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Nuanced reading of complex urban forms

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DOI
[10.7480/abe.2023.14](https://doi.org/10.7480/abe.2023.14)

Publication date
2023

Document Version
Final published version

Citation (APA)
Tola, A. T. (2023). *Addis Ababa's Sefer, Iddir, and Gebbi: Nuanced reading of complex urban forms*. [Dissertation (TU Delft), Delft University of Technology]. A+BE | Architecture and the Built Environment. https://doi.org/10.7480/abe.2023.14

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Please check the document version above.

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Dissertation

for the purpose of obtaining the degree of doctor
at Delft University of Technology
by the authority of the Rector Magnificus, prof.dr.ir. T.H.J.J. van der Hagen
chair of the Board for Doctorates
to be defended publicly on
Monday 25 September 2023 at 10:00 o'clock

by

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to Alemitu Shimelis, Tesfaye Tola, and Abeba Getu

for your unwavering love, trust, and support

Preface

The nuances are my abode: it is natural to me that I see and seek purpose in the nuances. Growing up in-between two cultures, both under poverty, provides me a degree of comfort within uncertainty. I was born and raised in the charmful city of Harer in Ethiopia, where I remained until the end of my high school education. The home culture created by my parents, who are educators themselves, places hard work, ingenuity, and diligence as cardinals to everyday life while situated in a city culture of laissez-faire, that is of Harer. Surely navigating such contrasting cultures at a young age had instilled in me the patience and humility to acknowledge the sort of in-between state of everyday life—not everything can be ordered and not everything can be disorder.

In addition to the formal education that I was receiving to be an architect, at Addis Ababa University, I had the environment to adapt to the dynamic nature of a big city. But it is what I experienced in the nexus of academics and practice in a drastically changing city that brought to my attention the incompatibility between curricula and policy on the one hand, and the everyday life of ingenuity and adaptation by the majority poor in the city on the other. It is indeed a shock exposure to witness the callous erasure of living environments in the name of urban development. What curricula and policies accept to be urban in form and economy stood against what everyday people understand to be their city.

In my professional career as an architect, I have had the opportunity to work on large scale housing projects that involved the real estate market in Addis Ababa; I have worked with government agencies in developing urban design and local development plans for different parts and scales of the city of Addis Ababa; and I started my academic career at Addis Ababa University in 2008. These experiences allowed me to actively partake in the period of drastic changes of a city that was faced with multiple challenges. As the reader will read within the body of this dissertation, I shared the frustration of many academics and practitioners of design, architecture, and planning especially in the housing sector. The context in which urbanization is led, to a large extent, by economic policies that are mainly top-down in conception and implementation; the lack of interest by both federal and local governing bodies to consider social and spatial issues as matters of legitimate urban policy; and the single-minded assumption by the same that quick and large scale interventions lead to alleviation of urban poverty and addressing

the housing shortage; have frustrated many involved. A mass production approach, that does not recognize contextual variables, has resulted in a redundant application of limited options, loss of local identities, and disruption of livelihoods. In policy documents, such as the GTPs (the growth and transformation plans) of the Ethiopian government, and political discourses that accompany them; there was little discussion on urbanization as a socio-spatial reality; rather a repetitive use of words such as sustainability, development, resettlement, renewal, participation and so on without meaningful articulation of what these mean in context. The rapid, top-down, and forceful lauding of these words without associated and contextualized meaning or interpretation leaves many in confusion. I have been at multiple venues where thought leaders have alarmed of replacing 'low rise 'slums' for high-rise ones' through such a process.

Such confusion and frustration is the inspiration to this research. With the drive to unearth the nuances of the complex city of Addis Ababa and re-evaluating—if not challenging, what is understood as urban, formal, or appropriate development according to the curricula and policies enacted in it. In order for local governance operatives and experts to be able to better articulate what is of essence for the city and its dwellers, I argue that a context driven, and inclusive form of reading and conception is of paramount importance. By extension, it is my hope that this dissertation is stimulating to not only those who are interested in the city of Addis Ababa, but also those who engage with the 'other' territories; places that regularly fall outside of the urban categories as formulated in trans-Atlantic academies and their cities.

Readers of this dissertation may encounter words and language that they are not familiar with. Some of this is because of context specific concepts, and some of it is because of phraseology adopted from one or another epistemic tradition as a result of the research methodology that is grafted from different scholarly realms. Readers will also find that architectural research and fieldwork has fertile fields of exploration in an transdisciplinary manner, especially as it relates to the social sciences.

Furthermore, as an author, although I am embedded in an institute in the Netherlands, I am linguistically, socially, culturally, and professionally situated in the context of study. This situatedness has been an advantage for insights that help capture nuances but I am also aware of the biases it can induce and much effort and care is invested to alleviate this possibility. I believe further studies and experimentation on the method of research will help refine the findings and the method itself for even better outcomes in this regard.

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Summary

Presently, Africa is experiencing rapid urbanization. The history of urbanization indicates that the process transformed the European traditional agrarian rural-based societies into modern urban-based industries, manufacturing and services.[1]

This dissertation problematizes the above two statements—the frequent overemphasis on population growth in connection to rapid urbanization in Africa, the framing of the eminent challenges as solely of economic concerns, and the usual recommendation that the solution is to build and urbanize fast and inexpensively. The second statement exemplifies the most usual tendency of policy makers and governance bodies to pursue European or American references in search of projective logics—remedies against the challenges of 'rapid urbanization.' Such casual disregard to the context-specific nature of city making, based on the imprecise premise of rapid urbanization thus seem to keep cities in African countries in a catch-22[2]—a cycle of urbanization processes that threaten the welfare and livelihood of urban dwellers with little to no means. Academic discourse regarding cities in Africa has for long been dominated by development theories that categorize the region in broad strokes as 'third world,' 'developing,' and recently the 'global south.' The contextual variations and rapidly mutating urbanizations of cities in the region are thus overlooked. Various epistemic clusters have caught up with this phenomenon and started calling for new theories, concepts, vocabulary, and analytic tools to be developed.[3] Many scholars hypothesize that transdisciplinary and expansive tactics need to be deployed in order to capture differences and understand nuances that should be integral to the production of knowledge about the 'other' territories. Towards this objective, there

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1   These are the first two statements of the article: Hassan M. Yousif, "Rapid Urbanization in Africa: Impacts on Housing and Urban Poverty," *Africa's Sustainable Development Bulletin*, 2005, 55.

2   AbdouMaliq Simone and Edgar Pieterse, *New Urban Worlds: Inhabiting Dissonant Times* (Cambridge, Medford: Polity Press, 2017), 6.

3   Christian Schmid et al., "Towards a New Vocabulary of Urbanisation Processes: A Comparative Approach," *Urban Studies* 55, no. 1 (January 2018): 19–52, https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098017739750; Neil Brenner and Christian Schmid, "Towards a New Epistemology of the Urban?," *City* 19, no. 2–3 (May 4, 2015): 151–82, https://doi.org/10.1080/13604813.2015.1014712; Jennifer Robinson, "Global and World Cities: A View from off the Map," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 26, no. 3 (September 1, 2002): 531–54, https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2427.00397; Ananya Roy, "The 21st-Century Metropolis: New Geographies of Theory," *Regional Studies* 43, no. 6 (2009): 819–30, https://doi.org/10.1080/00343400701809665.

are ongoing efforts to generate new theories and methodologies across various epistemes such as comparative urbanism, grounded theory, and social anthropology.

On the other hand, even though there are longstanding, built-in, cross-disciplinary traditions in their practices, design and architectural research have lagged in this effort. While, for instance, design anthropology and architectural anthropology have been advocated within the field of anthropology as interdisciplinary approaches to complexity, there exists little drive vise versa. Broadly, architectural fieldwork adopts ethnographic techniques such as observation and in-depth interviews and has done so for long; but theories and methodologies that are intent on apprehending the complex and ever-mutating contexts such as cities in Africa are rare.

This research is thus motivated by the calls for new concepts and analytic tools for documenting, analysing, and theorizing complex urban territories. With implicit comparative intent, it takes the case of Addis Ababa city and its old and typifying places—*sefer*,[4] to develop and test a new architectural transdisciplinary research methodology referred, in this dissertation, to as the trinocular.[5] By way of this methodology, it unearths and introduces *sefer*, *iddir*,[6] and *gebbi*[7] of Addis Ababa as not only socio-spatial phenomena but concepts and vocabulary for a located reading of the city itself. These concepts and vocabulary, the current dissertation argues, in both practical and metaphoric sense, should be the starting point of new urban imaginaries for Addis Ababa. Urban planning and housing projections thus, should draw inspiration from these notions and phenomena.

The trinocular is a methodology that is grafted from multiple disciplinary traditions and composed of three conceptual viewing lenses or frames of enquiry: cognitive borders—dwellers' understanding of the limits of their communal environs, social relationships—social networks that are sources of security and social capital for residents, and spatial typologies that embed and characterize these. These lenses are agile and can be dislocated beyond Addis Ababa or the continental region of Africa, especially in research aimed at nuanced reading of urban complexities. In addition to being an architectural methodological advance, the trinocular provides researchers in the field a springboard for more productive collaborative and transdisciplinary engagement and outcomes.

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4 See chapter 2.

5 See chapter 3.

6 See chapter 5.

7 See chapter 6.

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Samenvatting

Het proces van verstedelijking voltrekt zich momenteel in Afrika in een razend tempo. De geschiedenis van verstedelijking laat zien hoe dit proces in Europa traditionele agrarische en landelijke samenlevingsvormen heeft getransformeerd tot moderne en stedelijke vormen, gebaseerd op industrie, productie en dienstverlening.[8]

Dit proefschrift stelt vragen bij de twee bovengenoemde stellingen – de voortdurende benadrukking van de bevolkingsgroei in relatie tot de snelle verstedelijking in Afrika, de veronderstelling dat de grote uitdagingen verbonden aan de verstedelijkingsprocessen louter van economische belang zijn, en de gebruikelijke aanbeveling dat snel en goedkoop bouwen en verstedelijken het juiste antwoord is. De tweede stelling illustreert de meest gebruikelijke tendens van beleidsmakers en bestuursorganen om Europese en Amerikaanse referenties na te streven in de zoektocht naar antwoorden op de uitdagingen van 'snelle verstedelijking.' Het zodoende negeren van de context-specifieke aard van vorming en ontwikkeling van steden door zich te baseren op algemene en onnauwkeurige aannames met betrekking tot processen van snelle verstedelijking, lijkt Afrikaanse steden op deze manier in een catch-22[9] te houden – in een cyclus van verstedelijkingsprocessen die het welzijn en de kostwinning bedreigt van de stedelingen die over weinig tot geen middelen beschikken. Het academisch discours over Afrikaanse steden wordt al lange tijd gedomineerd door ontwikkelingstheorieën die de regio categoriseren aan de hand van brede termen als 'de derde wereld', 'ontwikkelingslanden,' en recent, 'the Global South.' De context gebonden variaties en snel veranderende verstedelijking van steden in de regio worden daarmee over het hoofd gezien. Verschillende kennisdomeinen hebben dit fenomeen inmiddels in het vizier en roepen om ontwikkeling van nieuwe theorieën, concepten, vocabulaire, en analytische

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8 Dit zijn de eerste twee zinnen (hier vertaald naar Nederlands) van het artikel: Hassan M. Yousif, "Rapid Urbanization in Africa: Impacts on Housing and Urban Poverty," *Africa's Sustainable Development Bulletin*, 2005, 55.

9 AbdouMaliq Simone en Edgar Pieterse, *New Urban Worlds: Inhabiting Dissonant Times* (Cambridge, Medford: Polity Press, 2017), 6.

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middelen.[10] Veel wetenschappers veronderstellen dat transdisciplinaire en wijd uitwaaierende methoden ingezet moeten worden om de verschillen te kunnen vaststellen en om de nuances te begrijpen die onlosmakelijk horen te zijn bij de ontwikkeling van kennis over de 'andere' gebieden. Om dit te bereiken, zijn er voortgaande pogingen en inspanningen om nieuwe theorieën en methodologieën te ontwikkelen vanuit verschillende kennisgebieden, zoals comparative urbanism, gefundeerde theorie en sociale antropologie.

Hoewel er in de praktijk langdurige en ingewortelde interdisciplinaire tradities aanwezig zijn, lopen architectonisch ontwerp en onderzoek achter in deze inspanning. Terwijl bijvoorbeeld ontwerp antropologie en architectonische antropologie worden bepleit binnen de antropologie als interdisciplinaire benaderingen van complexiteit, bestaat er vice versa, vanuit ontwerp en architectuur zelf, weinig motivatie deze benadering verder te ontwikkelen. In grote lijnen gebruikt architectonisch veldwerk al sinds lange tijd etnografische technieken zoals observatie en diepgaande interviews; maar er bestaan nauwelijks theorieën en methodologieën die de intentie hebben om de complexe en continu veranderende contexten, zoals die van steden in Afrika, te begrijpen.

Dit onderzoek wordt zodoende gemotiveerd door de oproep om nieuwe concepten en analytische middelen te ontwikkelen voor het documenteren, analyseren, en theoretiseren van complexe stedelijke gebieden. Met een impliciete intentie tot vergelijking met andere steden neemt dit onderzoek de stad Addis Abeba met zijn oorspronkelijke en typerende *sefer*,[11] tot uitgangspunt om een nieuwe architectonische, transdisciplinaire onderzoeksmethodologie, in dit proefschrift genoemd de trinocular,[12] de trinoculair of drievoudige verrekijker, te ontwikkelen en te testen. Door middel van deze methodologie worden *sefer*, *iddir*,[13] en *gebbi*,[14] van Addis Abeba geïntroduceerd en blootgelegd als sociaal-politieke fenomenen, maar

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10 Christian Schmid et al., "Towards a New Vocabulary of Urbanisation Processes: A Comparative Approach," Urban Studies 55, no. 1 (January 2018): 19–52, https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098017739750; Neil Brenner en Christian Schmid, "Towards a New Epistemology of the Urban?," City 19, no. 2–3 (Mei 4, 2015): 151–82, https://doi.org/10.1080/13604813.2015.1014712; Jennifer Robinson, "Global and World Cities: A View from off the Map," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 26, no. 3 (September 1, 2002): 531–54, https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2427.00397; Ananya Roy, "The 21st-Century Metropolis: New Geographies of Theory," *Regional Studies* 43, no. 6 (2009): 819–30, https://doi.org/10.1080/00343400701809665.

11 Zie hoofdstuk 2

12 Zie hoofdstuk 3

13 Zie hoofdstuk 5

14 Zie hoofdstuk 6

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tegelijkertijd als concepten en vocabulaire voor een locatie gebonden en ruimtelijke lezing van de stad zelf. Dit proefschrift beargumenteert dat deze concepten en vocabulaire, praktisch en metaforisch, het uitgangspunt zouden moeten zijn voor nieuwe stedelijke denkbeelden voor Addis Abeba.

De trinoculair is een methodologie die geënt is op meerdere disciplinaire tradities en samengesteld uit drie conceptuele lenzen of kaders van onderzoek: cognitieve grenzen (het begrip van de begrenzingen door bewoners van hun gemeenschappelijke omgeving), sociale relaties (sociale netwerken die bronnen van veiligheid en sociaal kapitaal zijn voor bewoners) en ruimtelijke typologieën die deze grenzen en relaties karakteriseren en insluiten. Deze lenzen zijn wendbaar en kunnen zich verplaatsen buiten Addis Ababa of het Afrikaanse continent, met name in onderzoek gericht op een genuanceerde interpretatie van stedelijke complexiteit. Naast betekenis als een stap vooruit in architectonische onderzoeksmethodologiën, dient de trinoculair als springplank voor wetenschappers om meer productieve en transdisciplinaire verbindingen en resultaten te bereiken.

1 Introduction

The adequacy of design, architectural, and urban theories to conceptualize the multitude of experiences in cities across various territories has been under scrutiny for a while now. Scholars have questioned the conceptual frames of the 20th century that deal with cities via categories that led to the theoretical exclusion of territories such as the continental region of Africa.[15] And some have alarmed that new vocabulary are needed to expediate discourse and understanding of urbanization; and that, terms such as 'informality' or 'urban informality,' are infused with negative connotations that marginalize experiences of significant urban landscapes.[16] Such transatlantic lobbed readings result in misguided urbanization, especially in the said territories, through development policies that rely on their briefs and recommendations. In addition, and tied to these theoretical inadequacies, scholars from varying epistemic clusters have raised methodological concerns; that there exists deficiency in capturing the rapid mutation of conurbations and communities—a lack of agility to read urbanization in varying temporal, cultural and spatial contexts.[17]

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15   AbdouMaliq Simone, "On the Worlding of African Cities," *African Studies Review* 44, no. 2 (September 2001): 15–41; Robinson, "Global and World Cities"; Jenny Robinson, "Postcolonialising Geography: Tactics and Pitfalls," *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography* 24, no. 3 (November 1, 2003): 273–89, https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9493.00159; Ananya Roy, "Urban Informality: Toward an Epistemology of Planning," *Journal of the American Planning Association* 71, no. 2 (2005): 147–58; Roy, "The 21st-Century Metropolis: New Geographies of Theory"; Ananya Roy, "Urbanisms, Worlding Practices and the Theory of Planning," *Planning Theory* 10, no. 1 (2011): 6–15, https://doi.org/10.1177/1473095210386065; AbdouMaliq Simone, "The Surfacing of Urban Life: A Response to Colin McFarlane and Neil Brenner, David Madden and David Wachsmuth," *City* 15, no. 3–4 (August 2011): 355–64, https://doi.org/10.1080/13604813.2011.595108; AbdouMaliq Simone, "Demonstrations at Work: Some Notes from Urban Africa," in *The Ghetto: Contemporary Global Issues and Controversies*, First (Avalon Publishing, 2012), 245–64, http://www.abdoumaliqsimone.com/files/45663502.pdf; Jennifer Robinson, "Comparative Urbanism: New Geographies and Cultures of Theorizing the Urban," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 40, no. 1 (January 2016): 187–99, https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2427.12273; Abdoumaliq Simone, "(Non)Urban Humans: Questions for a Research Agenda (the Work the Urban Could Do)," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 44, no. 4 (2020): 755–67, https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2427.12875.

16   Schmid et al., "Towards a New Vocabulary of Urbanisation Processes"; Gautam Bhan, "From the Basti to the 'House': Socio-Spatial Readings of Housing Policy in India," *Current Sociology* 65, no. 4 (July 2017): 587–602, https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392117697465.

17   Section 1.3 below summarizes further scholarly calls to re/de-center urban theory from the Euro-American to the southern territories.

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These epistemic and methodological critical discourses have for decades been staple to the fields of behavioral sciences, humanities, and social sciences. Grounded theory's introduction in the 1960s conceived as the discovery of theory from systematically collected and analyzed empirical data, and Comparative Urbanism's drive to systematically study similarity and difference among cities and urban processes are examples of rich critical traditions with pronounced pluralistic tendencies.[18] And, the adoption of photography as an anthropological research method in the 1960s as visual anthropology,[19] and the emergence of visual ethnography[20] in the 1990s with the incorporation of visual material in ethnographic research also signify interdisciplinary methodological advances as means for apprehending the spatiality of human and cultural experiences—interdisciplinarity as means to address the methodological shortcomings under scrutiny.[21] In similar fashion, a number of scholarly drives, especially since the 1970's, have been made as anthropology and architecture discover more common areas of interest and operation.

Designers are now as likely to engage in social research as they are in the making of form: Once an intuitive process, gauging cultural relevance has become part of a burgeoning area – design anthropology.[22]

The above declaration by Alison J. Clarke comes at the back of the early to mid 1990s spatial and material turns in anthropology. Design anthropology emerged in this period as a subfield that "combines elements from design and anthropology."[23] Clarke discusses the historical relation of design to anthropology by referring to the 1976 inaugural exhibition at the Cooper-Hewitt National Design

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18 Barney G. Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1967); Jan Nijman, "Introduction—Comparative Urbanism," *Urban Geography* 28, no. 1 (2007): 1–6, https://doi.org/10.2747/0272-3638.28.1.1. See also chapter 3 of this dissertation wherein an in-depth review is presented.

19 John Collier and Malcolm Collier, *Visual Anthropology: Photography as a Research Methodology*, Revised and Expanded (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1986).

20 Sarah Pink, *Doing Visual Ethnography: Images, Media and Representation in Research* (London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: SAGE Publications, 2001).

21 Further discussion regarding grounded theory, comparative urbanism, and visual ethnography can be found in Chapter 3 of this dissertation.

22 Alison J. Clarke, ed., *Design Anthropology: Object Culture in the 21st Century*, 1st ed., Edition Angewandte (Vienna: Springer Vienna, 2011), 9, https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-7091-0234-3.

23 Ton Otto and Rachel Charlotte Smith, eds., "Design Anthropology: A Distinct Style of Knowing," in *Design Anthropology: Theory and Practice* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2020), 1.

Museum in New York titled MAN transFORMS as a venue where the Austrian Architect Hans Hollein's installations questioned the definition of "design practice and its relationship to society" and advocated for a more anthropological understanding that conceives architectural objects as products of social processes than the "genius maker."[24] According to Ton Otto and Rachel Charlotte Smith the convergence of design and anthropology is rooted back to the late 1970s when "designers became aware of the value of ethnographic data and methodologies."[25] And later, Lucy Alice Suchman's embeddedness in an industrial and corporate setting at Xerox Palo Alto Research Center (PARC) with an anthropological research[26] that takes the photocopier as an object is widely credited for being foundational[27] to design anthropology and having "stretched the bounds of disciplinary orthodoxy."[28]

Otto and Smith proclaim design anthropology as a distinct style of knowing that emerges out of the tension that results from the difference between design and anthropology.[29] Design's orientation to the collaborative making of the future, its impulse for intervention—to effect change, and tradition of collaboration, multidisciplinary teamwork, and cocreation are attributes that are distinct from anthropology as are anthropology's function in theory development and cultural interpretation, systematic study of the past to be able to comprehend the present, and its key practice—ethnography, as means to sensitively capture the "value orientation of the various groups affected by design projects"[30] from design. Design anthropology thus is a theoretic position that allows for a productive convergence of "approaches of social anthropology and design research."[31]

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24 Clarke, Design Anthropology, 74–75.

25 Otto and Smith, 2.

26 Lucy A. Suchman, *Plans and Situated Actions: The Problem of Human-Machine Communication*, Learning in Doing (Cambridge, New York, New Rochelle, Melboune, Sydney: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

27 Otto and Smith, "Design Anthropology: A Distinct Style of Knowing," 5.

28 Lucy Alice Suchman, *Human–Machine Reconfigurations: Plans and Situated Actions*, 2nd ed. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 3–4.

29 Otto and Smith, "Design Anthropology: A Distinct Style of Knowing." See also, Ton Otto and Rachel Charlotte Smith, "Cultures of the Future: Emergence and Intervention in Design Anthropology," in *Design Anthropological Futures* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2020), 19, https://www-taylorfrancis-com.tudelft.idm.oclc.org/books/edit/10.4324/9781003085188/design-anthropological-futures-rachel-charlotte-smith-kasper-tang-vangkilde-thomas-binder-ton-otto-joachim-halse-mette-gislev-kjaersgaard.

