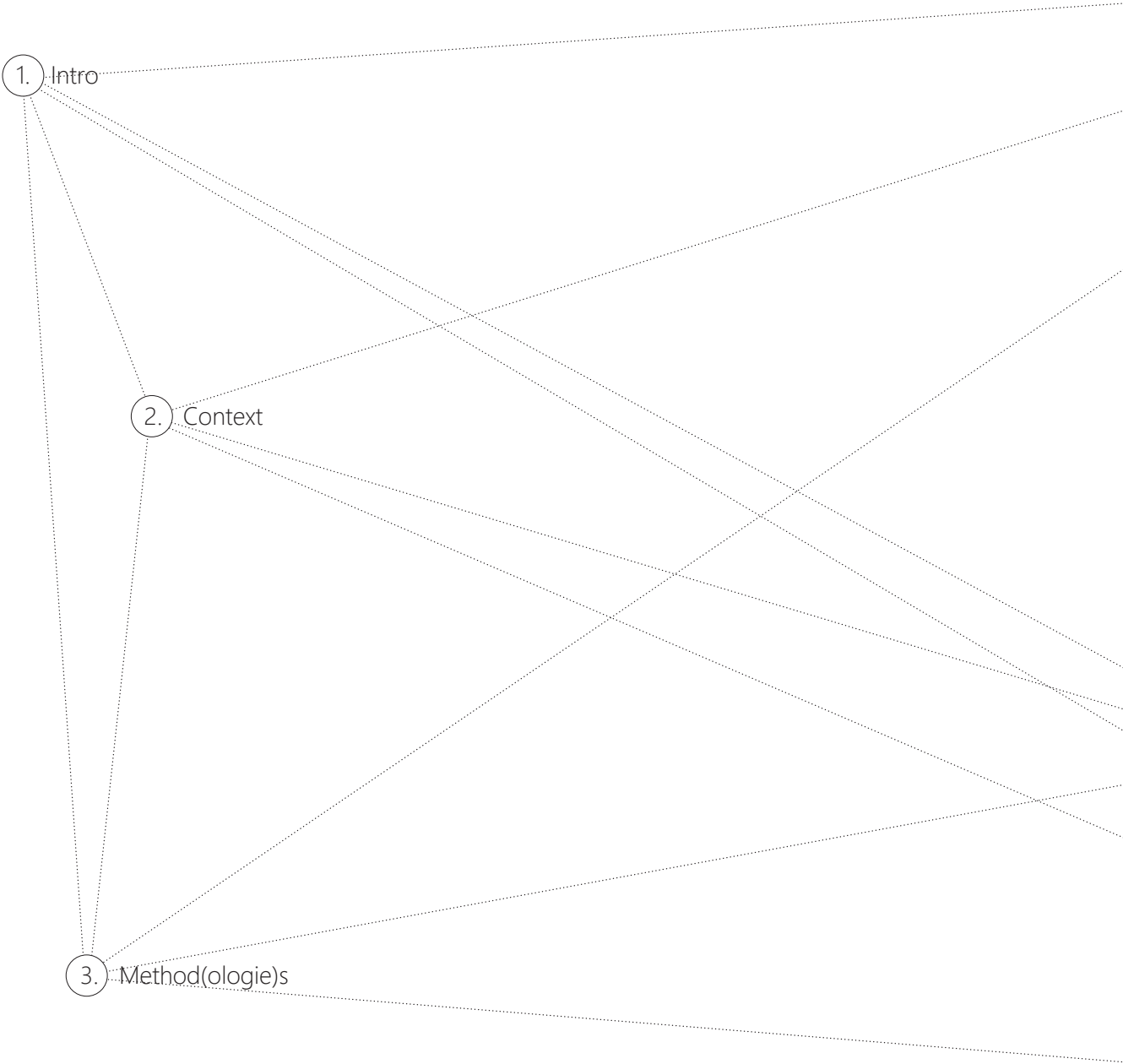
Conclusion

The discussed findings that emerged from the situated empirical research on socio-cultural and economic practices of the **ሓበጃ** Community, illustrate social and spatial, material and immaterial, local and translocal aspects of diasporic life in the urban realm. They are based on an understanding of contextual and relational diasporic identities within multi-dimensional reference systems, including differing personal, communal and national (hi)stories. By adopting the Community's perspective, intrinsic biases and structural obstacles within existing (urban) ordering principles are unveiled, on the one hand, and countering strategies from within the Community are discovered, on the other hand. In doing so, it is shown how the Community is capable of fulfilling basic physical and emotional necessities: enabling trans(local) exchange, pursuing communal activities and creating spaces of refuge. This can be achieved by particular forms of diasporic organizing and place-making in urban settings, including translocal and interlocal networks, unpaid commitment, spatial and social flexibility and resilience as well as spatial mimicry and hybridity. 'Diasporic Urbanism' is thus constituted in the intersection of emerging types of urban diasporic spaces and agencies, which are characterized by their scale-transcending and non-binary, rhizomatic and self-organized, multi-functional and adaptive features. It is one form out of many urbanisms that contemporary cities host, yet the **ሓበጃ** Community as well as other international communities in Hamburg and other German and European metropolises, are no longer marginal parts in globalized urban societies and will thus, to a growing extent, shape the current and future urban environment. The situated findings, including identified exclusive effects in city-making processes as well as observed countering strategies could feed the analysis of other urban contexts and stimulate further discourses on urban development in post-migrant cities.