30 Otto and Smith, "Design Anthropology: A Distinct Style of Knowing," 4.

31 Otto and Smith, "Cultures of the Future: Emergence and Intervention in Design Anthropology," 19.

Regarding its position as a discipline: Otto and Smith see design anthropology as a discipline on its own, Suchman argues it should remain as a critical anthropology of design—"design as a problematic object,"[32] and others suggest that anthropology as a discipline should change by adopting some directions from design practices.[33] Concerning disciplinary boundaries and diffusions: Clarke cautions against a "hyper-inflated design culture" that is disconnected from historiographic foundations for it may lead to the loss of criticality within design.[34] Adam Drazin establishes three devices; context, values, and futures, as heuristic way of knowing[35] wherein design is to be considered as a "cultural field in itself."[36]

As a young field that engages in both analysis and intervention throughout the production of knowledge, design anthropology is an ongoing exploration of tools and methods to create located knowledge and particular solutions. Its operations move knowledge bidirectionally between the design studio and the fields of everyday life. It is found on interdisciplinarity and collaboration. Its context and value sensitivity, expansive temporal interests—backward and forward in time, its reflexive and iterative practices, and heuristic modes of knowledge production open a vast field of possibilities for the construction of located and pluralistic understanding of complex contexts.

In similar vein, but separate from other design practices, architectural anthropology is another emergent field of anthropology. Although the preoccupation of anthropology with architecture specifically is an age-old tradition embedded in the subfield of anthropological archaeology,[37] the explicit mention of architectural anthropology as a focused field can be traced back to the late 1960s when it was announced as a "News of general interest"[38] on Anthropology News; an American Anthropological Association publication, saying:

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32 Lucy Suchman, "Anthropological Relocations and the Limits of Design," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 40, no. 1 (October 21, 2011): 1, https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.anthro.041608.105640.

33 Otto and Smith, "Design Anthropology: A Distinct Style of Knowing," 10.

34 Alison J. Clarke, "The New Design Ethnographers 1968-1974: Towards a Critical Histography of Design Anthropology," in *Design Anthropological Futures* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2020), 73, https://www-taylorfrancis-com.tudelft.idm.oclc.org/books/edit/10.4324/9781003085188/design-anthropological-futures-rachel-charlotte-smith-kasper-tang-vangkilde-thomas-binder-ton-otto-joachim-halse-mette-gislev-kjaersgaard.

35 Adam Drazin, *Design Anthropology in Context: An Introduction to Design Materiality* (New York: Routledge, 2021), 127–211, https://www-taylorfrancis-com.tudelft.idm.oclc.org/pdfviewer/.

36 Clarke, "The New Design Ethnographers 1968-1974: Towards a Critical Histography of Design Anthropology," 72.

37 Victor Buchli, *An Anthropology of Architecture*, 1st ed. (London: Routledge, 2013), 47, https://www-taylorfrancis-com.tudelft.idm.oclc.org/pdfviewer/.

38 "Architectural Anthropology," *Anthropology News: Published Monthly by the American Anthropological Association*, 1968, V–9, N-6 edition, 8.

Unlike much architectural planning, this group of collaborators places man in the center of its thinking. "Dwelling" Is conceived to be the manner of dwelling involving activities and achievements, rather than a static, physical concept.[39]

By contrasting 'activities and achievements' against 'static, physical concepts,' this announcement represents the interest of the said 'group of collaborators' to be to explain 'dwelling' as an experience rather than an artefact. This remained a thematic shift; a focus on lived experiences in the decades that followed.

A fundamental push to activate architectural anthropology "as a new field of interdisciplinary specialization and research,"[40] came from mainly non-English speaking scholars, one of whom is Mari-Jose Amerlinck.[41]

Yet we have found that the Spanish *forma construida* and *entorno construido* are not only not fully equivalent to their English counterparts *built form* and *built environment* but also lack precision and therefore theoretical content; *forma* is an ambiguous term, and there are many other equally ambiguous possible synonyms for *built (edificado)* and for *environment (entorno, medio ambiente, ambiente)*.[42]

Motivated by the advantages it presents in the conceptualization of *'other'* cultures of construction and settlement, Amerlinck pursued a definition to architectural anthropology as an interdisciplinary field—"interdisciplinarity seems to precede the formation of a new discipline."[43] According to Amerlinck, architectural anthropology is "anthropologically oriented synchronic and diachronic research" that takes activities and processes of the production of living environments as its object.[44] As a co-discussant of the subject matter at the beginning of the 21st century, Amos Rapoport argued against the establishment of architectural anthropology as a separate field and proposed instead for it to remain under the practice of environmental and behavioral studies.[45]

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39 "Architectural Anthropology," 8.

40 Mari-Jose Amerlinck, ed., *Architectural Anthropology* (Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey, 2001), 1.

41 Amerlinck, 4.

42 Amerlinck, 5.

43 Amerlinck, 11.

44 Amerlinck, 3.

45 Nicholas Jay Watkins, review of *Architectural Anthropology*, by Mari-Jose Amerlinck, *Technology and Culture* 43, no. 2 (April 2002): 405.

An invigorated push in favor of architectural anthropology came almost two decades later as Marie Stender argued that "the most intriguing contribution to be expected from future architectural anthropology lies in combining anthropology's current material turn with an architectural approach to materiality."[46] Stender further highlights, because of contemporary architects' practice of crossing cultural contexts, "anthropology has become particularly relevant to architecture" as it marks its deviation from modernism and universalism.[47] Design research and especially architectural research has since increasingly grown toward the development and use of anthropological tools and techniques intent on capturing what the user, dweller, or worker wants. By laying out three positional and practical differences that exist between anthropological and architectural research and practice; in terms as communication, temporality, and normativity, Stender put forth a strong argument that, despite their differences that can be turned to "fruitful new ways of developing both architecture and anthropology," architects and anthropologists should be invested in the development of architectural anthropology that applies in more ways than just the study of the vernacular.[48] And, most recently, Tim Ingold pointed to the possibility for "even melding with one another" of anthropology and architecture as they open to a "more-than-human world, and to the sheer range of human experience within it."[49] Considering these discourses are emerging largely from the field of anthropology, the lingering question would thus be, is architecture ready for such possibly intricate futures beyond its customary interdisciplinary traditions?

Architecture is a design profession wherein theory and practice co-operate, and a copious tradition of fieldwork exists.[50] And, as stated previously, architectural research and practice is imbued with cross-disciplinary traditions. Adam Jasper's continued search for a conversation between architecture and anthropology[51] over

46   Marie Stender, "Towards an Architectural Anthropology—What Architects Can Learn from Anthropology and Vice Versa," *Architectural Theory Review* 21, no. 1 (2017): 28, https://doi.org/10.1080/13264826.2016.1256333.

47   Stender, 28.

48   See also, Marie Stender, Claus Bech-Danielsen, and Aina Landsverk Hagen, eds., *Architectural Anthropology: Exploring Lived Space*, Routledge Research in Architecture (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2022). In this recent book co-edited by Stender et. al. more expansive discussion and exploratory cases are presented.

49   Tim Ingold, "Foreword," in Architectural Anthropology: Exploring Lived Space, Routledge Research in Architecture (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2022).

50   Suzanne Ewing et al., eds., *Architecture and Field/Work*, AHRA Critiques: Critical Studies in Architectural Humanities 6 (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2011).

51   Adam Jasper, "Anthropology and Architecture: A Misplaced Conversation," *Architectural Theory Review* 21, no. 1 (January 2, 2017): 1, https://doi.org/10.1080/13264826.2017.1289709. "The two fields—architecture and anthropology—seem to have so much to say to each other."; Adam Jasper, "Anthropology and Architecture: A Misplaced Conversation (Part 2)," *Architectural Theory Review* 21, no. 2 (May 3, 2016): 112, https://doi.org/10.1080/13264826.2017.1373412"Where is the conversation between anthropology and architecture?"

two issues of *Archiectural Theory Review* brought forth an assortment of writings stemming from both fields. Among others, Elena Chestnova's elaboration of Gottfied Semper's concept; *Stoffwechsel*,[52] in the 1850s, how his work was influenced by contemporary ethnographic and cultural historical ideas, and in turn, how his style "became a precursor for ethnographic studies of the late nineteenth century," stands out as an example of historic overlaps between the two disciplines, especially from the architects' perspective. Despite the brilliant contributions to this collection, Jasper stated that some questions remained unanswered in this conversation—"the host of papers illustrating how to do urban anthropology never materialized."[53]

Suzanne Ewing urges that architecture's long-standing practice of fieldwork is underexplored and requires critical attention that does not necessarily rely on the "paradigms, legacies, and critical frameworks" of other disciplines.[54] The fieldwork in architectural research has yet to establish itself as a viable form of inter and intra disciplinary research engagement. Jill Seddon acknowledges her fieldwork to be a dissimilar experience to "the intensive participant observation that remains a defining criterion of anthropology."[55] Clearly, the critique of Rem Koolhaas's work[56] in Lagos as "as reckless anthropology and as an outsider's indulgent aesthetic project"[57] has merit but it should not discourage architecture's anthropological exploration and tradition of fieldwork. Instead, the articulation of sociality and its spatiality, and the theorization of the 'ethnographic turn' within architectural research; respondent to the technical and paradigmatic critiques, and confronting architecture's anthropological shortcomings in research and practice, emerges as a theoretic and methodological growth area within the discipline.

52   Jasper, "Anthropology and Architecture: A Misplaced Conversation (Part 2)," 111. "... sometimes translated as 'metabolism,' or the substitution of materials."; Elena Chestnova, "The House That Semper Built," *Architectural Theory Review* 21, no. 1 (January 2, 2017): 45, https://doi.org/10.1080/132648 26.2016.1271343. Chestnova here, quotes Semper's description of Stoffwechsel that can offer a fuller understanding of the concept.

53   Jasper, "Anthropology and Architecture: A Misplaced Conversation," 3.

54   Suzanne Ewing, "Introduction," in *Architecture and Field/Work*, AHRA Critiques: Critical Studies in Architectural Humanities 6 (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2011), 1.

55   Jill Seddon, "Landscape with Statues: Recording the Public Sculpture of Sessex," in *Architecture and Field/Work*, AHRA Critiques: Critical Studies in Architectural Humanities 6 (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2011), 65.

56   *Lagos Wide and Close: Interactive Journey into an Exploding City*, Interactive (Amsterdam: Submarine, 2005).

57   Ewing, "Introduction," 1.

Urban theory's exclusion of significant global territories problematized at the beginning of this chapter, the methodological and theoretical quests in academic disciplines such as humanities, and behavioral and social sciences, and the emergence of design and architectural anthropology in recent decades as viable avenues of research that put lived experiences, context, sociocultural values, speculative attitudes at the center of research and practice are all backgrounds to the current research. Albeit the cultural, geographic, and academic locations they may have originated from, they present clear cognizance, both within and outside of their respective epistemic realms, of either the inadequacy of inclusive reading of cultures and city-ness, or the potentials in remedy—through interdisciplinary evolution, for new fields, methods, and modes of practice. Yet, despite the emergence and progression of design and architectural anthropologies as disciplines on their own rights, their theories have not yet been formally established. Thus, till date, strict adherence to their canons remains elusive. Moreover, these interdisciplinary efforts are seldom presented as growth areas within the discipline of anthropology. Amerlinck, for instance, cautions her readers of "an unfortunate emphasis on anthropology than on architecture" in her seminal formulation.[58] In Amerlinck's and Stender's formulation of architectural anthropology construction/building process and activities, and materiality are the objects of its enquiry. But within architectural research the concerns of sociality remain of interest. Anthropology in this regard seems to have taken its social studies for granted as it ventures into tectonic matters.

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[58] Amerlinck, *Architectural Anthropology*, 1.

1.1   'Burning' questions

The embedded position in this research is that efficiency driven urbanization—focused on urgency and financial viability—has brought about uncertainty, insecurity, and vulnerability of urban communities. The primacy of efficiency as the 'burning' concern of urbanization needs to be resisted. After all, "too much efficiency leads to fragility, which goes together with too little diversity and connectivity."[59] In this dissertation thus, sociality and resilience are posited as metaphoric antagonists to the discourse of urgency. Considering the decades long intellectual and institutional agency the notion of efficiency is operationalized with, and that, socio-spatial concerns have neither the discursive nor the political umph as of yet, it becomes apparent that urgency, at least in the research arena, should be placed on such questions as those that relate to sociality and resilience in complex urban settings—whence the 'burning' questions.

Case Addis Ababa

So much of urban Asia and Africa seems caught in a catch-22. The very spatial products and policies undoing long-honed practices of inhabitation are offered as the cure for their loss. Customary land arrangements, public guarantees, forms of tenancy and land- and building-use give way to condominiums, shop-house complexes, and all-in-one sub-cities, almost always fully sold in advance of completion, at least in the Asian context.[60]

Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia, is a city gripped with the challenges of rapid urbanization. A number of development projects had been realized through a Development-induced Resettlement Program (DiRP) that relocated the low-income urban population that were dependent on and living in the center of the city. The dependence on domestic production, micro economic activities, and the locational advantage of the city center have, for years, availed social and economic advantages for the urban poor to sustain their livelihoods. The social networks of inter-dependency such as the *equb* (community organized savings association),

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59 Jan Bredenoord, Paul Van Lindert, and Peer Smets, Affordable Housing in the Urban Global South: Seeking Sustainable Solutions (London, UNITED KINGDOM: Taylor & Francis Group, 2014), 7, http://ebookcentral. proquest.com/lib/delft/detail.action?docID=1707386.

60 Simone and Pieterse, *New Urban Worlds*, 6.

iddir (community based funerary organization), and *maheber* (religion and/or social relation based, scheduled communal support, and gatherings) have been sources of social security, economic resilience, shared identity, and sense of belongingness. It is such qualities and values that are threatened by the contemporary urbanization trends, thus putting the livelihoods of the city's dwellers at risk.[61]

The case of Addis Ababa is an ever-relevant example to highlight the need for context sensitive reading of African cities, as it is hailed by many scholars, for its indigeneity in evolution and structure. In calling for new perspectives in reading Addis Ababa, Peter P. Garettson pronounces it as "an example of an African indigenous city in both its formation and growth;" and that, an investigation of its urbanization should not be based on a "Eurocentric point of view."[62] Anthony O'Conner further stresses that the "growth and evolving character of Addis Ababa has depended on indigenous initiatives."[63]

Recent studies have documented the socioeconomic challenges urban dwellers are facing in sustaining a living once they are affected by urbanization that is led by DiRPs. Regarding the case of Addis Ababa, Sabine Planel and Marie Bridonneau presented a social and political analysis of access to housing within its urbanization trend.[64] Gebre Yntiso, discussed the impact, especially the socioeconomic ones, of Addis Ababa's resettlement projects on low-income households.[65] Tesfa Teferi Gebreegziabher analyzed the experiences of relocated communities and issues of governance in availing housing in Addis Ababa.[66] Ezana Haddis Woldegebriel discussed the rights and participation of communities in development projects.[67]

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[61]   Gebre Yntiso, "Urban Development and Displacement in Addis Ababa: The Impact of Resettlement Projects on Low-Income Households," *Eastern Africa Social Science Research Review* 24, no. 2 (2008): 53–77, https://doi.org/10.1353/eas.0.0001.

[62]   Peter P. Garretson, *A History of Addis Abäba from Its Foundation in 1886 to 1910* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz Verlag, 2000), xvii.

[63]   Anthony O'Connor, *The African City* (London, Melbourne, Sydney, Auckland, Johannesburg: Hutchinson & Co. Ltd, 1983), 30.

[64]   Sabine Planel and Marie Bridonneau, "(Re)Making Politics in a New Urban Ethiopia: An Empirical Reading of the Right to the City in Addis Ababa's Condominiums," *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 11, no. 1 (February 14, 2017): 24–45.

[65]   Gebre Yntiso, "Urban Development and Displacement in Addis Ababa."

[66]   Tesfa Teferi Gebreegziabher, "The Effect of Development Induced Displacement on Relocated Household: The Case of Addis Ababa," December 12, 2014, https://thesis.eur.nl/pub/17501.

[67]   Ezana Haddis Woldegebriel, "Urban Redevelopment Project and Community Participation," in *Movements in Ethiopia: Ethiopia in Movement*, vol. II (18th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa: Tsehai, 2016).

In his doctoral thesis, Alazar G. Ejigu presented an ethnographic study of the "emerging residential environments."[68] A critical documentation and analysis of processes of urban transformation and urban renewal focusing on the experiences of the urban poor and the youth is forwarded by Elias Yitbarek Alemayehu and Laura Stark.[69] Through such discussions of politics, governance, economics, rights, participation, and experiences these works have put forth the emergent risk that low income families of Addis Ababa are put under as a result of DiRPs.

Are these risks avoidable? Here, we are faced with a situation where not much is known about the socially and morphologically defining elements of the city of Addis Ababa—the *sefer*[70], upon which aggressive "re/development" is deployed, based on the recommendations obtained from contexts external to them. The inner workings of daily life; the psycho-social makeup of the communities, the physical and material environments that dwellers construct and adapt in an autochthonous and continuous manner, and the relationships and exchanges that are sources of resilience for them are not sufficiently recorded and analyzed. Thus, a persistent question that calls for a practical and epistemological response is: **In such rapidly urbanizing a city as Addis Ababa, what socioeconomic and spatial values are being compromised to give way to new forms?** In other words, **what social, economic, and spatial practices is the *sefer* comprised of? How is the *sefer* cognized and valued by its residents? Do the places in *sefer* work for the dwellers? If so, how do they work?**

Well then, how does an appropriate understanding of the *sefer* that answers these questions help avoid the risks? This dissertation presupposes that the unearthing of *sefer* as a socio-spatial phenomenon avails new knowledge that can be theorized and in turn inform design and planning practices towards the mitigation of the risks that come with DiRPs. This brings another daunting question forth; **How can the *sefer* be best read in a theoretically inclusive manner?** The dynamic way of living, wherein there rarely are fixed sets of relationships, exchanges, and everyday practices, presents a complexion that requires methodological theoretical advances.

68   Alazar G. Ejigu, *Places on Becoming an Ethnographic Case Study of a Changing City and Its Emerging Residential Environments* (Stockholm: Architecture and the Built Environment, KTH Royal Institute of Technology, 2015), http://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=urn:nbn:se:kth:diva-165097.

69   Elias Yitbarek Alemayehu and Laura Stark, eds., *The Transformation of Addis Ababa: A Multiform African City* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2018).

70 Chapter 2 of this dissertation contains an expansive discussion of the notion of *sefer*. And, an abridged definition to it can be found in chapter 7.

Re-centering urban theory?

Current literature in urban theory is also contending the established intellectual mapping of cities that is based on the Euro-American point of view. In 2002, Jennifer Robinson put forth an argument for alternative readings of cities that are inclusive in attitude and wide in coverage.[71] Alternatives "without categories and more inclusive of the diversity of experience in ordinary cities."[72] Pushing this narrative further, Ananya Roy, declared that a recalibration of urban and regional theory is necessary.[73] She argues that the shift in the center of urban theory from Euro-American to the theories based on the experiences of cities of the 'global South' is needed. In doing so, she suggests that theories have to be produced within their own contexts but at the same time should be "appropriated, borrowed, and remapped" for they need to be both "located and dis-located." As one of selected 'world-areas' she presents Africa for which she highlights the emergence of an ambitious project of theorizing urban spaces and subjects. AbdouMaliq Simone used a detailed narration to illustrate the dynamic presence of "simultaneity of the incongruities" in Kinshasa as "also a demonstration of potentials that are difficult for conventional analysis to apprehend."[74]

Thus far, the debate for the need to re-center urban theory southward remained on the social, political, and planning spheres. Design and architecture disciplines are yet to initiate this discourse. Seemingly limited by their inherent normative cultures, they remain largely uninterested or untrusting of the prospects of knowledge production out of the 'informal' living settings. Beyond the aesthetic of the 'informal,' and discourse of the vernacular, fundamental architectural research that cohabits the discussion to re-center urban theory is rare to none.

… precarity and uncertainty represent a material and psychic threat, but they may also provide an opportunity to reimagine and re-enchant the world. In other words, we cannot access an imaginary about alternative urban futures without confronting the violent impossibility of that future.[75]

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71 Robinson, "Global and World Cities."

72 Robinson.

73 Roy, "The 21st-Century Metropolis: New Geographies of Theory."

74 Simone, "Demonstrations at Work: Some Notes from Urban Africa."

75 Simone and Pieterse, *New Urban Worlds*, 31.

In addition to the interdisciplinary inventions in anthropology, and behavioral and social sciences discussed at the beginning of this chapter, this research is motivated by the concept of re-description that AbdouMaliq Simone and Edgar Pieterse dubbed as an "'inventive method' in that it attempts to compose urban knowledge of *what can be as well as of what is*."[76] By confronting the physical reality of caducity and lack of resource in contexts like *sefer* as the final frontier from where a renewed description/enquiry emerges—the problematic becomes a place of futures, scenarios, and possibilities. Simone and Pieterse recognize that this is a tedious endeavor "with enormous variation and texture, which is hard to hold on to when the urgencies of inequality and deprivation are overwhelming."[77] The trust in this dissertation thus that, generating an architectural discussion based on the located case of *sefer* in Addis Ababa, that resonates with the re-centering of urban theory, is not only possible but also necessary, is therefore, a result of these motivations. The remaining question is thus, **what method and theory of method is applicable in the unearthing and re-description of *sefer*?** And indirectly, **what architectural knowledge can be produced as a result?**

1.2 Objectives

The current research pursues a theoretical and methodological exploration within the discipline of architecture. In this dissertation thus, an inclusive and non-categorical understanding of complex urban contexts, such as the *sefer* of Addis Ababa, is argued for in both explicit and implicit manners. Concurring with the calls from urban theory and architectural anthropology discussed above, new vocabulary that carry theoretical weight are introduced. A methodology that transgresses into anthropological practices while maintaining its architectural fieldwork traditions is introduced and tested for its capacity to unearth located meanings, values, and socio-spatial practices. By taking the socio-spatial makeup of the *sefer* as its object and leaning to the normative and temporal cultures of anthropology and social sciences in general this methodology expands the tools of architectural research. It is argued herein that such an exploration and its findings are necessary if not preconditions for effective trans-disciplinarity and collaborative interdisciplinary work.

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76 Simone and Pieterse, 11.

77 Simone and Pieterse, 63.

As such, this dissertation strives to answer the 'burning' questions framed above. Instead of the swift delegitimization of the 'other' urban forms as 'informal,' 'slum' or in need of repair,[78] it proposes a reading that registers and analyses the events and spaces of incongruities that exist within them. With Addis Ababa's *sefer* as its field/ site and socio-spatial phenomena as its objects; to comprehend the complex forms of relations, networks, and exchanges, dwellers' cognitive understanding of their environs, and the spaces these manifest in, a context-driven and nuanced reading of local neighborhoods and communities is critically pursued. The main objectives of the dissertation are thus:

1   To present a socio-spatial documentation and analysis of the formational neighborhoods of Addis Ababa—*sefer*.

2   To introduce and test a new research methodology for the socio-spatial study of complex urban contexts such as the *sefer*. This method is grafted from social/ anthropological and design research methods so as to be able to apprehend nuances that single epistemes and methods cannot. Three selected *sefer* that have persevered since the foundational period of the city through varying political and administrative regimes are chosen as cases for such an exposition. Using three looking-lenses; cognitive borders, social relationships, and spatial typologies, this dissertation will demonstrate the socioeconomic and spatial qualities embedded in *sefer*.

3   To provide a demonstration and complement the scholarly calls for the need for inclusive and context driven urban theory and methods by delving into the missing portion of the discussion; that is, the spatial needs and qualities that boost resilience for low-income majority dwellers.

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78   Repair, in this context, does not refer to one of Gautam Bahn's three modes of Southern practice. Bahn brilliantly acknowledged residents' incremental autoconstruction practices as 'repair' and accordingly, posited it as a mode of home-making practice in contrast to the State's zeal to "construct, build, and even upgrade." Gautam Bhan, "Notes on a Southern Urban Practice," *Environment and Urbanization* 31, no. 2 (October 1, 2019): 639–54, https://doi.org/10.1177/0956247818815792. On the contrary, the premature supposition that such practices and the resulting housing conditions need to be acted on by an external agent—other than the residents themselves—is what is being referred to here.

1.3 Outline

This dissertation has four distinct bodies. The first is the current introductory chapter. The second body; chapters 2 and 3, provides the conceptual framework, via the introduction of *sefer* as the defining urban figures of Addis Ababa, and the methodology of the research conducted respectively. The third body; chapters 4, 5, and 6, will describe the findings of the research that corelate with the three looking-lenses indicated earlier. And lastly, Chapter 7 will be the conclusion.

Chapter 2 is a diachronic review and introduction of *sefer*. Beginning with an overview of the general historical events that formed Addis Ababa city, and followed by the successive plans that guided its evolution, it culminates with the revelation of *sefer* as urban figures of neglect from and by planning agencies and, to a certain degree, governance. In chapter 3, a transdisciplinary research method referred, in this research, to as trinocular will be introduced as a means to generate new and located insights. As inferred in the word 'trinocular,' a set of three looking-lenses 'hoisted' on various inter/disciplinary technics and tactics constitute this methodology. The three lenses are cognitive borders, social relationships, and spatial typologies; referring to the mapping of the environs as cognized by the residents—in almost all cases, contrary to the limits placed by state and other structuring agents, networks that are social capital to communities, households, and individuals, and the places that facilitate these and typify the *sefer,* respectively. Towards the formation of this method, brief reviews of methodological explorations across different epistemic clusters—such as grounded theory, comparative urbanism, and visual ethnography—are discussed. It is by threading through these methodological and technical discourses that the trinocular emerges as a reflexive and simultaneous means of documentation, analysis, and theorization of these complex urban sites.

As part of the third body of this dissertation, chapter 4 delves into the cognitive borders of the case *sefer* in study. In this chapter, the findings from in-depth interviews, go-along observation, and visual documentations, regarding the limits of *sefer* as comprehended and narrated by their dwellers is presented. Dwellers are offered with two open ended questions that relate with their understanding of the limits of the *sefer* they reside in. These questions probe into the processes and conditions that establish borders that dwellers themselves ratify, and their sense of belongingness to and within these limits. Chapter 5 reveals *iddir* (a primarily funerary mutual support association) as a social network of social capital order: a structure that embeds social capital and a social capital on its own right. Based on in-depth interviews, go-along and mapping fieldworks, this chapter presents a new

understanding of *iddir* than what has already been discussed among economic and anthropological scholars. Here thus, social capital theory avails an ideal conceptual platform to understand *iddir* as a network of socio-spatial manifestation in *sefer*. And Chapter 6 discusses the compounds within *sefer* that are shared among a number of households known as *gebbi* as dwelling typologies where social and spatial complexities manifest in the form of sharing, interaction, and exchange—creative forms of adaptation, but also the reality of dilapidation and vulnerability as precarious living environments.

In chapter 7, the concepts and components explicated through the thematic lenses: cognitive borders, social relations, and spatial typology—in view of exposing urban complexity—are summarized. The notions of *sefer*, *iddir*, and *gebbi* are thus brought together as descriptors of Addis Ababa's age-old urban communities. Furthermore, the reports on the trinocular as a tested methodology, and what it holds for future studies, especially within architecture and design fields, but also for establishing transdisciplinary grounds of collaboration, are précised.

2 Addis Ababa's *sefer*

Since the turn of the millennium, many African cities have witnessed a rapid urbanization the rate of which is seen with scepticism. This scepticism is usually targeted at the risk, that such a fast-tracked urbanization might cause loss of existing socioeconomic relationships that are sources of income and social security for low-income dwellers. And the possibility that spatial qualities that accommodate such pertinent values may be ridden off without an appropriate survey and consideration. Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia, is one such city gripped with this challenging phenomenon. Over the last decade, a number of housing projects have been realized through a Development-induced Resettlement Program (DiRP) that relocated the low-income urban population that were dependent on and living in the centre of the city. Such a practice has put many livelihoods at risk.[79] Thus, the persistent question that calls for a practical and epistemological response is: In such rapidly urbanizing cities of Africa, what socioeconomic and spatial values are being compromised?

This chapter reviews the evolution of Addis Ababa and introduces its historic but poorly serviced neighbourhoods, locally known as *sefer,* as products of a process of self-actualization.[80] By illustrating the indigenous aspects of these neighbourhoods, this chapter brings forth the socioeconomic and spatial values that are threatened by the looming rapid urbanization. The first section discusses the historical events and the planned interventions that formed the city. The second section presents *sefer* more as the result of reactions of communities to historic events rather than they are of master planning. And the third section concludes the chapter with a discussion on the need for an expanded and nuanced socio spatial reading of African cities. In order to mitigate the discrepancies between planned and unplanned urbanization of African cities, it is essential that planning is engaged in a legitimate and inclusive reading of the socioeconomic and spatial values embedded in such communities as Addis Ababa's *sefer*.

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[79] Gebrenwe Yntiso, "Urban Development and Displacement in Addis Ababa: The Impact of Resettlement Projects on Low-Income Households," *Eastern Africa Social Science Research Review* 24, no. 2 (2008): 53–77.

[80] Some authors use *säfär* (e.g. Peter P. Garretson) and others use *safar* (e.g. Bahru Zewde).

2.1 General historical events that formed Addis Ababa

Founded in 1886, Addis Ababa is a young capital city of Ethiopia. Though young, it has undergone a fast growth to become a prominent city of national, regional and global relevance.[81] Albeit the impact of a brief period of Italian occupation from 1936-1941, it is a city that grew in an autochthonous manner following customary practice of military settlements that initially gave it an outlook of a garrison town.[82] Its formation and evolution are of an indigenous process that can hardly be analysed from a Eurocentric point of view; nor could patterns of other African or Middle Eastern urban centres be used as references to understand it.[83] This section presents a brief account of the historical events that formed the city and offers a glance into the organic processes that took effect amidst a sequence of sudden changes in political regimes and administrative structures.

Ethiopia's Emperor Menelik II (reigned 1889-1913), right after the victory of Adwa in 1896 over the first Italian colonial invasion,[84] opted for a strong, vibrant, and settled capital. With his consolidated power over the interior territories and further expansions southward, he broke the preceding practice of "roving capitals" and forged a rather stationary one signalling an end to the series of civil wars and power struggles, which were one of the reasons for the wandering political and military centres.[85] He sought to form a city on the relatively vast fields south of mount *Entoto* by offering land and property, often on top of hills, to those leaders who gradually joined his rule and government.[86] In such a manner, the foundation of the city

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[81] Bahru Zewde, "Early Safars of Addis Ababa: Patterns of Evolution," in *Proceedings of the International Symposium on the Centenary of Addis Ababa* (Addis Ababa: Institute of Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa University, 1987), 43–56.

[82] Edward Gleichen, *With the Mission to Menelik, 1897* (London : E. Arnold, 1898).

[83] Peter P. Garretson, *A History of Addis Abäba from Its Foundation in 1886 to 1910* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz Verlag, 2000).

[84] There are two main wars, not accounting for smaller battles such as the battle of Dogali, fought between Italy and Ethiopia, the first in 1896 and the second in 1936-41. Both were failed attempts initiated by Italy's colonial interest.

[85] Ronald J. Horvath, "The Wandering Capitals of Ethiopia," *The Journal of African History* 10, no. 2 (1969): 205–19.

[86] Fasil Giorghis and Denis Gerard, *The City & Its Architectural Heritage, Addis Ababa 1986-1941* (Addis Ababa: Shama Books, 2007).

became entwined with the history of the country as is established since Menelik; serving as a platform for negotiating national territory, and establishing the post Menelik national order and integrity.

At the outset, it is important to notice that land for settlement (*gasha meret*) in Addis Ababa was given by Menelik to the regional rulers and loyal generals solely at his discretion. Based on traditional practice of setting out an encampment of an army; high ranked royals were positioned on top of hills with large tracts of property while smaller plots were allotted to their loyal followers and servants on the sides of these hills. Such emergence of the city demanded the construction of houses and palisades, and the laying out of roads and paths following natural features. This created demand for labour and "produced a further influx of population, particularly from the southern provinces."[87] The growing population as a result of labour migration, captivities under the emperor's custody, and loyal followers of the regional rulers and generals, led to the erection of temporary dwellings in the form of tents and huts. As his territorial rule expanded, and more people migrated to the city, Menelik needed to let go of aspects of his authority over land allocation and start to exercise a combination of tenure modification and strong taxation to increase confidence over land for a more stable settlement.[88] Starting 1890, by changing the *gasha meret* form of land allocation to *rest/rist*,[89] land grants gradually became permanent allowing for properties to be inherited by descendants.

Addis Ababa quickly grew as an urban centre during Menelik's reign. It had formed distinct commercial and political centres, adorned by architectural styles, urban life, and vibrant trade with both local and international influences.[90] By the year 1930, when Haileselassie was inaugurated as emperor of Ethiopia, the urban centres had consolidated and prominent streets, open spaces and boulevards had manifested. Yet, much of the dwelling environs remained rural in character with scattered clusters of houses embalmed by the dominating figures of the eucalyptus trees.

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87 Richard Pankhurst, "Menelik and the Foundation of Addis Ababa," *The Journal of African History* 2, no. 01 (January 1961): 103.

88 Garretson, *A History of Addis Abäba.*

89 Rest/rist is a traditional land tenure system that accords descendants of land owners the right to use a property. It is practiced strictly based on hereditary lineage.

90 Giorghis and Gerard, *The City & Its Architectural Heritage.*
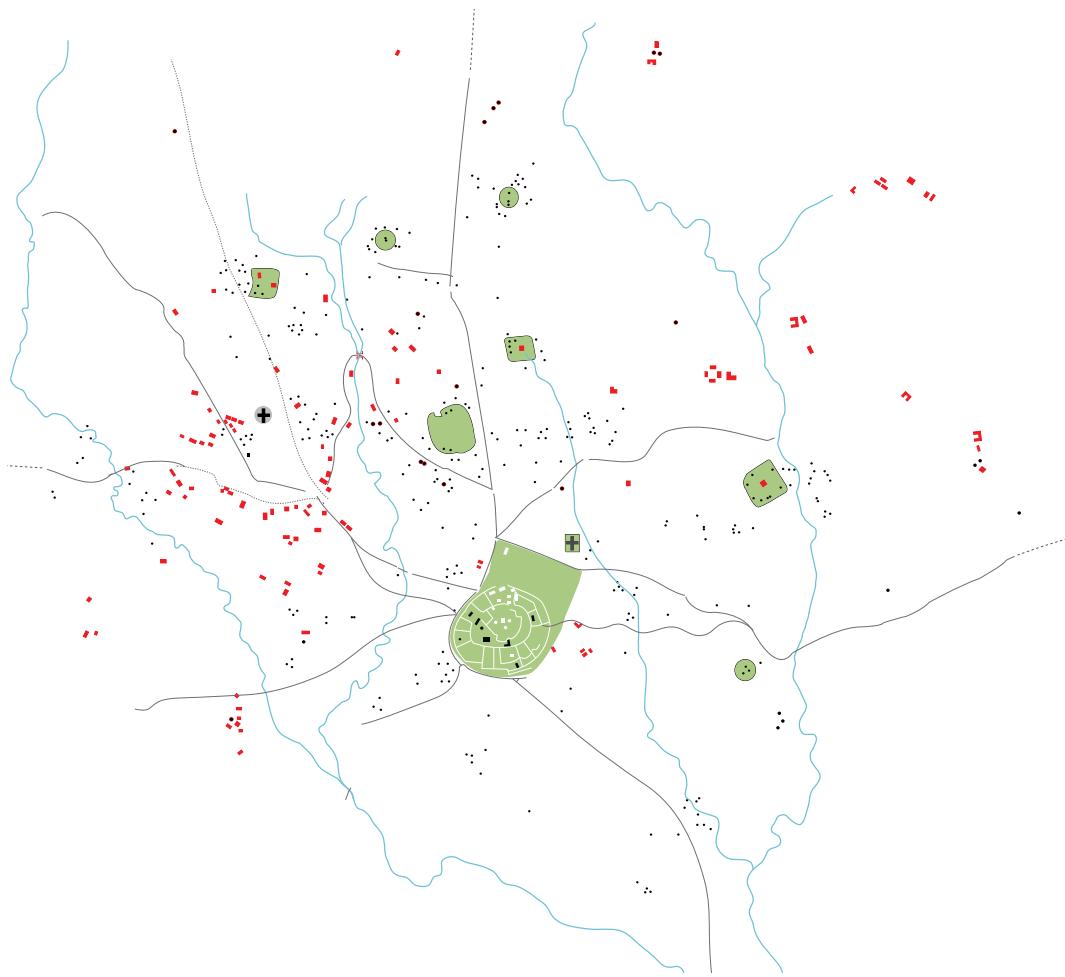
FIG. 2.1 Map showing Ca. 1897 Addis Ababa with hilltop camps as an early evolution—the formation of *sefer*.
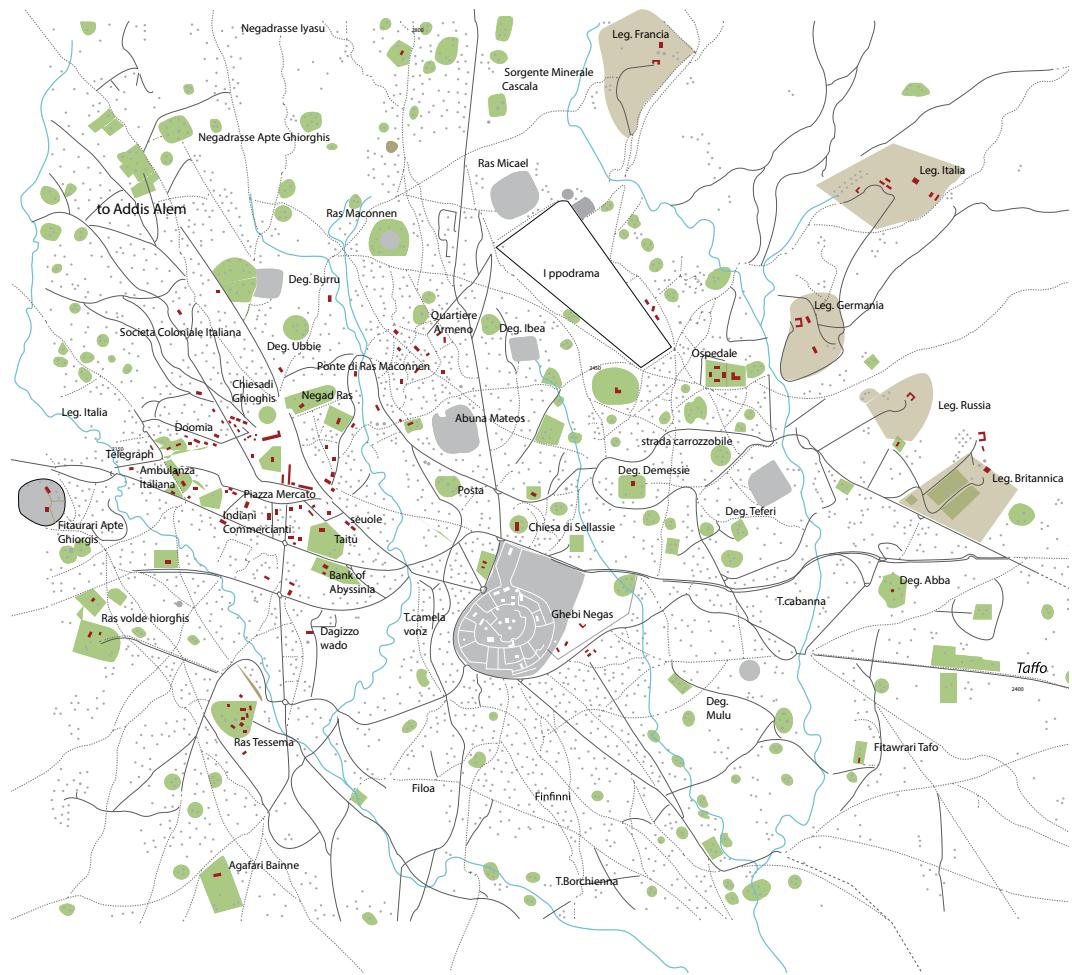
FIG. 2.2 Map showing Ca. 1912 Addis Ababa as garrisons, towns, settlements, foreign legations, bank, and hospital emerge.
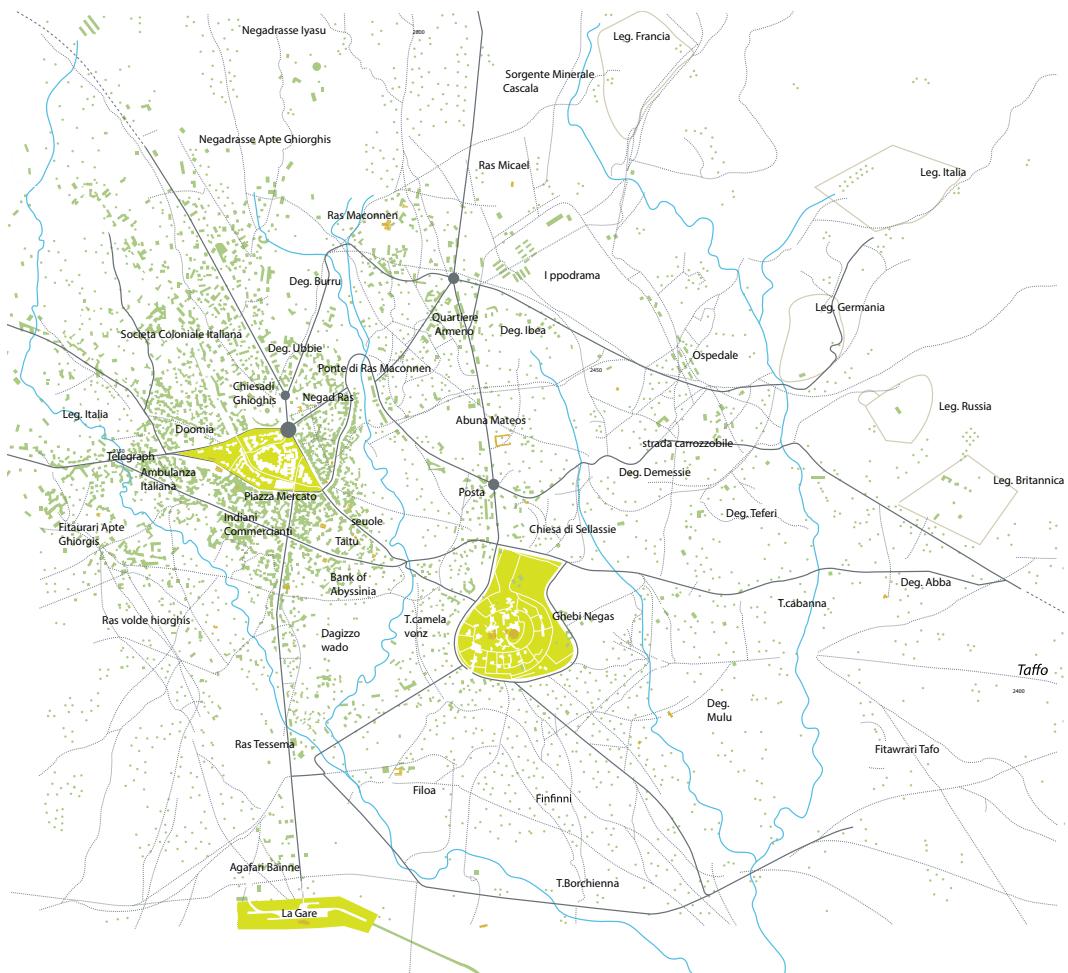
FIG. 2.3 Map showing Ca. 1935 Addis Ababa with the emergence of three consolidated centers: the *Gebbi* negus, *Arada* market, and *La Gar*e train station..

FIG. 2.4 Areal view of Addis Ababa in 1934. Two of the consolidated three centers are visible: the *Gebbi* Negus and Arada Market. (Photograph by Walter Mittelholzer, Flugbild von Addis Abeba, [1934]. Courtesy of the ETH-Bibliothek, Zürich.)
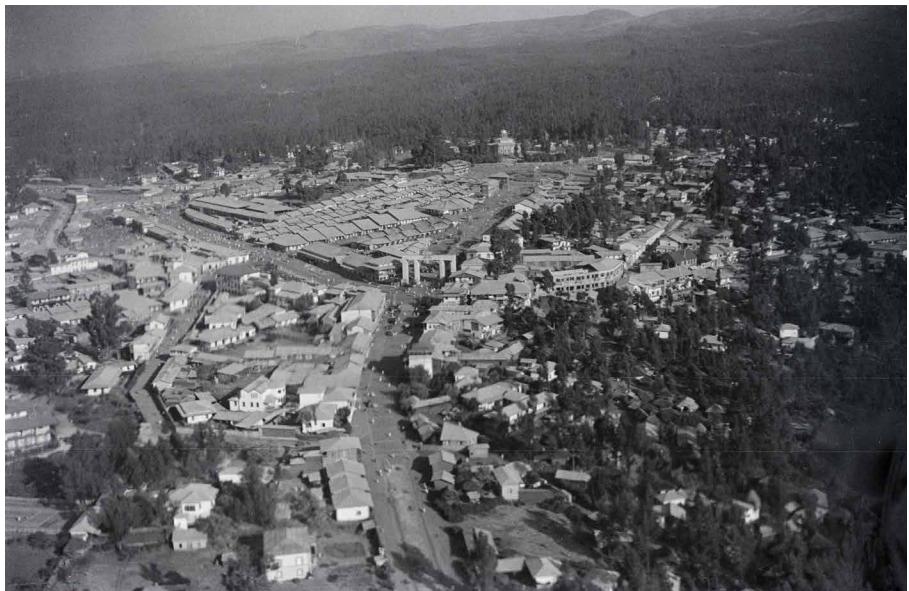
FIG. 2.5 Areal view of Arada area, Addis Ababa 1934. (Photograph by Walter Mittelholzer, Abessinienflug, 1934, Abb. 63, Bildlegende: Zentrum von Addis Abeba. In der Mitte der Triumphbogen für den Kaiser Hailé Selassié I. Oben am Waldrand die Georgiskirche, [1934]. Courtesy of the ETH-Bibliothek, Zürich.)