1. Intro

2. Context

3. Method(ologie)s



4. Empirical Analysis

5. Discussion

6.

Outro

- 6.1 Contributing to the discipline
- 6.2 Contributing to the Community
- 6.3 Carrying on the research
- 6.4 Imagining alternative futures

6.1 Contributing to the discipline

The primary objective of this work is to make existing knowledge and information explicit and therefore start a debate on the implications for concrete urban planning practices. My analysis aims to uncover existing ‘adjustment screws’ that are crucial for a more just planning apparatus of our cities. If the city of Hamburg takes its propagated slogans such as “Kulturelle Vielfalt: Internationale Stadtgesellschaft und Interkulturelle Öffnung [Cultural Diversity: International Urban Society and Intercultural Opening]” (Stadtkultur Hamburg 2021) or “Die super diverse Stadt [The super diverse city]” (Körper-Stiftung 2017) seriously, it is obliged to initiate the necessary measures. This also includes questioning existing legal frameworks as well as planning tools and identifying their invisibly inscribed biases, for instance by asking the following questions: How (un)equal is the distribution of financial funds for urban district and community work which are supposed to prevent social marginalization? In which languages are advertisements for public funding published? Is it possible for someone who recently moved to Germany to found a non-profit association? What facilities and types of usages get addressed when mentioning “communal use [Gemeinbedarf]” in legal frameworks such as the zoning plan [‘Flächennutzungsplan’]? Why is a church listed as an example and a mosque is not? Whose places and activities are regarded as valuable for urban development? Who gets actively invited to events of so-called ‘citizen participation’ and who represents whose interests?

Promoting fundamental and structural change would require answering these questions by seriously considering existential spatial and social needs of all members of the ‘super diverse city’. Some exemplary examples have been unveiled in this research work. So far, “unequal conditions in Europe are frequently discussed in terms of migration and (national) integration, instead of analysing them from an anti-racist and anti-colonial perspective [...]” (Ha 2017:81). A lack of integration is thus propagated as an individual and/or cultural problem on the side of the migrant instead of considering and examining structural barriers (Foroutan 2015). If urban development as well as general societal structures would start adapting to already existing urban realities of post-migrant societies, loud demands for integration from the privileged parts of society would very likely turn out to be groundless. This would mean taking concrete measures of adapting policies such as the ones mentioned above, as well as addressing striking representation gaps in German institutions (ibid.).

6.2 Contributing to the Community

Apart from the professional contribution to the field of urban studies and urban planning, I sincerely hope that this work will be useful for the **ሕዝብ** Community in Hamburg. Firstly, it should act as a reflection of their achievements so far and thus a statement of recognition for the things they have achieved. Furthermore, the spatial and temporal survey of **ሕዝብ** locations in Hamburg could be a concrete and useful

tool for navigating their activities in the city. And finally, a more profound study of the content could open up the possibility to spread information, to connect people and ideas. My personal impression is that people have similar ideas of what the Community needs: committed individuals, more networking activities, more extensive exchange of information instead of internal separation and, most importantly, a common place in the city for social and educational purposes that is open for all members of the Community. This research could possibly help to link existing spatial and personal resources from within the Community in order to facilitate such developments.

6.3 Carrying on the research

The research on spatial and social urban realities of international communities looks back on a short history but will play an even greater role in the future. The findings in this thesis would gain more relevance by comparing them to other contexts; by asking how other diasporic communities deal with similar challenges, how different international communities could learn from each other, and what potential a joint representation of interests would hold. For instance, against the backdrop of decreasing numbers of German church members, why not consider structural measures regarding the conversion of existing churches for the purposes of international communities?

Moreover, I would be interested in research on how quotidian, institutionalized and structural racism spatializes in urban contexts and how it influences urban planning processes. This would touch upon mentioned questions of discriminatory exclusion mechanisms, disguised as seemingly neutral legal frameworks. Besides scrutinizing concrete (urban) governing tools, the personnel composition of strategic positions in urban planning institutions, but also in regional and national parliaments as well as in places of knowledge production such as universities need to be questioned and adjusted. Noa K. Ha stresses the central role of European metropolises as the scene where the “[...] preconditions of postcolonial representation, governance and justice get challenged” (2017:79). Only by uncovering the blind spots in (urban) research, existing asymmetrical practices can be renegotiated.