A period of halt for this prosperous urbanization happened around 1935-36 because of the second colonial campaign initiated by Italy's fascist leader Benito Mussolini. Firstly, Ethiopian patriotic forces destroyed many buildings right before the Italian army occupied the city, and secondly the Italian army immediately proclaimed that any form of construction, be it repair works or building anew, was forbidden.[91] The short period of Italian occupation, 1935-1941, saw the start of the use of masterplans in the city. For lack of time and some bureaucratic delays, the various Italian plans primarily aimed at segregation were not implemented. What was delineated as local and colonial quarters got appropriated right after the Ethiopian forces reclaimed the city in 1941 and Emperor Hailesellassie I returned from exile.

The departure of the Italian forces marked an increase in housing demand that was followed by demographic growth due to migration towards the recently freed city. This acute shortage of housing motivated the urban dwellers to subdivide their plots, build more housing structures within their compounds and avail them for rent in the market. Such a market driven response to provide shelter for the majority of poor that migrated to the city resulted in a mass of poorly constructed neighbourhoods that lacked proper provisions and facilities. By the year 1967, different parts of the city were comprised of about 60 percent of rental houses, and by 1970, "only about a quarter of the housing units produced in Addis Ababa had municipal permits."[92] It was only through such subdivision of plots, mass construction of small, substandard, and poorly serviced houses that the city dealt with its housing crisis of the post-1941 period. Though not regulated and authorized, it is essential to recognize the self-building and self-actualization practices that went into effect in this period of the making of the city. This aspect will be further discussed in section 2.3.

The *Land for the Tiller* political movement of early 1970's led to the revolution that ousted emperor Haileselassie I and resulted in the formation of the pseudo-communist military government, the Provisional Military Administrative Council of Ethiopia, also known as the *Derg* regime. Among many reforms and structural changes that it enacted, the most consequential in terms of land ownership and

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91 *Situation Analysis of Informal Settlements in Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa Slum Upgrading Programme*, Cities Without Slums; Sub-Regional Programme for Eastern and Southern Africa (Nairobi: UN-Habitat, 2007).

92 *Situation Analysis of Informal Settlements in Addis Ababa.*

urbanization, was the issuance of proclamation no. 47 of July 1975. The aim of this proclamation was "to provide for government ownership of urban lands and extra houses."[93] The rental houses that the previous decades formally and informally produced got nationalized and put under public ownership. The government established the Agency for the Administration of Rental Houses, under whose administration the dwellings that rented for over 100 ETB per month were put. It also formed the *Kebele*, the urban dwellers' associations that were in practice used as the smallest unit of administration and put those houses that rented below 100 ETB under their administration. The formation of the *kebele*s was another significant moment in the city as the number of housing units "brought under *kebele* control accounted for about 93 percent of all rental accommodation in the city."[94]

With the nationalization of urban land and rental houses came a set of challenges regarding administration and governance. The strong handed administration of the period issued a series of notices, formed tiers of administrative offices and authorities, established a number of institutions such as the Housing and Mortgage Bank and the National Urban Planning Institute (NUPI), to deal with these challenges. The attempt of reigning in the informal practices of subdivision of plots and availing of rental houses and the setting out of state control over the urbanization of the city was a stressful exercise by the government that faced scrutiny and resulted in other forms of unauthorised squatter settlements, especially in the peripheral areas of the city. In many aspects, the practices of the authorities were too stifling and unable to deal with the rising housing demand. Studies conducted in the late 1970s advised the need for aided self-help housing programs, which led to the introduction of some sites-and-services schemes and availing of plots for cooperatives. Some of these efforts yielded promising results but were either small in scale or short-lived that did not meet the demands of the time. It is in the middle of such firefighting mode of actions that in 1991 the military government of the time was toppled down, and EPRDF (a revolutionary fighters group turned into a political coalition named, Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front) came to power.

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93   The Provisional Military Administrative Council of Ethiopia, "Proclamation No.47 of 1975: A Proclamation to Provide for Government Ownership of Urban Lands and Extra Urban Houses," *Negarit Gazetta*, July 26, 1975, 41 edition, FAO of UN.

94   *Situation Analysis of Informal Settlements in Addis Ababa.*
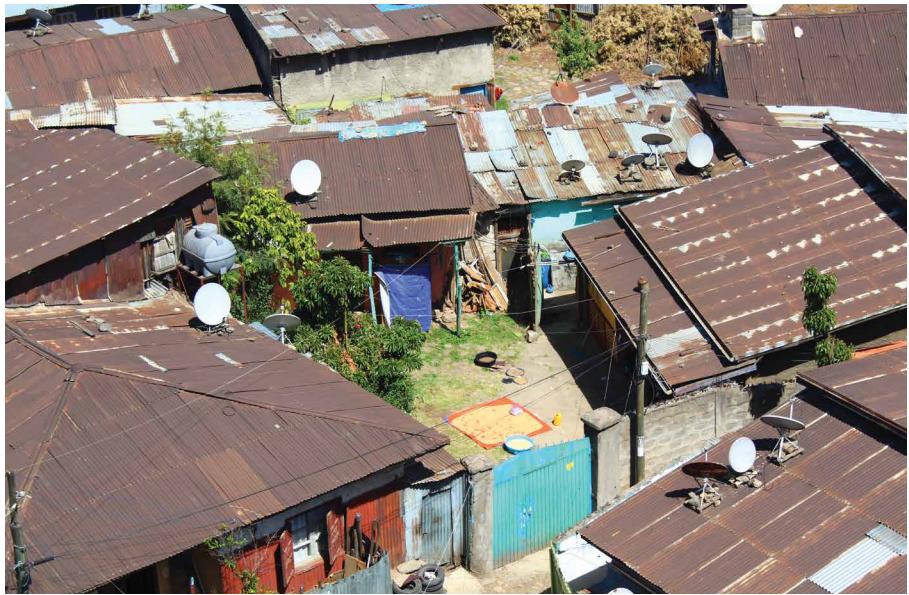
FIG. 2.6 Areal view of *kebele* administered houses with a shared courtyard-like space.

FIG. 2.7 Areal view of *sefer* with the characteristic pockets of spaces, narrow alleys, and rusty, corrugated iron sheet roofing.

FIG. 2.8 The 'sites and services' scheme of Nefas Silk area, Addis Ababa. (Illustrated by J. Tenorio de Peroy, L. Spagnol, S. Fan, Y. Haseki).

Though the newly formed government, in theory, ventured a market-oriented economy as a general policy, it retained the prime practices of the preceding administration. Land remained to be public property and urbanization was to be led by the government. It later issued Proclamation No. 3 of 1994 which introduced the urban land lease policy as means to avail land for development and create means of revenue for city administrations. This proclamation further kept the process of urbanization in the grips of city administrations and the federal government. The issue of raising revenues aside, in its essential practice, urbanization became more a result of political and administrative decisions than the social, economic and spatial needs of city dwellers, or even the market itself. The conception of the city administration as the driver of urbanization can also be witnessed in different policies and programs that followed. A prime example being the Integrated Housing Development Program (IHDP) of 2005, which intended to redevelop poor residential areas and open lands into the housing figures referred to as "condominiums." Though it had a quick and effective start as a development project producing housing, creating jobs and supporting small businesses, the cumulative result to date

shows that it neither met its own target of alleviating housing shortage nor did it produce spatial results that can cultivate social and economic growth for dwellers.[95]

FIG. 2.9 The view across Bantyiketu river with IHDP's Basha Wolde housing site at a distance, as seen from the middle of *Serategna Sefer*.

FIG. 2.10 The view across Bantyiketu river with *Serategna Sefer* at a distance, as seen from the IHDP's Basha Wolde housing site. (Photograph by Maartje Holtslag)

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95 Yntiso, "Urban Development and Displacement in Addis Ababa."

2.2 A brief history of Addis Ababa's planning

While Addis Ababa grew primarily through indigenous and organic processes, it is important to recognize the impact of a series of master plans that attempted to structure the city as per the political and economic climate of each period of intervention. The 1936-41 Italian occupation period had the primary interest of segregating European and native quarters, installing axial centres and functional zones. The years 1946, 1959, 1965, and early 1980's had seen foreign professionals hired by the Ethiopian government to produce successive master plans. Their impact can mainly be seen in the formation of satellite towns, roads for motorized traffic, furtherance of functional zoning, and creation of public squares. The years since 1986 have shown an increased involvement, and later on, full control of planning works by local professionals. This period is pronounced by the formation of sub-centres, expanded new residential areas, the introduction of Local Development Plans (LDP's) as implementation tools, and targeted projects such as the IHDP. Overall, along changing political and administrative forms of Ethiopia, urbanization grew more and more toward a state-controlled process. But the local and communal actions along or against the different top-down efforts have stronger and sustained footprint on the morphology of its capital, Addis Ababa.

A review of official plans envisioned to direct the growth of Addis Ababa and their impact on the city offers a distinct understanding of the spatially intentions of planners, policy makers, administrators and regimes that reigned through the history of the city. This section thus delves into a series of these drafted plans and elaborates on the planning entities, the prime intents of the plans and the physical and the spatial results on the structure of the city today. Without entering into an elaborate argument about what constitutes a masterplan, this paper assumes the position that the first planning attempt happened during the second Italian colonial attempt. In doing so, it views the 1907 decree and charter that further generated title deeds deep into the 1910's as tools of governance and legal acts of private land allocation that are less intent on spatial organization.

During the Italian occupation of 1936-1941, there have been two distinct attempts to draw a masterplan for the city. The first and developed attempt is a series of four proposals and revisions performed under the Governor's Technical Office between 1936 and 1939, which started with the establishment of the Central Committee on Building and City Plans (*Consulta centrale per l'edilizia e l'urbanistica*) comprising Alberto Calza-Bini, Plinio Marconi, Ignazio Guidi, and Cezare Valle in

November 1936.[96] In due time, architects such as Enrico Del Debbio and Gio` Ponti would have taken part at different levels. The discussions at the 1937 conference at *Istituto Nazionale di Urbanistica* highlighted the prime target of the Italian plan to be separation between native and Italian quarters.

Beyond that, the two major concerns were the design of a new commercial and political centre that would satisfy Italian needs (both of commerce and prestige); and zoning, both for European and native quarters.[97]

Italian architects and planners sought to seize this opportunity with the skewed assumption and repetitive narration that Addis Ababa was a "virgin territory" without relevant structures to consider, while realities on the ground showed that in fact Addis Ababa was an already established city with a vibrant market and defined political, religious and cultural centres. They were prepared to exuberantly experiment and test their theories of the Italian colonial city to shape Addis Ababa as the capital of the Italian colonial empire.

The successive plans of Ignazio Guidi, and Cezare Valle display the duos' strive to achieve segregation by using topographic features such as riverbeds and greenery and their struggle on the decision as to where to position the colonial city centre. The difficult topography and prominent structures such as the *Gebbi*, St. George church and the vibrant commercial area forced the decision to move the new city centre to the south. And the plan ended up on adopting and incorporating such existent structures than effecting a complete tabula rasa.[98]

On the other hand, decision on the parts of the plan that had little contestation, such as the native's quarter and parts of the Italian quarter were made early enough for a significant part of them to be constructed. Further, separation depending on hierarchy can be seen among the Italian residential areas as it is the case between *Kasanchis*[99] (a neighbourhood of spacious villas and open spaces to the east) and Populare (the low-ranking officials' apartments to the south). Whereas further

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96   Mia Fuller, "The Italian Imperial City - Addis Ababa," in *Moderns Abroad : Architecture, Cities and Italian Imperialism* (London and New York: Taylor and Francis, 2007), 197–213.

97   Fuller.

98   Rixt Woudstra, "Le Corbusier's Visions for Fascist Addis Ababa — Failed Architecture," *Failed Architecture* (blog), 2014, https://www.failedarchitecture.com/le-corbusiers-visions-for-fascist-addis-ababa/.

99   This Ethiopian name originated from Casa-INCIS, which refers to INCIS the Italian housing association

segregation depending on race, religion and economic class was exercised on the native's quarter on the northwest part of the city known today as *Merkato*.[100]

The second but less relevant attempt was an August 1936 letter written by Le Corbusier to Benito Mussolini "to offer his technical services and to comment on the appropriate design for the new cities of Africa Orientale Italiana, the Italian colonial empire."[101] This letter was accompanied by a sketch showing his idea as to how the city of the new Italian empire should be organized. His plan showed a relatively detailed north–south axial boulevard as a political centre that is primarily accessed at two points, east and west and four major roads radiating away from these access points. Further, he introduced various geometric lines for functional and segregationally zoning purposes. Rixt Woudstra asserts, had this plan been implemented, Addis Ababa "would have been one of the most ruthlessly planned cities of the twentieth century."[102]

Le Corbusier's persistent attempts to reach Mussolini fell on deaf ears as the Duce rather chose to pursue the ongoing efforts of his compatriots. Nevertheless, the concepts of his plan, especially pertaining to the monumental boulevard from the *Gebbi* southward, are clearly visible in the fourth version of the design of Ignazio Guidi and Cezare Valle.

Due to such elaborate debates, confrontation between plans and reality and disorganized bureaucracy, the plan for the capital of the Italian colonial empire was only sufficiently ready by 1939. This meant, there were only two more years of construction as the Italian occupation of Ethiopia was ended in 1941.

The urban development steered by the two plans discussed above would be challenged and reconfigured by the masterplan developed by Sir Patrick Abercrombie in 1946. On the wake of victory over the Italian occupation, the city had faced the risk of urban sprawl and economic stagnation.[103] To arrest such sprawl the proposed plan used roads for motorized traffic as means to bind cluster of neighbourhoods within the city and assumed satellite towns on the fringes. These roads would form rings that would keep neighbourhoods calm off of traffic. In addition, clustered neighbourhoods would be linked with accessible green belts. Though it did not

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100 Dandena Tufa, "Historical Development of Addis Ababa: Plans and Realities," *Journal of Ethiopian Studies* 41, no. 1/2 (2008): 27–59.

101 Woudstra, "Le Corbusier's Visions for Fascist Addis Ababa — Failed Architecture."

102 Woudstra.

103 Tufa, "Historical Development of Addis Ababa."

succeed in dealing with the urban sprawl, the plan did transform the city structure away from the segregating structures of the period of the Italian occupation.

This restructuring continued through the 1959 masterplan of the British firm called Bolton Hennessy and Partners. This plan expanded on the work of Abercrombie by further developing satellite towns which in time would be consumed and be part of the city structure of Addis Ababa. Together these two plans expanded the city horizontally and introduced framing road networks. Whereas neighbourhoods developed in their own original course due to lack of funds to support a complete implementation.

By 1965 a team called French Mission for Urban Studies and Habitat with the leadership of Luis De Marien was commissioned the masterplan development task. The development of the north-south axial boulevard[104] that connected *Arada* with the train station as a main element in the city is credited to the master plan developed by this team. With the help of a booming construction industry significant buildings popped up to emphasize this avenue. The plan envisioned the development of this axis further south culminating on a longitudinal zone designated for industry. It focused on structuring the city with this axis while the neighbourhoods still continued to grow naturally.

As discussed in the previous section, the period from 1974 to 1991 is a time in which Ethiopia underwent a radical change in political landscape from a monarchy to a pseudo-communist military government. The construction industry that was booming in the preceding decades came down to what amounted to freezing.[105] The most damaging measure taken by the government would be the proclamation of 1975 that nationalized urban property and extra houses.[106] Private sectors lost the motivation to build structures, especially because of the discouraging nationalization campaign that was going on. It is only in the late 1980s that individuals and cooperatives began to be interested in building residential communities, motivated by an alarming housing shortage. Through highly regulated schemes, conservative sizes of plots were given for cooperatives to construct at low costs. These neighbourhoods gained the name 'quteba,' an Amharic word for

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[104] This axis is now called Churchill avenue and is situated to the west of the one proposed by the previous plans would become the second bold north-south axis in the city.

[105] Bahru Zewde, "The City Center: A Shifting Concept in the History of Addis Ababa," in *Urban Africa: Changing Contours of Survival in the City*, ed. AbdouMaliq Simone and Abdelghani Abouhani (Dakar: CODESRIA, 2005), 120–37.

[106] The Provisional Military Administrative Council of Ethiopia, "Proclamation No.47 of 1975: A Proclamation to Provide for Government Ownership of Urban Lands and Extra Urban Houses," *Negarit Gazetta*, July 26, 1975, 41 edition, FAO of UN.

the frugality in the project and would have a morphologically visible character of pixelated neighbourhoods most in the south and South-eastern part of the city.

On the other hand, the Hungarian planner C.K. Polonyi in collaboration with the then Ministry of Urban Development and Housing, generated a masterplan to be implemented by the government. The outstanding *Meskel* Square was developed as a public space where military parades and celebrations would happen as a result of this plan. In addition, other parts of this masterplan suggested an extended development to the South and Southeast, but its success was limited to the square and the parade routes in close link to the axial avenue (Churchill Avenue) of the previous plans within the city.

Another significant master planning effort was initiated in 1986 and performed by a consortium of Ethiopian and Italian professionals. This plan attempted to create sub-centres to distribute the urbanization that for decades focused around the north-south axis of the city to other smaller centres called *qatana*.[107] This became a reminiscence of the initial poli-centric character of the city. It is also characterized by strict zoning of functions and planning of services for the city. In addition to zoning for production and services areas it also suggested new areas for residential purposes. In continuation to the previous plans, it also illustrated part of the city as an industrial zone along the axial road southward. Considering political instabilities and as a result of bureaucratic entanglements its approval got delayed until 1994, which is after the toppling of the military government in 1991. From its endorsement till the year 2003, this plan allowed developments such as the ring road, industrious private developments, housing cooperatives and private allotments for dwellings, and real estate companies to expand the city considerably.

By the year 1998, a project office known as the Office for the Revision of Addis Ababa Master Plan (ORAAMP) was established by the Addis Ababa City Administration. This is the first predominantly Ethiopian team of experts with some foreign consultants to have worked on the masterplan of Addis Ababa. It generated the revised masterplan that was endorsed by the year 2003. As the name of the office suggests the main task of this team was to revise the masterplan of 1986. This meant to reorganize the city structure so that it can be in alinement with the new market economy and political system. This also meant to frame the sprawl and informal settlements that resulted from the loos period of political transition. It resulted in the redevelopment of some inner-city parts, availing of land for private real estates and public housing projects, and major infrastructural transformation and construction of roads.

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107 Tufa, "Historical Development of Addis Ababa."

These developments were guided by Local Development Plans (LDP) and the Integrated Housing Development Program (IHDP). It is only in the master plan of 2003 that Addis Ababa started the use of LDP as planning instrument.[108] This instrument serves to bridge the provisions of a structural plan, which is a framing body of the master plan, and realization through projects by emphasizing on concrete standards and development criteria. The prime purpose of LDP is to "present viable development directions to some areas under pressure."[109] The phrase 'areas under pressure' refers to either parts of the city that were identified as major strategic investment areas or those that need immediate intervention due to a pertaining urban challenge. A secondary purpose to LDP is to react to requests that arise from private individuals or investors. Unlike preceding masterplans, it is by the use of such a tool of implementation that the plan of 2003, was able to impact the urban tissue including long standing neighbourhoods such as *Kasanchis*.

Parallel to LDP, the establishment of the IHDP in 2005 and the resultant introduction of the housing figures referred to as condominiums played a major role in the transformation of the city. Arkebe Oqubay, mayor of Addis Ababa 2003-2005, had invited the German Technical Corporation (GTZ), to take part in generating a project for low cost housing. A pilot project was steered by the GTZ at an area close to the airport called *Bole-Gerji*. Based on the success achieved with this project of availing 750 residential units with some commercial spaces, it got scaled up on a national level. It is at this point with the recommendation of the GTZ that the IHDP was formulated. This project is a large scale and ambitious plan to generate 175,000 housing units within Addis Ababa and 185,000 units in other cities within the period 2006-2010.[110] Its main objective was to address the backlog in housing stock, targeting the urban poor and with the end goal of expanding home ownership and dealing with the poor condition 80% of the city's residential areas were in. Its primary success is its integrated approach to housing and economic development by linking job creation, advancement in the construction industry and creating a cyclic relationship among the stakeholders of the project.

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108 "Local Development Plan Manual" (Ministry of Works and Urban Development - Federal Urban Planning Institute, September 2006), http://www.mwud.gov.et/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=8a35ee84-1de6-4dbf-93ca-0576aceb292b&groupId=10136.

109 "Local Development Plan Manual."

110 "Condominium Housing in Ethiopia: The Integrated Housing Development Program," Housing Practices (Nairobi: UN-HABITAT, 2011), http://www.iut.nu/Facts%20and%20figures/Africa/Ethiopia_CondominiumHousingUN-Habitat2011.pdf.

2.3 *Sefer*: The urban clusters neglected by the plans for Addis Ababa

From its foundation until 2003, much of Addis Ababa's transformation through plans and policies has been limited to large scale framing, zoning, and networking. Despite persistent interests in dealing with the organization and development of the residential areas within the city, masterplans were not able to impact the main tissue of the city, the neighbourhood clusters. Especially during the military government of 1974-1991 the city's bulk of urban structure has not been kept up with infrastructure and necessary urban services. Hence, at the beginning of 2000s more than 80% of the city was comprised of poorly serviced primarily residential areas. Yet, through years of evolution, these same urban structures have developed into neighbourhoods containing significant socio-economic capital. Attesting to the fact that they have not been greatly affected by masterplans, they display discernible layers of self-actualization efforts by their dwellers. In times of challenging poverty, urban dwellers depended on traditional practices of frugality by the use of social networks, financial associations and funeral organizations.[111] Residential environments are conceived as multi-purpose enclaves where domestic production and small-scale trades and exchanges happen. This section discusses the various values that are embodied by *sefer*; indigeneity, social associations, micro economic relations, and belongingness.

As described in the historic overview presented in the previous section, the settlement of emperor Menelik and his loyal followers was based on military principles, giving priority to security, and social and military hierarchy. This mode of settlement is then replicated atop smaller hills, by the royal dignitaries and regional leaders to whom he granted land in Addis Ababa. With the tents and traditionally constructed houses spreading over the fields, such pattern of settlement gave Addis Ababa the look of a garrison town. In Amharic, the local language, these initial structures of the city were called "*sefer*." The original meaning of *sefer* is encampment for military purposes or otherwise.[112]

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[111] Stefan Dercon et al., "Group-Based Funeral Insurance in Ethiopia and Tanzania," *World Development* 34, no. 4 (April 2006): 685–703.

[112] Zewde, "Early Safars of Addis Ababa."
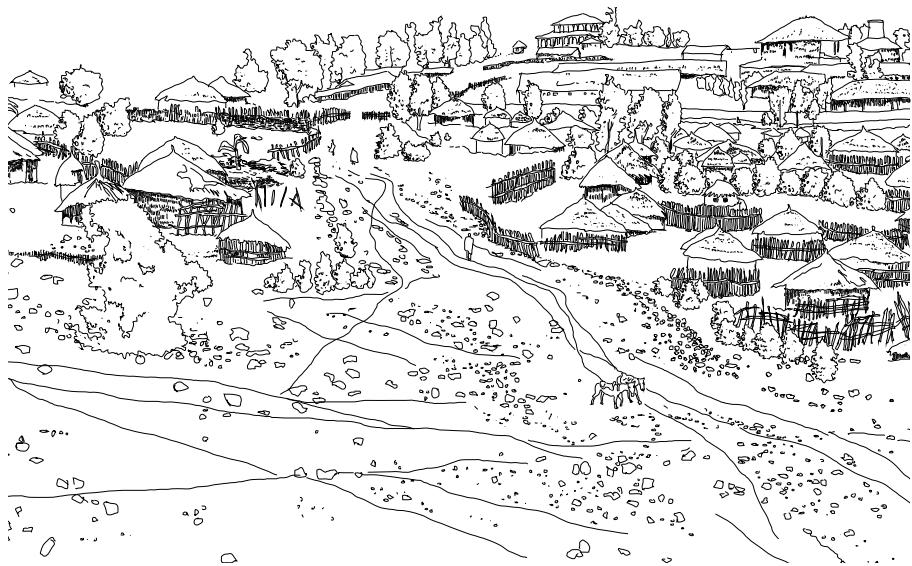
FIG. 2.11 Encampment as an organizing principle for the *sefer* of early age Addis Ababa. (Illustration by P. Degli Esposti, A. de Putti, X. Meng, H. Qian, Y. Tarumi.)

Yet through the past century, *sefer* has gradually become a term used to describe a place, community, as the term neighbourhood would. But it also embodies rather abstract connotations such as association, identity, and belongingness. Such are the layers of meaning attached to this term, in the social and economic sense, that making the straightforward substitution with the English alternative, 'neighbourhood,' is inadequate. It is then essential to unpack the different aspects that characterize a *sefer* to form a critical and contextual understanding of this notion.

Bahru Zewde claims that during the first few decades of the city, three forms of *sefer* could be witnessed.[113] The first is the *sefer* of nobilities, named after a dignitary they settled around, such as *Dejazmach Wube sefer* and *Dejazmach Balcha sefer*. They typically are formed around a palace of the dignitary and a church. The second form is the occupational *sefer*, such as *Serategna sefer* (workers' *sefer*) and *Tebmenja Yazh sefer* (gun holders *sefer*, referring to low ranking armed guards). The third form is, what he calls the community *sefer*, which are named after the origin of the community that migrated and settled in such areas. *Geja sefer* is an example of such, named after an area in the Southern parts of Ethiopia from where its settlers are.

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113 Ibidem.

TOC

In contemporary Addis Ababa, there are various forms of *sefer*. As the city grew into new areas the use of the term moved away from meaning 'garrison' toward 'neighbourhood,' and/or community. The initial pattern of settlement based on the prime positioning of nobilities gradually faded, especially after the fall of the imperial regime. Currently, there are hardly any actual ties between a *sefer* and a nobility except for the storified notions embedded as heritage, in the names of the old *sefer*. Rather new ways of formation and nomenclature of *sefer* have since flourished. For instance, some *sefer*, such as *Gullele*, maintained the names of the areas prior to the consolidation of settlements; some are based on physical or geographical features such as *Qebena* river leading to the *sefer* being named after it; and in such cases as *Worku sefer*—a community that is initiated in the 1980s by Worku Debelu, a chairman of a peasants' association[114]—persons of prime contribution to the making of the *sefer* lent their names. Despite such dynamics, the indigenous social practices that define the early *sefer* re-emerged in the new areas that got formed later on resulting in resilient consolidation of communities.

The fast pace Addis Ababa grew with, the series of political changes, conflict, disaster and poverty it went through have challenged communities in *sefer*. The traditional, adaptive and accommodative means communities coped with such challenges constitute the various social values of resilience embodied by *sefer*. For instance, *Iddir* is a funeral association in which its members contribute financially, emotionally and in kind to help console other members who lost a family member or relative. As Alula Pankhurst put it, they are "essentially an urban phenomenon that emerged in early 20th century Addis Ababa as a result of urbanization, migration, and monetization of the economy."[115] Numerous scholars argue that such an association came into practice especially linked with the deadly period of Italian occupation. Gradually, *Iddir* became part of the urban tradition of social support. The other social institution is *Equb*, a rotating savings and credit association customarily formed for the purposes of increasing purchasing ability, savings, starting or expanding businesses, and personal or family medical emergencies. These organizations are joined by members who have either financial or social motives. Especially the small scale neighbourhood *Equbs* are mostly joined by those with social motives.[116] Such local practices add to the indigeneity and resilience embodied in *sefer*.

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114 Frew Truneh, *Institutional Interfaces and Actors' Behavior in Transitional Real Estate Markets of Addis Ababa (Ethiopia)*, Doctoral Dissertation (Rotterdam : Erasmus University, 2013).

115 Alula Pankhurst, "The Emergence, Evolution and Transformations of *Iddir* Funeral Associations in Urban Ethiopia," *Journal of Ethiopian Studies* 41, no. 1–2 (December 2008): 143–86.

116 Agegnehu Bisrat, Karantininis Kostas, and Li Feng, "Are There Financial Benefits to Join RoSCAs? Empirical Evidence from Equb in Ethiopia," *Procedia Economics and Finance* 1 (2012): 229–38.

Another important value of *sefer* is the socioeconomic mix that allowed for micro economic relations to flourish. People of different income groups, ethnic and religious backgrounds live in close proximity to one another. The spontaneous growth and rapid urbanization of the city had resulted in "bizarre juxtaposition of luxury and squalor."[117] Such a condition has allowed for various forms of exchange to happen in the day-to-day life. Community dwellers depend on livelihoods based on small scale, domestic production and exchange. The mixed presence of commercial and residential areas, high and low-income groups, different financing systems, and variety of spaces within a district in the city are virtues of the *sefer*. The 1975 proclamation that nationalized urban land and property has made the state a landlord of the houses availed through rent. This makes the houses administered through the *kebele* the main body of most centrally located and historic *sefer*. Yet, within the frame of *sefer* are also private residences, warehouses, neighbourhood markets known as *gulits*, street side shops and workshops, and in some occasions, offices. These intricate micro economic and social constellations are not only means of livelihood but also important structures of social security for dwellers.[118]

The political and administrative changes that occurred in Addis Ababa since its foundation introduced various top-down administrative categories such as *ketena*, *kebele*, *woreda*, *kefetegna*, zone, and *kifle-ketema*, that were used to subdivide and restructure administratively the city. When the old and initial *sefer* settled, there was no clear demarcation of borders except for basic geographic limitations, least of which are in documents. The subdivisions introduced through time attempted to assimilate the rather fluid borders of *sefer* into a structure that used hypothetical limits such as roads and rivers. Addis Ababa had 10 Administrative units with 30 smaller sub-divisions in the 1950s. Five out of the 10 units used the name of an established *sefer*, but they introduced new borders to them.[119]

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117 Zewde, "Early Safars of Addis Ababa" 22.

118 Sabine Planel and Marie Bridonneau, "(Re)Making Politics in a New Urban Ethiopia: An Empirical Reading of the Right to the City in Addis Ababa's Condominiums," *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 11, no. 1 (February 14, 2017): 24–45.

119 Some *sefer* are an agglomeration of smaller sub-*sefer*. They could have a general *sefer* name but containing smaller *sefer* within.

FIG. 2.12 View of *Biqil Gebbi* in *Geja Sefer* of Addis Ababa. Proximity to the major market (Merkato) allows the community to specialize in the production and sale of *biqil*/malt.

Considering the genesis of *sefer*, it is clear why it is challenging to generate clear-cut boundaries to it. The transition is gradual, and it is common that in-between zones representing more than one *sefer* exist. Though boundaries are non-explicit, the transition between *sefer* is grounded in local customs, especially for long time city residents. None of the bureaucratic decision introduced top-down could contest the prevalence of the logic of *sefer* for communities as collective urban memory, source of identity and main means of wayfinding and orientation.

In conclusion, while many scholars have highlighted the value in the indigeneity of the organic evolution of Addis Ababa;[120] and while *sefer* is an important kernel in its genesis—deeply rooted in the psyche of its contemporary residents—currently, both are under immense pressure as the city government of Addis Ababa pursues rapid urbanization ventures that aim to replace them with new, and denser urban forms. This process opens a vast space of enquiry to examine what these new forms should be. Better yet, what values of *sefer* should be known and carried into such 'development' ventures? A comprehensive synchronic understanding of the *sefer* themselves is thus paramount.

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120 Anthony O'Connor is a case in point. He contends that "Perhaps the best example of an indigenous city elsewhere in tropical Africa, and certainly the largest, is Addis Ababa, […] the growth and the evolving character of Addis Ababa has depended on indigenous initiatives to a far greater extent than that of the great majority of African Cities." Anthony O'Connor, *The African City* (London: Hutchinson & Co. Ltd, 1983).

3 Trinocular: a methodology for nuanced reading of *sefer*

Unearthing entrenched complex practices and relations in urban communities such as the *sefer* of Addis Ababa requires renewed attitudinal and methodological posture. The arguments for such, especially on reading African cities in general, and the surrounding theoretical and methodological discussions are laid out in chapter 1 of this dissertation. Overall, the recommendations of these arguments are (1) the need to abandon the dominant 20th-century theories of categorizing and labeling cities primarily based on the experiences of cities in Europe and North America, (2) the expansion of the frame of theory towards inclusiveness of varying experiences, identities and histories, and (3) the dislocation/relocation of the center of theory from the established Euro-American point of view. The methodological propositions of these arguments call for the development of new tools that cross disciplinary borders and allow researchers to read complexities through strategized and at times messy processes. There are two prongs of the challenge that demand methodological and epistemological response: the inability of 20th-century epistemological frames and the inadequacy of singular methodologies to grasp situated differences, and the complexities that manifest in rapidly urbanizing regions. A methodological probe thus, has to point toward both the theory of methods and the techniques that need to be developed.

This chapter presents a methodological hypothesis—one that is cutting across disciplinary boundaries—which, from here on, is referred to as, Trinocular. The trinocular is a composition of three key concepts of inspection as lenses to look into communities' psychosocial, socioeconomic and physical/spatial characteristics. Across these three lenses, a set of methodological techniques, grafted from varying disciplines are applied in a tandem operation of data collection and analysis. The case *sefer* in this research are selected based on two criteria. The first criterium is

that they are formed as integral parts of the city since its formation as a garrison town. The second criterium used is Bahru Zewde's types of *sefer* distinct to the formational period of the city discussed in chapter 2.[121] The selected case *sefer* are thus characteristic to these three types; nobilities' *sefer*, occupational *sefer*, and community (origin of settlers) *sefer* (Deja'ch Wube *sefer*, *Serategna sefer*, and *Geja sefer* respectively).

A general introduction to the trinocular as a method grafted from varying disciplinary and theoretic spheres, its elements, and application in this research is presented in section 3.1. Section 3.2 offers an in-depth discussion of methodologies and theories of methods that prioritize expanded, located and inclusive reading of urbanization practices. It lays out the scholarly milieu this particular methodological hypothesis draws its elements from. It further expounds on the concerns of expanded reading, as a response to the need for a context driven, inclusive and strategized operation; and cross-cutting methods, as the means to draw tools and techniques together to develop the capacity for such strategies. In sections 3.3 and 3.4, two main aspects of the trinocular are further discussed: the frames, and the lenses of investigation. The frames; stories, visual evidencing and ethnography, are the tools and techniques applied to document and analyze what is seen through the lenses. Whereas, the lenses are concepts of observation formulated to apprehend the multifaceted nature and complexity of *sefer*. Finally, section 3.5 is a brief description of the selected case sites, the fieldwork performed, and the method of analyses employed towards this dissertation. A deliberate operation of data collection and analyses performed (sometimes at a time and in some instances sequenced), is introduced in this section.

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[121] Bahru Zewde, "Early Safars of Addis Ababa: Patterns of Evolution," in *Proceedings of the International Symposium on the Centenary of Addis Ababa* (Addis Ababa: Institute of Ethiopian Studies, Addis Ababa University, 1987), 46–47.

3.1   Trinocular

Trinocular, as a term in this dissertation, is used in relation to the three conceptual lenses that are used to document and analyze the complexities that are entrenched in *sefer*. According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, its first known use is as an adjective "relating to or being a binocular microscope equipped with a lens for photographic recording during direct visual observation" dating back to 1960.[122] The natural eye-to-lens combination provides two vantage points that work together to generate one rich picture, that is then recorded or directly observed by the third lens. The analogic adaptation of this character to the context of this dissertation is thus, all three lenses are used for viewing and recording as vantage points that work together at the same time and not in a sequence or hierarchy.

The metaphoric lenses in this research juxtapose three perspectives that are results of a first round survey and analysis of the three sites. The first lens is a psychosocial investigation and traces cognitive borders as qualified by residents. The second lens is an examination into social relationships, and the third lens focuses on spatial typologies. Except for these three broad conceptual categories, the analytic method employed is a juxtaposition that provides an implicit form of comparison within and out of the selected cases and allows for located dissimilarities to be examined in a transductive manner as introduced by Henri Lefebvre.[123]

Documentation and analytic methods that are common practice in different epistemes are laced together to form the frames of the trinocular.[124] Disciplinary enclaves, while they allow for an in-depth expertise to advance within a certain field, it has also become increasingly clear that they are insufficient in apprehending contemporary urban complexities.[125] Especially, the generation of located and nuanced knowledge demands for new strategies that escape such disciplinary entrapments. On one hand, cross-disciplinary collaboration—a coming together of

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[122] "Definition of TRINOCULAR," accessed August 26, 2020, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/trinocular.

[123] Henri Lefebvre, *The Urban Revolution*, trans. Robert Bononno (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003).

[124] Section 3.2 discusses these epistemic traditions and the thread-through operation that generated the frames of the trinocular, which themselves are presented in section 3.3.

[125] Jo Beall et al., "Understanding Infrastructure Interfaces:Common Ground for Interdisciplinary Urban Research?," *Journal of the British Academy*, no. 7S2 (July 8, 2019): 11–43, https://doi.org/10.5871/jba/007s2.011.

various methods and expertise is needed. On the other hand, individual disciplines themselves should invent new strategies. These are not mutually exclusive endeavors, rather complementary with the target of generating inclusive urban theories.

In its essence, the trinocular falls in the earlier approach. It is an advancement of architectural and urban research methodologies toward meeting the challenge of reading the nuances within emerging urban complexities. It builds on overlapping scholarly endeavors from different epistemes such as grounded theory, comparative urbanism and visual ethnography in appreciating dissimilarities and generating located knowledge and theory. Moreover, it narrows disciplinary gaps, and enriches the grounds for cross-disciplinarity in research and practice.

In summary, as is shown in FIG. 3.1, the trinocular is an assembly of the lenses and the frames, and is applied to investigate the three selected *sefer*. These methods (frames) are visual evidencing, ethnography, and stories/allegories. When applied through the three lenses, they allow the researcher to capture nuances, and serve as means of consistency in data collection and analysis.
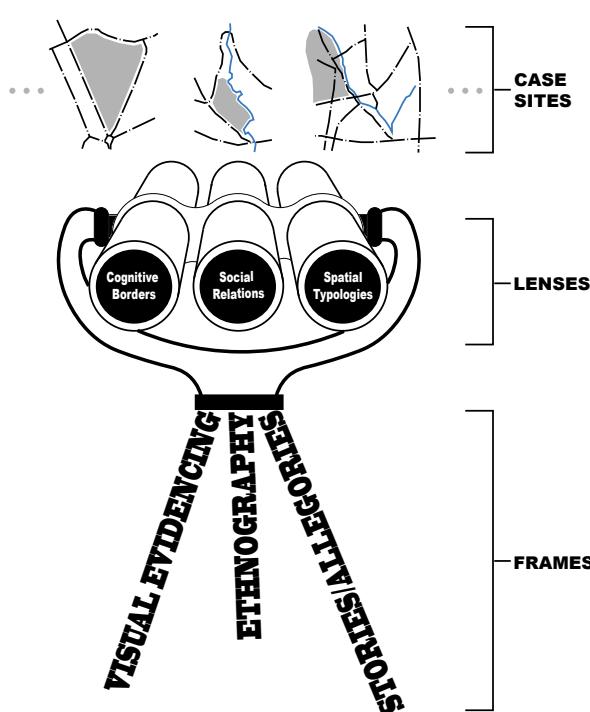
FIG. 3.1 An illustration of the trinocular methodology. The lenses and frames are integrated parts to investigate the selected case *sefer*.

A review of expanded readings and methodological explorations

In the propositions to either loosen the dominant frames of urban theory to be more perceptive of varying experiences in different cities and geographies, or to clearly dislocate theory for the purposes of both a globalized and localized reading of city-ness; methodologies are presented in realms of grounded theory, peripheral urbanization, and planetary urbanization. A review of these methodological discourses from varying epistemological clusters that aim at an expanded reading, serves as a knowledge base and an opportunity to contemplate grafted methodological hypotheses—cross-cutting methodologies.

An overview of grounded theory

In the early 1960s, sociologists Glaser and Strauss, introduced grounded theory as a furtherance of the discovery of theory from systematically collected and analyzed social data.[126] Contrary to the deduction of "testable hypotheses from existing theories"[127] that mainly focused on verifiability and replicability of research, proponents of grounded theory argued for the formulation of theory from research grounded in various field data. They advocated for the simultaneous performance of data collection, analysis and theory development in a strategized manner. Within the research process, by placing literature review and reference to existing theory after the development of researchers' own analysis, and strategizing the use of memo writing, coding and sampling for the discovery of theory, not merely for representation purposes; Glaser and Strauss strengthened the reliability of qualitative research. Building on this initial work, Kathy Charmaz offers a clearer definition for grounded theory; "a systematic method consisting of several flexible strategies for constructing theory through analyzing qualitative data."[128] Furthermore, together with Antony Bryant she provided a revision to

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[126] Glaser and Strauss, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research.*

[127] Kathy Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide Through Qualitative Analysis*, Reprint (London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2006).

[128] Kathy Charmaz, "Constructivist Grounded Theory," *The Journal of Positive Psychology* 12, no. No. 3 (2017): 299–300, http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2016.1262612.

grounded theory and developed constructivist grounded theory.[129] The revised theory gives emphasis to the "language, meanings and actions" of researchers and research participants.[130] In doing so, constructivist grounded theory accepts the methodological strategies of Glaser and Strauss but deviates from their epistemology.[131] In her book, Constructing Grounded Theory, Charmaz pointed out that though the initial effort of Glaser and Strauss in formulating grounded theory was to confront the positivist quantitative researches of the time; by 1990, the evolved form of grounded theory became known for its positivist assumptions.[132]

In addressing the "positivist tendencies, a lack of reflexivity and oversimplification"[133] that she highlighted as shortcomings of grounded theory, and aiming at "regenerating and updating"[134] it to be able to deal with differences and complexities; Adele Clarke presented situational analyses as a method in empirical research projects.

Similar to constructivist grounded theory, situational analyses endorses the methodological strategies of grounded theory but rejects "the quest for disembodied and unanchored generalizations."[135] It rather follows and expands Strauss's own deviation[136] from the conceptual structure of classical grounded theory and offers three cartographic approaches; situational maps, social worlds/arenas maps, positional maps.[137] The three maps thus, are used to grasp complexities by working in three domains and refraining from simplifications and generalizations. Situational

129 Antony Bryant and Kathy Charmaz, "Introduction," in *The Sage Handbook of Grounded Theory* (Los Angeles, London, New Delhi and Singapore: SAGE Publications, 2007), 1–28; Kathy Charmaz, "A Constructivist Grounded Theory Analysis of Losing and Regaining a Valued Self," in *Five Ways of Doing Qualitative Analysis* (New York and London: The Guilford Press, 2011), 165–204.

130 Charmaz, "Constructivist Grounded Theory."

131 Charmaz, "A Constructivist Grounded Theory Analysis of Losing and Regaining a Valued Self."

132 Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide Through Qualitative Analysis.*

133 Adele E. Clarke, Carrie Friese, and Rachel Washburn, eds., *Situational Analysis in Practice: Mapping Research with Grounded Theory*, eBook (Walnut Creek, California: Left Coast Press, 2015).

134 Adele E. Clarke, "Situational Analyses: Grounded Theory Mapping After the Postmodern Turn," *Symbolic Interaction* 26, no. 4 (2003): 553–76, https://doi.org/10.1525/si.2003.26.4.553.

135 Kathy Charmaz, "Foreword," in *Situational Analysis in Practice: Mapping Research with Grounded Theory*, eBook (Walnut Creek, California: Left Coast Press, 2015), 7–8.

136 Juliet Corbin and Anselm Strauss, "Grounded Theory Research: Procedures, Canons, and Evaluative Criteria," *Qualitative Sociology* 13, no. 1 (1990): 19.

137 Clarke, "Situational Analyses."

maps are exploratory outlines indicative of the kind of data that needs to be gathered to gain an initial insight. They help to identify major elements and relationships that exist in the context of study. Social worlds/arenas maps lay out collective actors and the fields they operate in. They are broad clustering of actions, actors and fields of action; wherein the actions can be discussions, interactions, negotiations, confrontations, contradictions and possibly coercions. Positional maps outline major positions taken or not taken, especially regarding key issues of contestation, variation and difference. These are maps intent to articulate "the full range of discursive positions on key issues in the broad situation of concern."[138]

Clarke argued that this methodology will allow researchers "to draw together studies of discourse and agency, action and structure, image, text, and context, history and present moment—to analyze complex situations of inquiry."[139]

A particular strength of SA [situational analysis] is that it can be done with interview, ethnographic, historical, narrative, visual, and/or other discursive materials. . . .

It is especially useful in multi-site or multi-modal research that can draw together different kinds of data about a particular phenomenon or sets of data about different sites, or both.[140]

Situational analysis makes grounded theory even more relevant in the discussion of the expanded reading of city-ness. By putting needed emphasis on situatedness, thus context, widening the situation of inquiry towards diligence to differences and complexities, including non-human elements, allowing differentiations in data, and engaging in open ended inquiry; it presents a viable direction to grasping situated nuances. Situational analysis, as an extension of grounded theory, leans toward inclusivity, embracing differences and messiness while its methodological structures allow the researcher to prevent chaos.