6.4 Imagining alternative futures

With regard to growing social injustice and advancing climate change, hierarchical capitalist societies with strong tendencies towards isolation – on an individual as well as on a national level – do not seem to provide sustainable futures. We are therefore in need of inspiration for alternative ways of living. Looking at marginal spaces where different types of spatiality and conviviality in the urban context are created, offers the possibility to learn lessons for imagining different futures. In his book ‘Afrotopia’, Felwine Sarr constitutes a crisis of the material and technical civili-

zation, questioning the Western unified model of development and the 'objective' evaluation criteria it implies (2019:22). He stresses the need to recalibrate the interrelations between the cultural, social, economic and political sphere (ibid.: 28). Moving central characteristics of diasporic realities, such as rhizomatic translocal organization forms, strong engagement for the community and hybrid spaces and identities to the centre of attention, could be a starting point for this very process. If this will not lead to a shift in paradigm, it at least enables a shift in perspective, or in the words of Homi K. Bhabha, creates the opportunity to "[...] transform our sense of what it means to live, to be, in other times and different spaces, both human and historical" (Bhabha 1994:256).

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to thank all my interview partners for sharing their manifold stories with me! I am deeply grateful for your candour and the trust you placed in me.

I thank the professors of Urban Design for their commitment to interdisciplinary teaching and critical thinking.

I especially thank Johanna Hoerning for the encouraging guidance and precise feedback throughout the process of this work.

I truly thank Hewan Semon for sharing implicit and explicit knowledge with me. Thank you for your ability to combine scientific expertise with a human and humble nature.

Special thanks go to Simon Okbamichael for contributing the poem.

Many thanks for direct and indirect support to Bethlehem Mamo, Daniel Tesfamichael, Efreem Tesfalem, Dr. Getie Gelaye, Idris Mohamed, Kira Seyboth, Marian Rudhart, Marie-Therese Jakoubek, Philipp Stähr, Samson Wondimu, Sean Bisset and Sophia Leipert!

Thank you, የቸንየለፆ, አመሰግናለሁ!

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Interviews

Interview **ii** (2021). Personal interview, conducted by the author. 26 April 2021, Hamburg. 29 minutes, completely transcribed.

Interview **iii** (2021). Personal interview, conducted by the author. 15 May 2021, Hamburg. 40 minutes, completely transcribed.

Interview **iv** (2021). Personal interview, conducted by the author. 20 May 2021, Hamburg. 1 hour, 45 minutes, completely transcribed.

Interview **v** (2021). Personal interview, conducted by the author. 11 June 2021, Hamburg. 39 minutes, completely transcribed.

Interview **vi** (2021). Interview on the phone, conducted by the author. 12 June 2021, Hamburg. 36 minutes, completely transcribed.

Interview **vii** (2021). Personal interview, conducted by the author. 18 June 2021, Hamburg. Verbatim from memory.

Interview **viii** (2021). Personal interview, conducted by the author. 03 July 2021, Hamburg. 2 hours, 6 minutes, partially transcribed.

Interview **ix** (2021). Personal interview, conducted by the author. 14 July 2021, Hamburg. 28 minutes, completely transcribed.

Interview **x** (2021). Personal interview, conducted by the author. 22 July 2021, Hamburg. 23 minutes, partially transcribed.

Interview **xi** (2021). Interview on the phone, conducted by the author. 12 August 2021, Hamburg. 15 minutes, partially transcribed.

All interviewees are anonymised. Written out names have been changed, except for Dr. Abba Hiruie Ermias who agreed to appear with his real name.

Figures

All drawings, diagrams, photos and other visualizations have been produced by the author, if not indicated differently.

EIDESSTATTLICHE ERKLÄRUNG

Diese Erklärung ist der Thesis beizufügen!

Name: Tesfaigzi-Bund
Vorname: Yohana
Matrikelnummer: 6052782
Studienprogramm: Urban Design, Master

Ich versichere, dass ich die vorliegende Thesis mit dem Titel

Diasporic Urbanism

selbstständig und ohne unzulässige fremde Hilfe erbracht habe.

Ich habe keine anderen als die angegebenen Quellen und Hilfsmittel benutzt sowie wörtliche und sinngemäße Zitate kenntlich gemacht. Die Arbeit hat in gleicher oder ähnlicher Form noch keiner Prüfungsbehörde vorgelegen.

Im Falle einer Gruppenarbeit bezieht sich die Erklärung auf den von mir erarbeiteten Teil der Thesis.

Hamburg, den 13.09.21

Ort und Datum


Unterschrift der/des Studierenden

VOM PRÜFUNGSAMT AUSZUFÜLLEN

Die o.g. Thesis wurde abgegeben am

Eingangsstempel Infothek
Studierendenverwaltung | Prüfungsamt

ነገር ወዲ ሱብ ፡ እቲ ግርም ዝብለካ
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እንተ ኣስተብሂልካ ፡ እንተ ኣስተውዒልካ
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ስለምንታይሲ.

the things about human beings, that make you wonder
when you wake up, after a long night sleep
if you pause, and think about it
there are so many things, that puzzle you

why is that

first verse of a poem
by Simon Okbamichael