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138 Clarke, Friese, and Washburn, *Situational Analysis in Practice: Mapping Research with Grounded Theory*, 14.

139 Clarke, "Situational Analyses."

140 Clarke, Friese, and Washburn, *Situational Analysis in Practice: Mapping Research with Grounded Theory*, 15–17.

Grounded theory, both as a methodology and theory, had become popular and crossed different disciplinary margins since its inception in early 1960's.[141] Its evolved forms, constructivist ground theory and situational analysis, invite application in urban, spatial studies. Yet, such an application is quite limited largely due to the nature of urban research itself.[142] Its main focus on the physical environment, and its projective tendencies remain the frontiers of methodological enquiry.

In 2018, Natalie Allen and Mark Davey argued that constructivist grounded theory is suitable for urban research by saying:

Constructivist grounded theory suits a variety of urban research objectives because human scaled experiences and responses are constantly being contextualized within a city or region or theorized to encapsulate notions of civitas.[143]

Their work presents the value grounded theory in general, and constructivist grounded theory as selected approach, can add in strengthening the validity of urban research in the disciplines of architecture, landscape architecture, urban planning, and urban design.

To conclude, the language of visual narration and evidencing is routine in architectural and urban studies. These fields usually present complexities as palimpsests that demand a sequenced investigation. Grounded theories, on the other hand, are loose methodological frames strategized to capture differences and simultaneity. One of the methodological hypotheses of this dissertation is thus; based on the discursive, theoretical and methodological intents of grounded theory, and by interlacing its techniques (memo-writing, coding and sampling) with the customary techniques employed in urban research a new methodology and set of techniques to advance urban and architectural research can be invented.

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141 Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide Through Qualitative Analysis*.

142 Chathuranganee Jayakody, Dilanthi Amaratunga, and Richard Haigh, "Grounded Theory as an Approach to Explore the Use of Public Open Spaces to Enhance the Cities' Resilience to Disasters," 2017.

143 Natalie Allen and Mark Davey, "The Value of Constructivist Grounded Theory for Built Environment Researchers," *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 38, no. 2 (June 2018): 225, https://doi.org/10.1177/0739456X17695195.

An overview of comparative urbanism

. . .. Nor is my 1 + 1 "method" conducted in the name of a unitary, reductive answer (1 + 1 = 2)—comparison, say, in the name of a convergent or unified understanding of urbanization or the urban condition. I have adopted a research preference for 1 + 1 because I believe in the fact and the political potential of a world understood as differentiating and contingent; a world built around the open equation of …+ x + y + a +…[144]

Can we promote theory cultures which are alert to their own locatedness and sources of inspiration, open to learning from elsewhere, respectful of different scholarly traditions and committed to the revisability of theoretical ideas?[145]

Probably, in recent times, the most dominant voice for the expanded reading of city-ness in urban research comes from the scholarship in comparative urbanism.[146] Jan Nijman defined comparative urbanism as "the systematic study of similarity and difference among cities or urban processes" that is intent on tackling "descriptive and explanatory questions" regarding the manner and level of similarity and difference.[147] Furthermore he asserts that the main aim of comparative urbanism is:

. . .developing knowledge, understanding, and generalization at a level between what is true of all cities and what is true of one city at a given point in time. It should not surprise us that each and every place is different or even unique in some ways—this is the idiosyncratic nature of place.[148]

In the past two decades, such a reorientation by tackling the shortcomings of comparative urbanism—"scientism, developmentalism fallacies and universalist categories"[149]—revitalized and allowed it to regain its appeal and reverse its decline since late 1970s.

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[144] Jane M. Jacobs, "Commentary—Comparing Comparative Urbanisms," *Urban Geography* 33, no. 6 (August 2012): 904–14, https://doi.org/10.2747/0272-3638.33.6.904.

[145] Robinson, "Comparative Urbanism: New Geographies and Cultures of Theorizing the Urban," 188.

[146] Nijman, "Introduction—Comparative Urbanism"; Katherine V. Gough, "Reflections on Conducting Urban Comparison," *Urban Geography* 33, no. 6 (August 2012): 866–78, https://doi.org/10.2747/0272-3638.33.6.866; Colin McFarlane and Jennifer Robinson, "Introduction—Experiments in Comparative Urbanism," *Urban Geography* 33, no. 6 (August 2012): 765–73, https://doi.org/10.2747/0272-3638.33.6.765; Robinson, "Comparative Urbanism: New Geographies and Cultures of Theorizing the Urban."

[147] Nijman, "Introduction—Comparative Urbanism."

[148] Nijman.

[149] Nijman.

Colin McFarlane and Jennifer Robinson further attest that scholars who are interested in working across categories, or originating understanding from other located scholarships; quickly realize that new analytical strategies need to be invented.[150] They advocate for diligent enquiry into the "figure of 'difference' itself"[151] as a prominent operative in urban studies. This entails a position of view that takes difference as a resourceful lens into the complexities of contemporary urbanism but not as an irritation to much of the ready-made frames and categories. The pursuit of understanding within and through differences should not be an exercise of power but rather an open-ended endeavor for an enrichment of theory and innovation of new methods. It can initially be a large net of enquiry into located epistemes that should be further debated, compared and contrasted for both refinement on their own and transnational, dislocated understanding and application. The openness to new understandings, proactively engaging differences, discursive flow of located and dislocated theories and methods, as McFarlan and Robinson put it, "needs to negotiate both old and new approaches to the urban that divide it into oversimplified polarities or seek to solidify analytical differences."[152]

Regarding methods in the realm of comparative urbanism, Nijman depicts a frame of theory within which multiple approaches are employed. That, various methods fitting to contextual variabilities and absorbent of temporality and dynamics are in play instead of a singular and fixed approach. In the tabulated "taxonomy of urban comparisons,"[153] Robinson presented a summary of types, features and examples of comparisons in contemporary geographies and cultures of theorizing the urban. In this table are six types of comparisons laid out, three of which are relevant in illustrating the methodological positioning of this particular research vis-à-vis comparative urbanism.[154]

First, the explicit intent of this research is the presentation of a case city in a wider conversation. In her work that examines the imagination of the Marina beach in Chennai, Pushpa Arabindoo offered an analysis based on field notes, direct observation, interviews and analysis of discourses in selected media outlets, and projected a wider discussion on "fundamental difference between the Western

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150 McFarlane and Robinson, "Introduction—Experiments in Comparative Urbanism."

151 McFarlane and Robinson, 766.

152 McFarlane and Robinson, "Introduction—Experiments in Comparative Urbanism."

153 Robinson, "Comparative Urbanism: New Geographies and Cultures of Theorizing the Urban," 196.

154 The comparative gesture, cases in wider conversation, composing comparisons, tracing connections, launching analyses and the limits of translation are tabulated as types. For detail study see Robinson, 196.

and indigenous understandings of open spaces."[155] In the same manner, this dissertation files the case subject of the '*sefer*' of Addis Ababa with the aim to strike wider conversations. Secondly, the implicit act of this research is comparison without explicitly sited other case or cases. Even though comparative urbanism as methodology of comparison is not directly employed in this research, it definitely is a "mode of thought" as McFarlane proposes that we venture "to consider what might be gained from attempting to make our implicit comparative moves more explicit."[156] And thirdly, this research is an ambition of "launching analyses," as per Robinson's types of comparison—"generating concepts in specific contexts, with possible wider application."[157]

Among the urgings for de-centring urban theory, and as an example of comparative analysis in this context, we find the proposition by Teresa PR Caldeira—the use of peripheral urbanization to analyse processes of city-making by largely focusing on autoconstruction by residents—as the main mode of urbanization, especially in cities of the global south. She argues, such an analysis offers distinct reading of city-ness, different from those of cities of the North Atlantic.[158] Peripheral urbanization, according to Caldeira, refers to four interrelated processes: operations "with specific temporality and agency," transversal engagement with official logics, generation of "new modes of politics," and creation of "highly unequal and heterogeneous cities."[159] These modes of urbanisation enable dwellers develop ownership of their cities through political astuteness, capabilities to engage directly with rights talks, and also identify and utilize transversal logics with and around formal processes, agencies and plans. In addition, peripheral urbanization is not a single fit-for-all model of analysis, rather a provisional and flexible frame that aims to register variations in different contexts and also the dynamic changes even within a city, within a certain period. The word "peripheral" does not necessarily refer to geographic location, rather emphasises the mode of engagement of residents in the city making process.

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155 Pushpa Arabindoo, "'City of Sand': Stately Re-Imagination of Marina Beach in Chennai," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 35, no. 2 (2011): 379–401, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2427.2010.00943.x.

156 Colin Mcfarlane, "The Comparative City: Knowledge, Learning, Urbanism," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 34, no. 4 (2010): 726, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2427.2010.00917.x.

157 Robinson, "Comparative Urbanism: New Geographies and Cultures of Theorizing the Urban," 196; For an example of launching analyses see Simone, "The Surfacing of Urban Life."

158 Teresa PR Caldeira, "Peripheral Urbanization: Autoconstruction, Transversal Logics, and Politics in Cities of the Global South," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 35, no. 1 (February 2017): 3–20, https://doi.org/10.1177/0263775816658479.

159 Caldeira.

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Methodologically, Caldeira applies juxtaposition, as "a kind of comparison"[160]—as a qualitative logic it puts together "dissimilar, located, and historicized cases brought together to illuminate one another destabilize unexamined views and generalizations and opens up new possibilities of understanding."[161] Instead of a statistical comparative approach that searches for patterns and representations, and a straight forward comparisons of what is similar or not, such an approach depends on an inductive exploration of complexities, generating a large inventory of variations to form a saturated synopsis. Capturing the dynamic nature of peripheral urbanization, wherein both improvements and impoverishment can be seen at the same time, demands sufficient time and space for documentation and analyses.

It is essential here, to bring into view the methodological exploration within planetary urbanisation. As an urban theory, planetary urbanization relies on a theoretical hypothesis and a methodology offered by Henry Lefebvre—"the urban revolution"[162] and "transduction."[163] Its notable advocates Neil Brenner and Christian Schmid[164] underline that, Lefebvre's prediction of the urban revolution is already here, not only in particular regions but globally.[165] Accordingly, they proclaim, urban theory can no longer be about the features and forms of cities and city-ness, rather an endeavour of urban processes—of extended and concentrated urbanisations—detaching urbanisation from the notion of 'the city' and accounting for urbanisation that happens across fields, regions and the globe as a planetary phenomenon. This sets out a large space of theorization wherein lie multiple explorations between capturing the global nature of urbanization processes and diagnosing located differences and variables—from the neighbourhood to the planetary scale.

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160 Caldeira, 5.

161 Caldeira, 5.

162 "Similarly, by 'urban revolution' I refer to the transformations that affect contemporary society, ranging from the period when questions of growth and industrialization predominate (model, plans, programs) to the period when the urban problematic becomes predominant, when the search for solutions and modalities unique to urban society are foremost." Henri Lefebvre, *The Urban Revolution*, 5.

163 "Unlike a fact-filled empirism with its risky extrapolations and fragments of indigestible knowledge, we can build a theory from a theoretical hypothesis. The development of such a theory is associated with a methodology. For example, research involving a virtual object, which attempts to define and realize that object as part of an ongoing project, already has a name: transduction. The term reflects an intellectual approach toward a possible object, which we can employ alongside the more conventional activities of deduction and induction. The concept of an urban society, which I introduced above, this implies a hypothesis and a definition." Henri Lefebvre, 5.

164 Brenner and Schmid, "Towards a New Epistemology of the Urban?"

165 Philipp Horn, Paola Alfaro d'Alencon, and Ana Claudia Duarte Cardoso, eds., *Emerging Urban Spaces*, The Urban Book Series (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018), 3, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-57816-3.

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Secondly, planetary urbanisation predominantly employs transduction, rather than deduction and induction, as a methodological frame. "Transduction assumes an incessant feedback between the conceptual framework used and empirical observations."[166] It allows a degree of spontaneity among actors and observers of urbanisation processes while injecting thoroughness in innovation and knowledge. It is in such a methodological space of enquiry, that Schmid et al. introduce a 'horizontal' or synchronic analysis and a 'vertical' or diachronic analysis as methodological innovations to apprehend the challenges in urban comparative projects, that deem cities as ever dynamic and diversified phenomena.[167] In short, synchronic analysis, refers to the investigation of the present conditions, whereas a diachronic analysis refers to the dig into the historic processes of urbanisation. The two approaches are then brought together to form an analysis of "succession and overlapping of various urban processes. In that analysis urban areas do not end – it is just the analysis that stops."[168]

An overview of visual ethnography

Visual ethnography is a methodological innovation of the 1990's in ethnography and anthropological research and theory. As early as 1967, John Collier, Jr., and Malcolm Collier, in their book 'Visual Anthropology: Photography as a Research Method,' which is regarded as a manual of "how to get information on film and how to get information off film," laid out the basics of the use of photography in anthropological research.[169] As anthropology and ethnography experienced a period of rediscovery in the late 1980's, when "positivist arguments and realist approaches to knowledge, truth and objectivity were challenged."[170] This resulted in increased acceptability of the use of the visual in research on par with textual work. Sarah Pink attributed such gain in credibility of photography and images in research to timely innovations in visual technology, advances in critical postmodern theory, "reflexive approaches to ethnographic fieldwork methodology, and an emphasis on interdisciplinarity."[171] Since then, visual materials themselves became important contexts, cases or sites of research, methodologies of investigation and tools of representation of situated

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166 Schmid et al., "Towards a New Vocabulary of Urbanisation Processes," 31.

167 Schmid et al., 31.

168 Schmid et al., 32.

169 Collier and Collier, *Visual Anthropology: Photography as a Research Methodology.*

170 Pink, *Doing Visual Ethnography: Images, Media and Representation in Research*, 1.

171 Pink, 1–2.

cultures and phenomena. Similar to the adoption of the visual into ethnographic research, fields such as visual arts, media, and filmic researches increasingly relied on ethnographic approaches too. The interdisciplinarity in academic work, especially referring to visual ethnography, is largely among anthropology, sociology, media study, photographic studies, and cultural studies.

Albeit shared theoretical and methodological purview, it is difficult to assert a straightforward interdisciplinarity in visual ethnography that includes research in architecture, urban design and planning. The usage of visual materials such as, drawings, maps and photography, is intrinsic to these fields, and ethnographic approaches are employed regularly, yet their methodologies and tactics are rarely tied to visual ethnography. Here, in order to better imagine the methodological nexus, it is important to discuss the nature of and relationship between research and design.

Architecture, urban design, and planning, as practices, are projection oriented and generative. They describe what is to become a physical reality by the use of drawings, images, maps, animations and texts. As part of this projective exercise, they perform context analyses, which include the study of physical, environmental and socio-economic conditions of a place. In their book 'Architectural Research Methods,' Linda Groat and David Wang state that there is a "contentious and complicated" debate regarding the "equivalence—or lack thereof—between research and design."[172] Responding to the question "does design equal research?," they summarise what they find are the "primary differences" between design and research.[173] In a tabular manner, they illustrate that design is a dominantly generative process with proposals for artifacts, to solve identified problems by focusing on the future; while, research deals with questions, instead of problems, and produces generalizable knowledge and/or application through analytic and systematic processes with temporal focus on the past and/or the present. Based on Bruno Latour's rendering of the difference between research and science,[174]

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[172] Linda Groat and David Wang, *Architectural Research Methods*, Second (New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2013), 23.

[173] Groat and Wang, 21–27.

[174] "Science is certainty; research is uncertainty. Science is supposed to be cold, straight, and detached; research is warm, involving, and risky. Science puts an end to the vagaries of human disputes; research creates controversies. Science pro-duces objectivity by escaping as much as possible from the shackles of ideology, passions, and emotions; research feeds on all of those to render objects of inquiry familiar." Bruno Latour, "From the World of Science to the World of Research?," *Science* 280, no. 5361 (April 10, 1998): 208–9, https://doi.org/10.1126/science.280.5361.208.

David Salomon points to the "affinity between research and design as similarly experimental, subjective, and political processes."[175] Similarly, Groat and Wang, illustrate the "comparable and shared" characters of design and research, among which are logic-in-use (abduction, induction and deduction), and situatedness of both research and design practice.

This broad review of research, in the fields of design and planning, portrays its qualities as a situated and systematized enquiry of a place or artifact, that heavily relies on visual information. Especially, when dealing with dynamic urban contexts, ethnographic observation—in-depth exploration of a setting, situated detailing, the reliance on non-precoded data, analytic method that primes residents' points of view[176]—prove useful. The following is a discussion of various approaches that tie design and ethnography, and to a less explicit degree visual ethnography.

To bring ethnographic and design approaches together with an orientation to effect change and intervention, Sarah Pink et. al assembled and elaborated on a list of tested methods.[177] These methods are not presented as templates to pursue but as a review of the working grounds shared between ethnography and design based on a number of research examples done on the thematic of 'home.' The list of eleven approaches discussed are not always distinct but are often "used in relations to each other;" and in some cases "blur into each other." This list constitutes, a) researching homes, b) using short-term intensive ethnographic and design research methods, c) using interview methods in homes, d) touring the home with participants, e) video-re-enactment, f) in-practice study of everyday human activity, g) participatory floor plan activity and timeline method, h) art-based methods: the tactile time collage, i) self-reporting methods, j) self-interviewing methods: the five cups of tea video method, k) video diaries: the evening times video recording method. For these methods to function as nexus between the two fields, they propose three themes as collaborative spaces—temporality, environment and activities and movements at home.

175 David Salomon, "Experimental Cultures: On the 'End' of the Design Thesis and the Rise of the Research Studio," *Journal of Architectural Education* 65, no. 1 (2011): 34, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1531-314X.2011.01172.x.

176 see also, Groat and Wang, *Architectural Research Methods*, 225.

177 Sarah Pink et al., *Making Homes: Ethnography and Design* (London, UNITED KINGDOM: Taylor & Francis Group, 2017), 93–126, http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/delft/detail.action?docID=4835136.

An ethnographic method and theory that is advocated, by scholars such as Galen Cranz, as tailored to the needs of design and planning education and practice is semantic/cognitive ethnography.[178] Its proponents argue that it is most useful for the "jargon-filled world of design because it emphasizes meaning."[179] By relying on interviews, actively listening and giving due weight to the vocabulary terms 'clients' of architecture use to express their experience of a culture, and allowing "theory [to emerge] from the informants," the architect can generate a nuanced reading of a culture and context. Semantic ethnography is best applicable at the programming (at the beginning) and evaluation (after completion and occupation by users) stages of the architectural project.

Here it is also important to emphasize drawing as a form of note taking, an object of analysis, and a technique of representation in ethnographic observation. Doing so opens possibilities to establish a direct link between research in design and visual ethnography. Two recent works are key to exemplify the usage of drawings as prominent tools in visual ethnography. Atelier Bow-Wow's Momoyo Kaijima describes the methodology their practice employed as they attempt to draw a recovery plan for localities affected by the 2011 earthquake, tsunami and the destructions following the falling of the Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant.

We talked to village residents about the ways of life and the landscapes that had been washed away by the tsunami, and used the fragments of information collected in the interviews to make drawings that reconstituted these spaces. The process was akin to putting together pieces of a puzzle in one's memory, and I began to think that we might call this way of working 'Architectural Ethnography.' I thought that if we could draw up a reconstruction plan based on a thorough understanding of the village gained through the survey, then it could serve as an effective means of illustrating and realizing an entire sequence linking past, present, and future.[180]

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178 Galen Cranz, *Ethnography for Designers*, 1st ed. (London: Routledge, 2016), https://www-taylorfrancis-com.tudelft.idm.oclc.org/pdfviewer/; Galen Cranz et al., "Teaching Semantic Ethnography to Architecture Students," *International Journal of Architectural Research: ArchNet-IJAR* 8, no. 3 (November 30, 2014): 6, https://doi.org/10.26687/archnet-ijar.v8i3.433.

179 Cranz, *Ethnography for Designers*, 5.

180 Momoyo Kaijima, "Learning from Architectural Ethnography," HafenCity University's Urban Design master's programme, Urban Design Reader, accessed September 15, 2020, http://urban-design-reader.de/atrium-behaviorology/learning-from-architectural-ethnography.

Kaijima further elaborates that architecture has "its own built-in means of critical evaluation"— an autonomy, upon which, ethnography is overlaid to construct architectural ethnography.[181] In Atelier Bow-Wow's experiment in architectural ethnography, four themes of drawing the built environment are forwarded: drawing of architecture, drawing for architecture, drawing among architecture, and drawing around architecture.[182]

Jan Rathuizen's book, 'The Soft Atlas of Amsterdam: Hand Drawn Perspectives From Daily Life,' is a visually stimulating and ethnographically rich art work. He attributes the use of the word, soft, in the title of the book to the 1974 book by Jonathan Raban called 'Soft City' by saying:

His idea is that the city is where the solid concrete reality of buildings and asphalt meets the malleable, subjective experience and expectations of the people who live and work here.[183]

I began by simply recording my walks in text, photos, and sketches, and from there I gradually developed an approach to drawing that combines text and images in a way that pays equal attention to both. My drawings mostly consist of detailed graphic and written stories of the places I visit. They are like the windows through which I observe the everyday.[184]

As a located observer of an urban context, he relies on diligent and textual note taking, sketching, interviews, photography (as reference for drawing), printed maps (to position the notes in space), for gathering as much information as possible at a time.[185] This is then followed by an in-studio drawing process that puts the gathered information into one rich drawing.

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181 Kaijima.

182 Kaijima.

183 Jan Rothuizen, *The Soft Atlas of Amsterdam: Hand Drawn Perspectives From Daily Life* (Amsterdam: Nieuw Amsterdam Uitgevers, 2014).

184 Jan Rothuizen, "Club Colombia" (n.d.).

185 Rothuizen.
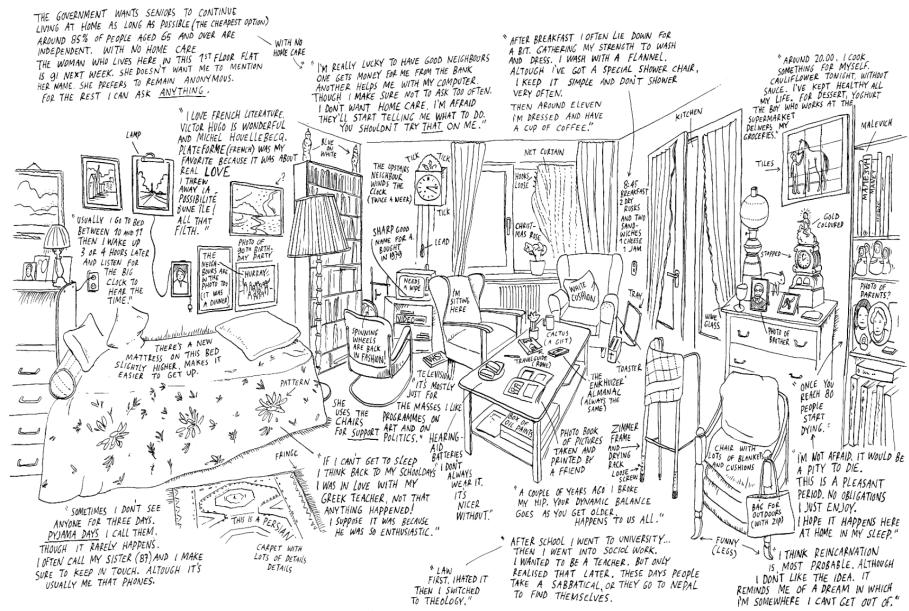
FIG. 3.2 A drawing by Jan Rothuizen titled 'Pyjama Days' shows an interior space of an elderly woman in Amsterdam. (Jan Rothuizen, *The Soft Atlas of Amsterdam: Hand Drawn Perspectives From Daily Life* [Amsterdam: Nieuw Amsterdam Uitgevers, 2014], 42-3)

Threading through: positions and methods to cross-cut

The cross-disciplinary review of methods and methodological theories discussed in the preceding section lays the foundation to the methodological hypothesis of this dissertation. What is common in these theories and methods is their pluralistic tendency—intent on inclusive reading of experiences and legitimization of differences. Regardless of their individual disciplinary traditions, and while largely situated in the pinnacles of Western academia, they offer either direct critics to the reductive disposition of the trans-Atlantic theorization of the urban or new possibilities to apprehend, comprehend and forward "other" theories and methods. This, indeed, should not be seen as a combating effort, rather as a growth area for knowledge regarding urbanization. Jane M. Jacobs draws our attention to the weakness of comparative studies in "seeing differences for differences sake."[186]

186 Jacobs, "Commentary—Comparing Comparative Urbanisms," 905.

A reporting on patterns (seldom presented as evidence or cause) of similarity among cases while ignoring anomalies and differences, she argues, is "fraught with difficulty."[187] It discounts what Jennifer Robinson calls 'ordinary cities,' as it leads to predictable conclusions as per the measures of comparison based on Western cities.

The methodological hypothesis of this dissertation is inserted on two tiers: on a theoretical/positional level, and on intradisciplinary methodological level towards interdisciplinary ends. First, positionally, it is an alignment with the aforementioned epistemic drives for accounting for urban phenomena that are used to be considered anomalies: a theoretic vantage point for the furtherance of methodologies to read dissimilarities and complexities as they are, for the purposes of generating new theories and imaginations of city-ness, and for capturing nuances within the sites themselves. Secondly, advancement of qualitative research methods within individual disciplines are necessary. To this end, a methodological innovation cross-cutting disciplinary traditions, either in a collaborative setting or in single disciplinary research, is needed. These advancements should not only be cognisant of other disciplinary methods and traditions but develop grafted techniques both to equip themselves and enhance collaboration in overlapping conceptual territories. In this regard, research in architecture, design, and planning disciplines needs to advance further than adopting qualitative approaches such as ethnography and phenomenology. In areas such as, tactics of fieldwork, methods, and timing of analysis, reporting and theorization approaches, there are vast areas for improvement.

In summary, threading through the reviewed methodologies and theories of methods in this section, a fertile ground for the discovery of new and cross-cutting methods for design research can be found. The main characteristics of this ground are:

1. It stands on the position that theory can be discovered from a 'systematically collected and analysed data.'
2. Its data collection, analysis and theory development are performed simultaneously.
3. It is mindful of the languages, meanings and actions used by researchers and research participants.
4. It accords sufficient care in reporting on dissimilarities and differences, as much as similarities.
5. It recognizes the use of visual materials and technics as techniques of data collection, analysis and presentation/description.
6. It is cautious of exclusive comparisons and comfortable with anomalies within and among different contexts.

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187 Jacobs, 905.

FEATURES OF QUOALITATIVE RESEARCHES /OPPORTUNITIES FOR CROSS-CUTTING METHODOLOGICAL EXPLORATION/

GROUNDED THEORY
- discovery of theory from social data
- simultaneous performance of data collection analysis and theory development
- attending to language, meaning and actions

COMPARATIVE URBANISM
- systematic study of similarities & differences
- implicit and explicit comparisons
- use of differences and estrangements as modes of analysis & critique
- contemporary/'horizontal'/ synchronic and historical/'vertical'/diachronic analysis

VISUAL ETHNOGRAPHY
- the visual material as a form of note taking, object of analysis, and technique of representation
- equal attention to textual and visual material

FIG. 3.3 Main features of qualitative research with similar conceptual intents—nuanced reading of experiences—as opportunities for exploration of cross-cutting, new methods.

3.3 The Frames: Stories, ethnography, and visual evidencing

The frames of the trinocular are not merely metaphoric, but they hold the whole methodology together. They serve as tools of documentation, analysis and representation or description. They apply to all stages of the fieldwork as discussed in section 3.5. to document what is seen through all the three viewing lenses. Threading through the theories of methods reviewed in section 3.2, these three frames serve as techniques that cross-cut disciplinary traditions and allow the researcher to probe different aspects of complex urban conditions at a time. Below are positional discussions and practical applications (within the current research) of these frames: stories, visual evidencing, and ethnography.

"What the map cuts up, the story cuts across."[188]

Stories offer a unique access into lived experiences, practiced lives and places; not limited in scope or purpose to freezing a once past event but traversing times and borders. Beyond describing object characteristics, flows, interplays and distinctions of spaces, stories play more profound role in founding, shaping, and authorizing them. Inversely, they can also render them inexistent or cause their loss through exclusion or by reducing them to mere "museographical objects."[189]

Michel de Certeau, in The Practice of Everyday Life, illustriously discussed the unreplaceable role of stories in making, narrating, and enacting the dynamic nature of spaces and social performances. He states, stories are spatial trajectories that, in similar fashion as vehicles of mass transport, crisscross and interlink different nodes, "traverse and organize" places.[190] Stories identify places and actualize spaces—they transform places from still constellation of forms into spaces actuated by practices, and vice versa,

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188 Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven F. Rendall, 3rd ed. (Berkerley, UNITED STATES: University of California Press, 2011), 129, http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/delft/detail.action?docID=922939.

189 de Certeau, 123.

190 "In modern Athens, the vehicles of mass transportation are called metaphoria. To go to work or come home, one takes 'metaphor'—a bus or a train. Stories could also take this noble name: every day, they traverse and organize places; they select and link them together; they make sentences and itineraries out of them. They are spatial trajectories." de Certeau, 115.

and "organize the play of changing relationships between places and spaces."[191] By identifying places they provide a locating map and in the utterance of successive actions they provide a tour. Maps are fixed in time and make actions visual and legible; they only capture what was once, but they deduct the continuum of happenings from discourse. They draw a 'route' that never existed before the act of walking happened, whereas stories enliven the walking act itself. Everyday stories are treatments of space, they make its potentials conceivable for the audience; they nudge the fixed lines and symbols on a plane into imaginations of practices. They go beyond description and unfix phenomena; they venture into founding and articulating spaces. Stories can also be operations of marking out boundaries of spaces; they validate, arrange, and rearrange their frontiers. Furthermore, they privilege a "logic of ambiguity,"[192] among the interstices of societal, metaphorical, or actual limits; they narrate and reveal anomalies and delinquencies.

In discussing the relation of theory to a discourse of composed stories, de Certeau stated:

In many works, narrativity insinuates itself into scientific discourse as its general denomination (its title), as one of its parts ("case" studies, "life stories," or stories of groups, etc.) or as its counterpoint (quoted fragments, interviews, "sayings," etc.). Narrativity haunts such discourses. Shouldn't we recognize its *scientific* legitimacy by assuming that instead of being a remainder that cannot be, or has not yet been, eliminated from discourse, narrativity has a necessary function in it, and that *a theory of narration is indissociable from a theory of practices, as its condition as well as its* production?[193]

The truth value that researchers seek out of stories needs to be checked. The role of stories beyond description is articulated by de Certeau as the creation of fictional space; and that narration's pursuit is not the 'getting close to' or arresting what is 'real' via textualization, but it is an act of hitting a balance in which place, time, and the speaker partake. Toward this goal, he proposes that, a more explicit scientific model wherein theory of everyday practices mimics the way of narration is needed.

The writing of the stories itself is allegorical; it is more than just inscription of what is said. James Clifford urges for the acceptance of the inescapably allegorical nature of ethnographic text.[194] The impulse to redeem phenomena in a certain way and

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191 de Certeau, 118.

192 de Certeau, 128.

193 de Certeau, 78.

194 James Clifford and George E. Marcus, eds., *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*, Experiments in Contemporary Anthropology (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1986), 99.

voice for eternity needs to be resisted in writing by "opening ourselves to different histories."[195] And that, the meanings of cultural accounts are uncontainable as there exists no means to separate the factual from the allegorical.

The data of ethnography makes sense only within patterned arrangements and narratives, and these are conventional, political, and meaningful in a more than referential sense.[196]

Allegory thus, primes narratives and stories embedded in the writing process and the resulting text. It adds temporal aspects to the reading process and complicates both the writing and reading process in a useful manner. Furthermore, awareness of the implicit and explicit narratives and temporal setups in a culture increases as allegoric awareness increases. The unrealistic fear that the recognition of allegory may lead to "a nihilism of reading" should thus be overcome from the get-go.[197]

Pictorial documentation, and representation are staple techniques to the design and planning professions. From site study to the projective workings of these disciplines, visual materials play a major role. As culture is increasingly becoming the main subject of discourse in such fields, ethnography as an "interdisciplinary phenomenon"[198] is gaining authority and rhetoric momentum. Similarly, visual representation is credited in social research for its benefits in not only data collection and analysis but also in "overcoming analytic paralysis;" it is a productive way of thinking across various types of data, and various scales of research.[199] It enables reflexive social research by exposing the research and researchers situatedness—sieving through the messy process social research itself.

Such epistemic and methodological intersections avail space for the discovery of new understandings and methodological innovation. Visual evidencing emerges advantageous in such a condition where the primacy of stories, and exposition and writing the allegoric narratives of a complex context is required, as a form of both visual and textual ethnography.

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[195] Clifford and Marcus, 119.

[196] Clifford and Marcus, 119.

[197] Clifford and Marcus, 120.

[198] Clifford and Marcus, 3.

[199] Clarke, Friese, and Washburn, *Situational Analysis in Practice: Mapping Research with Grounded Theory*, 172.

Fieldworks of in-depth interviews, go-along observation, and mapping works constitute the documentation function of the frames. A multi-step analytic process involving translation, transcription, and situational mapping also employ the frames in a non-linear manner. And within the writing process, a composition of stories, maps, and illustrations emerge as visual writings. This includes selection of sites, themes, voices, and formats that represent the seen through the lenses. For instance, in chapter 5, the discussion of social networks relies heavily on textual narration, whereas the spatial-typological discussion in chapter 6 requires greater use of visual illustrations. These steps are not sequential and any discovery or lack thereof at one of the steps prompts a move into another at any time and stage.

3.4   The Lenses: Cognitive borders, social relationships, and spatial typologies

The discovery of the lenses from the exploratory phase of the fieldwork for this research is introduced in section 3.5 below. The lenses are neither exhaustive nor exclusive of other features of the *sefer* or other communities in other contexts. They are rather specific to the case site conditions and can be taken as exemplary to what kind of viewing points can be set up to investigate complex urban conditions. Their validity across various contexts or ability to be extrapolated to other *sefer* conditions is not tested in this research. Yet, within the objectives of this research, since they are extractions from an observed reality with a special focus on features of peculiarity, they provide competent nuances to other dominant forms of readings that currently are in practice. The findings through these lenses will be discussed in chapters 4, 5, and 6. The introduction of the lenses below will be brief.

One of the complexities of *sefer*, as discussed in the previous chapter, is the multiplicity of border-making through different regimes and the contradictions regarding public knowledge of the *sefer* in its spatiality—its limits as understood by the dwellers. State agencies have enacted differing territories and labels/names (including numbers) to identify, locate, and administer communities at different times. This by itself creates diffused understanding of the *sefer* limits. Added to that, members of *sefer* communities ratify spatial limits and conditions differently than the state mechanisms. Thus, borders that are cognized by dwellers of *sefer* contradict official maps in multiple case areas. Furthermore, what is delineated

by the communities themselves may vary among groups and individuals. Dwellers comprehension of spatiality is thus an essential study that, for instance, stories can expose. Dimensions, orientation, and affinity are aspects of spatiality that the analysis of stories enriches the study of cognitive borders with.[200]

The investigation of the types, strength, and spatial manifestation of social relationships in *sefer* comprises the second lens of the trinocular—social relationships. In contexts where welfare mechanisms are weak or absent, risk mitigation and social security are gained through relationships outside of state mechanisms. *Sefer* are rich with such social networks that provide such values to dwellers. Understanding these networks and their features is thus essential to comprehend the *sefer* and its complexities.

Of interest, especially to design and planning disciplines, is the study of spaces within the *sefer* that typify it. The organic evolution and morphology, the physical dilapidation, and visually cluttered appearance of *sefer* obscure such spaces in *sefer*. A typological enquiry thus will uncover qualities essential for comprehending the *sefer*.

3.5 Sites, fieldwork, and method of analysis

Site *sefer*

As indicated at the beginning of this chapter, the subjects of this research are three case *sefer* in Addis Ababa selected based on two criteria. The first criterium is time—the basic fact that these *sefer* have been part of the city since its foundation. Through time, multiple *sefer* have been formed, but as young a city Addis Ababa is, it is important to peak into the historically embedded ones. The second criterium is the type of *sefer* as elaborated by Bahru Zewde.[201] The '*sefer* of the nobility,' the 'occupational' *sefer*, and the 'community' (based on place of origin, prior moving to Addis Ababa, or ethnicity of settlers) *sefer*. These typologies have also been alluded

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[200] de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 123.

[201] Zewde, "Early Safars of Addis Ababa: Patterns of Evolution," 46–47.

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to by Fasil Giorghis and Denis Gérard, as they categorise them as named-after "chief of the land…, main activity of the inhabitants, … name of the parish church, … dominant ethnic group that settled in the area."[202] In Zewde's categories, *sefer* known for/by the parish church are related to '*sefer* of nobilities.' In addition, Peter P. Garretson highlights that it is the military or nobilities' *sefer* not the *'atbiya'* or parish that was dominant both in forming the city and in identifying locations and orientation physically.[203] Thus, this dissertation follows in not presenting 'atbiya' as a separate type. The following are brief introductions to the selected *sefer*.

Dejach Wube sefer is named after Dejazmach Wube Atnaf Seged, a military commander,[204] and a son-in-law to Emperor Menelik II, as he was married to Princess Zewditu Menelik in 1891.[205] He was thus, like the few others favoured by the emperor, offered a large tract of land to settle in the newly founded capital. Similar to other areas in the city, what was a forest and plain field, is gradually cleared as new residents built new houses and settled as per the wish of the Dejach. Situated North of the prominent *Kidus Giorgis* (St. George) or *Arada Giorgis* church and *Arada* market, this land had major locational significance. During Melinik's reign *Arada*, as an area, would swiftly grow to become the vibrant commercial centre of the city, and in later times, especially in 1960's a cultural hub. It is during the later period *Dejach Wube sefer* attained the informal name "Wube Bereha" (Wube Desert). Though it is difficult to find the reasoning for the choice of the word 'desert' in this name, during this period, it had become the place with popular cafés, bars, and night clubs—a brewing spot for alternative cultures. It was the arena of cultural experimentation and performance, especially of 'modern' Ethiopian literary and entertainment cultures. Popular figures and celebrities frequented the *sefer* as it was considered the place where modernity manifested. Current residents, some of whom are informants to this research, reminisce about those times with nostalgia as they worry about its contemporary state. Today, significant portions of the *sefer* are demolished for redevelopment purposes and the remaining dwellers anticipate the same will happen soon to their area.

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202 Fasil Giorghis and Denis Gerard, *The City & Its Architectural Heritage, Addis Ababa 1986-1941, La Ville Son Patrimoine Architectural* (Addis Ababa: Shama Books, 2007), 42.

203 Garretson, *A History of Addis Abäba from Its Foundation in 1886 to 1910*, 2.

204 'Dejazmach' is a military title that Peter P. Garretson translates directly as "commander of the door," and equivalently as "commander of the rear guard." In contemporary, colloquial use it is shortened as 'Dejach.' Garretson, 2, 177.

205 Giorghis and Gerard, *The City & Its Architectural Heritage, Addis Ababa 1986-1941, La Ville Son Patrimoine Architectural*, 234.

Serategna sefer, translates from Amharic as workers' *sefer*, thus fitting into the occupational *sefer* category. As key informants and literature reveal, the founding residents of the *sefer* were those who followed Emperor Menelik from *Ankober*—his former seat, and were preoccupied with tasks such as fixing rifles, making horse saddles, and daily-use tools.

The most numerous of the workers were those working in iron. They were divided into two groups, the fitters and the more numerous the forgers. The former were the most skilful, could repair the parts of a rifle, make iron lances, bits, chains and sabres.[206]

Similar to *Dejach Wube*, it is located close to *Arada* marker, but borders it from South. In addition to the trade advantage the industrious workers' quarter enjoys because of its location, it was also where most foreigners (i.e. Greek, Armenian, and Indian workers and traders) worked and resided. It was not only the 'workshop of the city' but also the place where active exchange of technology and culture happened.

Even though there were a few noble households living in this *sefer*,[207] the most known and referred to, till date, by residents, as owning large portion of the land is *Basha*[208] Mulat Belayneh. Multiple informants stated that he inherited the properties from his father Belayneh,[209] who was deceased at a battle in *Maychew*, in which both of them took part. Basha Mulat is rather known as a trader, landowner, and landlord in the area than his military engagements. He was later killed during the revolution that toppled the monarchy in 1974 and his properties nationalized in keeping with the declaration for nationalization of extra properties. Similar to the case of *Dejach Wube sefer*, residents in *serategna sefer* harbour a feeling of uncertainty and insecurity as they witness neighbouring *sefer* be cleared for development purposes.

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206 Garretson, *A History of Addis Abäba from Its Foundation in 1886 to 1910*, 98.

207 Multiple interviews show, Fitawrari Yigletu, Balambaras Tilaye, and Basha Yigletu as some notable names of noble men who resided in the area and whose descendant's still live in *serategna sefer.*

208 'Basha' is a title given to low ranking military personnel.

209 This research was not able to identify Belayneh as a noble or military person in relation to Emperor Menilik II, but an informant has disclosed that both Basha Mulat and Belayneh have been at a battle in Maychew, where the later was deceased.

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Geja sefer is named after an ethnic group and a place called *Geja*, 230 kilometres South of Addis Ababa. The fast pace of settlement in the early years of Addis Ababa demanded workforce of builders, carpenters, and weavers. *Geja sefer* was a vast land administered by Menelik's *Azzaz*s[210]—Azzaz Gezaw until 1906 and Azzaz Wolde Tsadik from 1906-09.[211] Especially the later, as he was also the leader of the region of origin in Southern Ethiopia, facilitated the seasonal migration to the capital to supply the labour force required by the seat of the empire. Currently, it is a *sefer* tied to *Merkato*, both in proximity and daily trade, as most of its residents heavily rely on small scale production and exchange based on this locational advantage. Among residents, the clearing of nearby communities for housing developments, such as the case in *Lideta*, pose similar insecurities as the previous two case *sefer*.

Fieldwork

The fieldwork for this research is done in three separate periods with durations of two, four and three months each consecutively—a total of nine months. From July to September of 2017, two forms of explorations were performed. The first is a survey of Addis Ababa's *sefer*, with a mapping exercise to identify and locate the most notable ones. This included focus group session of mapping, interviews with elders and urban historians, and periodically walking through six prominent areas: *Geja*, *Doro Maneqia*, *Serategna*, *Gedam*, *Dejach Wube* and *Gebar sefer*. Together with the literature review and prior documentations of the conditions of *sefer*, this survey was essential to set out the overall story of *sefer* as individual areas within the city as well as a connected systems and relations.

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210 "The superintendent of the servants, head of the household, either of a noble or the emperor. A commander or chief." Garretson, *A History of Addis Abäba from Its Foundation in 1886 to 1910*, 176.

211 Garretson, 29, 32.

1 A focus group session, exploration to identify notable *sefer* in the center of Addis Ababa, 2017.
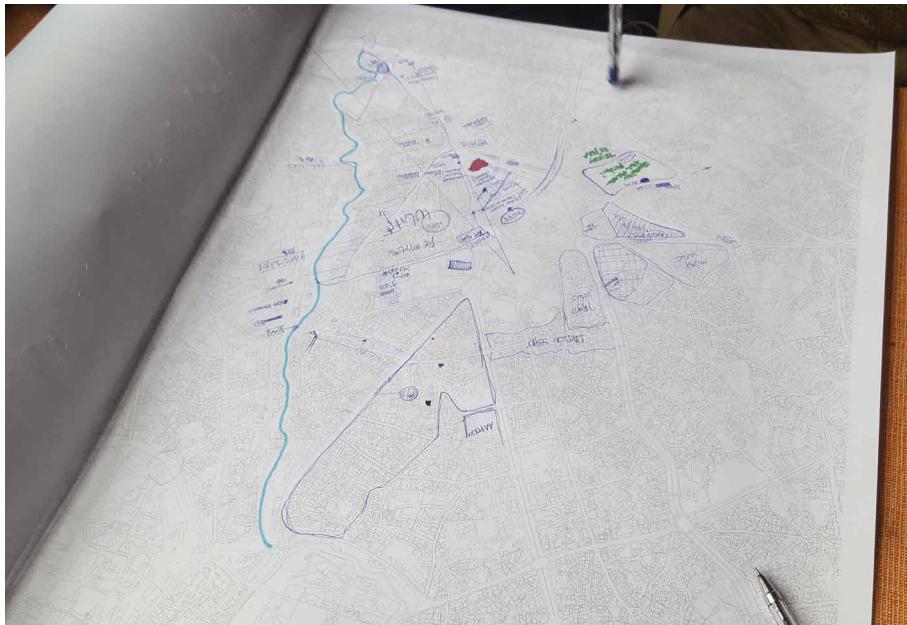
2 A sketch output marking *sefer* in Arada area.

FIG. 3.4 Focus group working session, identifying prominent *sefer* in the larger Arada area of Addis Ababa.
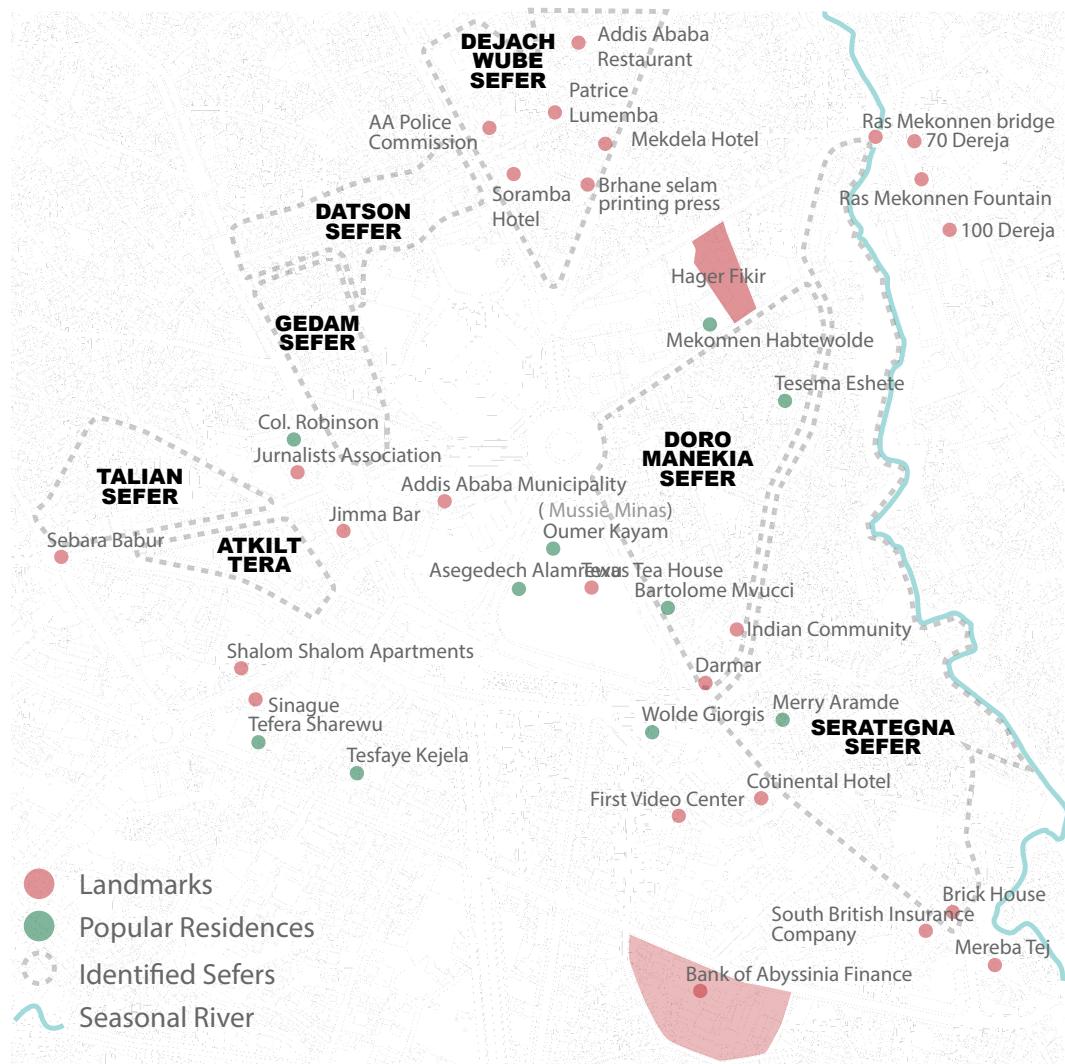
FIG. 3.5 Map showing *sefer* in the larger Arada area as preliminary finding—a result of focus group mapping exercise.

The second form of exploration was sharply focused on *Dejach Wube sefer*. The main objectives of this phase were observing the environs, establishing rapport with members of the community, identifying main activities from the domestic to the common spaces, and preliminary data collection and analysis. It is thus, a first step in forming the basis for the methodological approach and conceptual frames of this research. Through repeated visits and non-selective, *sefer*-wide, in-depth interviews, go-along observations, mapping and drawing exercises four main conceptual areas

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were noted for further exploration. A series of quick and messy exercises of situational and relational mapping were useful in deciding which thematic to pursue.[212]

1 Dwellers' cognitive understanding of the sefer

As was discussed in chapter 2, the administrative delineation and identification of *sefer* and the informal—rather popular—understanding of its limits are seldom different. A rather practical query into residents understanding of the borders of the *sefer* leads to physical, emotional, and historical marks that are not necessarily the same for all individuals. Through layered mapping of multiple responses and intervening with reductive and eliminative analyses some common borders can be identified. In addition to these shared understandings of the surrounding, a more detailed query into individuals' experiences, attachments and sense of belongingness yields personalized spaces that are marked by one's networks, movements, and experiences.

2 Social networks and economic relationships

A young man living in one of the compounds in *Dejach Wube sefer* recycles newspapers and old books to produce paper trays that he then sells to cafeterias in the vicinity, which they in turn use to serve cookies and pastries to their customers. Funeral associations are used to collect and organize resources so as to support those in dire need of help during mourning of lost ones and in recent practices even those who need help because of emergent misfortunes of personal and communal nature. These are only a couple of examples of the type of social networks and economic relationships that are integral to life in the *sefer*. The broader *Arada* district is a vibrant business area, complemented by the neighboring wholesale markets such as *Merkato* and *Atikilt Tera*,[213] residents of the *sefer* heavily rely on home-based businesses and relationships to meet ends meet on a daily basis.

3 Physical and spatial landmarks deemed indispensable by residents

Dejach Wube sefer, which is also known as *Wube Bereha* (Wube desert) for its vibrant night life during 1960s-80s has been an attraction to many who seek leisure, business, arts and progressive cultures. Residents constantly refer to that period with nostalgia to the activities and places. Most informants came to the area during this 'high time' of the *sefer*. Faced with the threat of relocation they passionately call for some features of the *sefer* to be retained as heritage. A bar named after the

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212 see also, Clarke, Friese, and Washburn, *Situational Analysis in Practice: Mapping Research with Grounded Theory*, 171–74.

213 Merkato is a large area of open market at the center of Addis Ababa and *Atikilt Tera* is a fruits and vegetable market, the largest in Ethiopia.

Congolese independence fighter and first prime minister of the then Republic of the Congo, Patrice Lumumba, was the go-to 'night club' where most of Ethiopia's popular singers of the time performed. The banquet hall of Dejach Wube Atnaf Seged, and the current Addis Ababa restaurant is another significant element residents claim to be a landmark 'worth fighting for.' Some residents indicate the whole street connecting the two as a street full of memories thus a space of significance to them. Both the stories and the landmarks need to be surveyed further as indicators of the sense of belongingness residents feel in broader *sefer*.

4 Claimed, contested and negotiated spaces

Since most of the houses in the *sefer* are state owned, there is almost no opportunity to make physical changes to the built houses. Yet, temporary structures such as fences and walls made of corrugated iron sheets, plants and planters are used to claim spaces for use by individual household. For lack of infrastructure and services, families are forced to share amenities such as kitchens, toilets and water taps. For example, washing clothes is a daily negotiation for the use of shared spaces and amenities like the tap. A festive event of a family is a responsibility shared by many as it happens, in many cases, in shared courtyard-like spaces shared among households. Such dynamic use of space for different purposes by a number of families is guided by the physical structures but a definitive character that defines the spaces themselves is also generated because of it.

The second fieldwork (January–May 2018) followed a review of the above conceptual frames, and the formation of the three lenses of the trinocular. The lenses are thus an extension of these initial conceptions. Noting the overlapping nature of the frames discussed in points 3 & 4 above, while formulating the methodology, an inclusive conception is adopted—spatial typologies. The other development prior to the second fieldwork was the choice of case *sefer* as discussed earlier in this section.

This phase of the fieldwork rigorously documented all three selected case sites on the *sefer* level and the *gebbi* (compound) level. The compounds in the *sefer* are results of organic growth of the *sefer* that are situated in; subdivisions of the area based on different tenure arrangements across many years and regimes. They reflect the initial organic beginnings of the *sefer* based on topography of the land and access but also later developments such as the 1975 nationalization of land properties that distributed buildings within compounds to new dwellers. This is reflected both in density and demographic composition of *sefer*. Most importantly, within *sefer* the *gebbi* are identifiers of a degree of relations lower in scale than the *sefer*. In all cases they have names given to them for different reasons—dominant domestic occupation, names of notable persons, names of the place of origin of some or most of the dwellers, or a coincidental historic phenomenon within the community.

Documentation of the *gebbi* is conducted based on accessibility for research and rapport established in all the three *sefer*.

The main objective of this phase of the research was thus, to document the selected *sefer* by employing the three methodological lenses: cognitive borders, social relations, and spatial typologies. To this end, further in-depth interviews, go-along observations, mapping and drawing exercises were conducted.

The third fieldwork was a focus on a single *gebbi* per *sefer*, for detailed documentation and analysis. It expanded on in-depth interviews performed in earlier phases, and intensified on visual evidencing through videography, photography and drawings. *Meqdela Gebbi*, *Qibe Gebbi*, and *Beqel Gebbi* are the three compounds chosen from *Dejach Wube*, *Serategna* and *Geja Sefer* respectively.

In summary, the three phases of fieldwork followed a narrowing-down approach in scalar terms, from exploring and grasping the *sefer* as a part in the larger urban dynamics to the detailed documentation of a compound within *sefer*. In this process, the methodology was constantly being updated based on analysis of the collected information.

Method of analysis—a patchwork of stories

There are five forms of information gathered during the field work for this research—interviews, videos, photographs, drawings and maps. All interviews are conducted in the local language Amharic, then translated and transcribed into English. Most of the videos recorded are done without prior notification of a visit to the sites, while some of them are planned to capture moments that are peculiar to the settings. For example, if a home-based economic production, has a specific high time during the day, this was pointed out by the informants and the recordings are planned as such. The same applies to photographic documentation. Drawing and mapping were done as part of the notetaking but also served as means of communication with informants at the sites. Digitization and further illustration of these initial maps and drawings is done in later stages, either immediately after a site visit or as part of the analytic and writing work.

FIG. 3.6 Gebbi (shared compounds) within *Dejach Wube*, *Serategna*, and *Geja sefer* selected for detailed documentation.
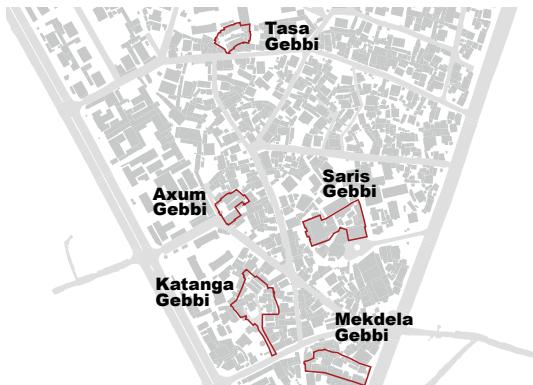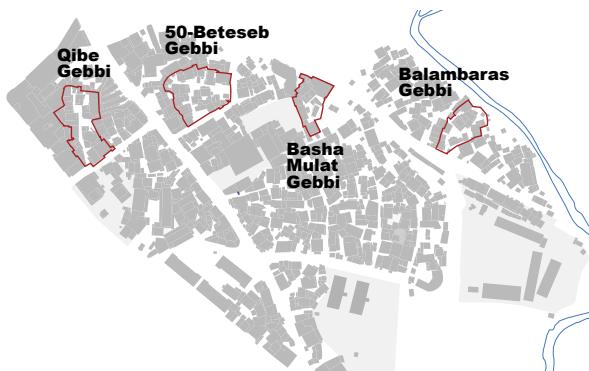
1 *Dejach Wube sefer*

2 *Serategna sefer*

3 *Geja sefer*

Even though all forms of data collection were used while looking through the three lenses discussed in the previous sections, each carried different weights in different lenses in the analytic process. For instance, the view through typologies and morphologies relies heavily on drawings and photographs than the interviews. And the study of social relationships makes the most use of mapping and interviews than drawings and photographs. This is further reflected in the discussion chapters that follow, in which, discussions and analyses as per a lens are presented in some of these forms than others. In chapters 4 and 5 stories of interviewees are presented separate from visual illustrations and descriptive text whereas in chapter 6 the stories are presented as part of the visual narration of the spatial typology. It is an analytic process by itself, within which the presentation formats vary depending on the type of information processed and narrated.

As discussed in earlier, the first analytic intervention was done together with the exploratory fieldwork that led to the discovery of the four conceptual frames that later became three. These conceptual frames then became the lenses of the trinocular—integral to the methodology thereafter. The second analytic intervention is organizing the data according to the three lenses. During analysis, especially of the stories told by informants, multiple interventions have been taken. First is the translation (from Amharic to English) and transcription of the recorded interviews. Translation already introduces the researcher's role in textualizing and intervention by infusing meaning to the stories with English speaking audience in mind. Here thus, cultural and linguistic allegories, even before the writing process begins, appear in the plot. Not only the storified circumstances (time and place), and the storyteller/interviewee, but also the interpreter (in this case the researcher) participate in the construction of the narrative. The second analytic step is situational mapping (both messy and ordered maps) of the information in the translated and transcribed text—a multistep process by itself. Thirdly, the situational maps are juxtaposed with the observational data: field notes, maps, photographs, videos, and drawings. The contents of the notes are either directly taken from the notes of the fieldwork, or reiterative and reflective writings in later stages. Recorded videos and audios are utilized in formulating some of these notes in retrospective evaluation.

4 Cognitive borders of *sefer*

Understanding cognition as driven culturally, affectively, and in terms of "embodied action"[214] presents us with an alternative understanding of borders as socially constructed.[215]

A recent article by James Wiley Scott begins with the claim; "[l]inking borders to cognition can widen our understandings of space–society relations."[216] Based on two case localities in Berlin and Warsaw, the article sought "to associate cognition, borders, and everyday processes of place-making."[217] It further argues that places and borders are crucial for "meaning-making;" they are co-constitutive of each other; border-making is a process of cognition and imagination; and the means to access these links is tapping into narratives and stories. This chapter builds on these assertions and argues that the complexity within, and the seeming monotony in the expansive appearance of Addis Ababa's *sefer* can better be untangled; engrained distinctions can be identified and the scale of meaningful associations and placeness, as located knowledge can be produced through the lens of cognitive borders. Consequently, fundamental understanding of an element of space-society relations that is crucial for design and planning functions—scale, at various levels, is established.

The notions of 'placeness,' 'thereness' and 'belongingness' in a certain community are tied to its residents' spatial comprehension—distinction of parts of the environ, relations among them, stories that constitute them, and changes and adaptations that are storified amidst and among them. Cognition, in this case, refers to the act or

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214 Francisco J. Varela, Evan Thompson, and Eleanor Rosch, *The Embodied Mind: Cognitive Science and Human Experience* (MIT Press, 1991) as cited in; James Wesley Scott, "Cognitive Geographies of Bordering: The Case of Urban Neighbourhoods in Transition," *Theory & Psychology*, October 17, 2020, 1–18, https://doi.org/10.1177/0959354320964867.

215 Scott, "Cognitive Geographies of Bordering."

216 Scott.

217 Scott, 12.

process of knowing or understanding one's environment. And one essential aspect of such cognition is identifying limits, components, parts and relations. Contrary to the linear and demarcating import of the term 'boundary,' border as a terminology, embodies such cognition and the intersubjective meanings of a place in a "bounded, yet open and dynamic" manner.[218] As such borders are complex; their command goes well beyond the arrestive notion as seldom used by mappers and administrators of localities, rather it redistributes agency to those who create, endorse and liven them—the residents. It indeed is true that "borders 'happen to people' and people subsequently accommodate and negotiate borders as part of their lives."[219] Furthermore, through everyday practices, stories and imaginations, communities encode and bring them to socio-spatial reality. Borders are not merely organizational tools of governance or political means of fixing limits and relations, they are rather dynamic expressions of the imagined, experienced and the narrativized practices of daily lives. Hence, they can be perceptions, ideas and/or imaginations as much as they can be physical features.

Henk Van Houtum and Ton Van Naerssen state that it is unjust for the word 'borders' to assume places as fixed in space and time—instead, borders "symbolize a social practice of spatial differentiation."[220] Social relations individuals are rooted in produce their social identity that must be comprehended as collective "processes of continuous 're-writing' of the self and of social collectives."[221] This process manifests with thrust in communities where resources are limited and life circumstances are less predictable. These conditions enforce the "cognitive nature of bordering"[222] that is exhibited in how distinctions and relations are established in places and communities. In order to understand borders beyond what is physical and visible, identify meanings that are seldom off the official maps, and account for time and change that can render or suspend placeness, it is essential to document and analyze dwellers' stories and visualize the distinctions and relationalities in *sefer*.

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[218] Scott, 6.

[219] Scott, 2.

[220] Henk Van Houtum and Ton Van Naerssen, "Bordering, Ordering and Othering," *Tijdschrift Voor Economische En Sociale Geografie* 93, no. 2 (2002): 126, https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9663.00189.

[221] Houtum and Naerssen, 132.

[222] James W. Scott, "Introduction: Bordering, Ordering. Othering (Almost) Twenty Years On," *Tijdschrift Voor Economische En Sociale Geografie* n/a, no. n/a, accessed October 28, 2020, https://doi.org/10.1111/tesg.12464.

A pilot observation of Addis Ababa's *sefer* reveals some common features as vivid borders. Regarding the wider *sefer* areas, varying street sizes and activities that accompany them signal distinctions, natural features such as rivers give limits to parts, landmarks provide anchors and reference points. Walking into the interiors of *sefer*, while most streets are lively, their limits are framed by fences made up of a sequence of corrugated iron sheets, masonry, vegetation, and solid facades of residential buildings. A peek through open gates offers yet another tier of borders in the form of railings, small scale gardens, floor level differences, and textile or plastic curtains; an overburdened use of shared spaces is characterized by flexible, small-scale demarcations.

Such initial observation can only form the basis for more exploration of borders as they relate to *sefer*. A few conversations with residents quickly expose that, borders that one can draw based on what is visible in the form of streets, topography and landmarks fail to apprehend the nuances that make places. For example, what was marked as *Serategna sefer* during the first phase of this research, as mainly bounded by Haileselassie I street and *Bantyiketu* river is later discovered to be a composition of three *sefer*—*Serategna sefer*, *Gebar sefer*, and *Menze sefer*. In other words, *Serategna sefer* covers a smaller area than initially identified. This was further reinforced with detailed markers through in-depth interviews with residents of the *sefer* in later stages.

During different political regimes, administrative borders regarding *sefer* have changed a number of times. These are lines drawn for governing reasons, that form areas with names composed of a generic word (equivalent to district) and numbers. Except for rare incidents, the dominant phenomenon in Addis Ababa is that official borders and borders of *sefer* as residents describe them, hardly coincide, nor are they part of the everyday narrative. Administrators' demarcation of borders invokes residents' receptive, adaptive, or rejective reaction, which by itself becomes a dynamic part of everyday practices and stories. For instance, *Dejach Wube sefer* includes a part within its larger set up, what residents refer to as *Zero Amst* (Zero Five); a name that refers to the administrative border established during the *Derg* administration of 1974-91, as *Kebele* 05. Even though, the administrative nomenclature has since been changed (currently lower administrative districts are called '*Woreda*' instead of '*kebele*'), the borders cover different areas than they used to, and more specifically, *Zero Amst* is already demolished and is set to be replaced by new development, the name *Zero Amst* still lingers in the nostalgic stories told by residents who remain in the *sefer*. Respondents to this research link the prevalence of *Zero Amst* as a storified place to the social ties severed because of its demolition, and not to endorsement of the demarcations of previous regimes.

In some cases, borders are suspended or undefined due to changing realities. When changes happen one after the other unpredictability sets in, making residents uncertain and anxious. Prior to the demolition of *Zero Amst*, *Dejach Wube sefer* was a larger area dissected by Benin street running North-east, and *Zero Amst* was a community east of this street. During interviews conducted in the *sefer*, informants showed hesitation to respond to the changing environment. Most resorted to a 'we will see what is to come but…' sort of incomplete answers. This is but a contemporary example that shows the overarching effects of time and change in defining borders and developing meaning and placeness in communities.

The three sections below are, *sefer* by *sefer* descriptions of findings of the research. They illustrate the multi-scalar manifestation of the cognitive borders in *Dejach Wube*, *Serategna* and *Geja sefer* consecutively. At the beginning of each section, pertinent physical border conditions in each *sefer* are discussed. These play introductive roles and provide basic orientation to the contexts. Then, they are followed by description of *sefer* wide cognitive border conditions based on interviews and contemporaneous narratives from academic and popular discourses. Thirdly, selected stories from interviews, and maps that work in tandem with them, bring forth specific, intra-*sefer* border conditions. These are based on responses that interviewees gave to variant forms of the questions:

— **Which area would you say is your *sefer* as a resident?**
— **What part of this *sefer* would you say you personally belong to?**

Follow up probes within the frame of these questions are used to facilitate multiple responses and clarifications that are then used to generate maps both on and off the fieldwork. Section 4.4 then, puts the site specific findings presented in the preceding three sections, in a broader view and link them back to the comprehension of space-society relations—the notions of 'placeness,' 'thereness,' 'belongingness' and scale of cognized sense of places in the *sefer*.

4.1 Dejach wube *sefer*

Before going into the exploration of the cognitive borders, those that are imagined, experienced and narrativized; it is important to mark those that are physical in nature. Topography, streets and alleys, fences and walls, and landmarks can be observed as physical borders at the initial levels of investigation. Locating these features at this stage helps to spatialize residents' narratives, as we inspect the non-physical ones in later stages.

Physical border conditions

The most pronounced topographical feature of *Dejach Wube sefer* is the vertical rise of about thirty-three meters as one moves from the Northeastern corner (*Afencho Ber*) to its Northwestern corner following Botswana Street into Senegal Street. While the *sefer*'s average elevation, predominantly, levels with the southernmost tip of Benin street; a street that dissects the *sefer*, its Northeastern parts are elevated and retained by a masonry wall that is six meters tall at its peak point. This topographic condition explains the frequency of inward access streets that increases as one moves Southward, and the *sefer* gradually levels with main streets. Topographic logics in establishing borders persists as one moves into the smaller alleys that form clusters within the *sefer*. The meandering and organic morphology thus, is a result of early days' footpaths that were established with minimal attack to the topography. Furthermore, parcels and plots that became the borders of *gebbi* arise from the nexus between the topographic features and the various land tenure systems and property regulations across varying regimes.

Landmarks, especially those embedded in the local narratives and used in everyday practice by residents, are also important markers of border making and marking. Places such as the Italian Cultural Institute may have transnational relevance in demarcation while the Addis Ababa Police Commission building complex can be taken as a city-wide reference. Whereas, local schools, heritage buildings, and business establishments such as hotels serve as references to the scope of the *Dejach Wube sefer* and its neighboring communities. The further we study the community, local places, streets and facilities become apparent means of distinction.

A distinct feature to *sefer* in Addis Ababa is the use of corrugated iron sheet fencing to create tactile borders to *gebbi*. In addition to this physical limit, *gebbi* are distinctly named borders, with their individual histories and identities. Since these borders are results of organic evolution processes, they are irregular in size, shape, number of households, and as will be discussed in Chapter 6 , in their internal spatial logic.
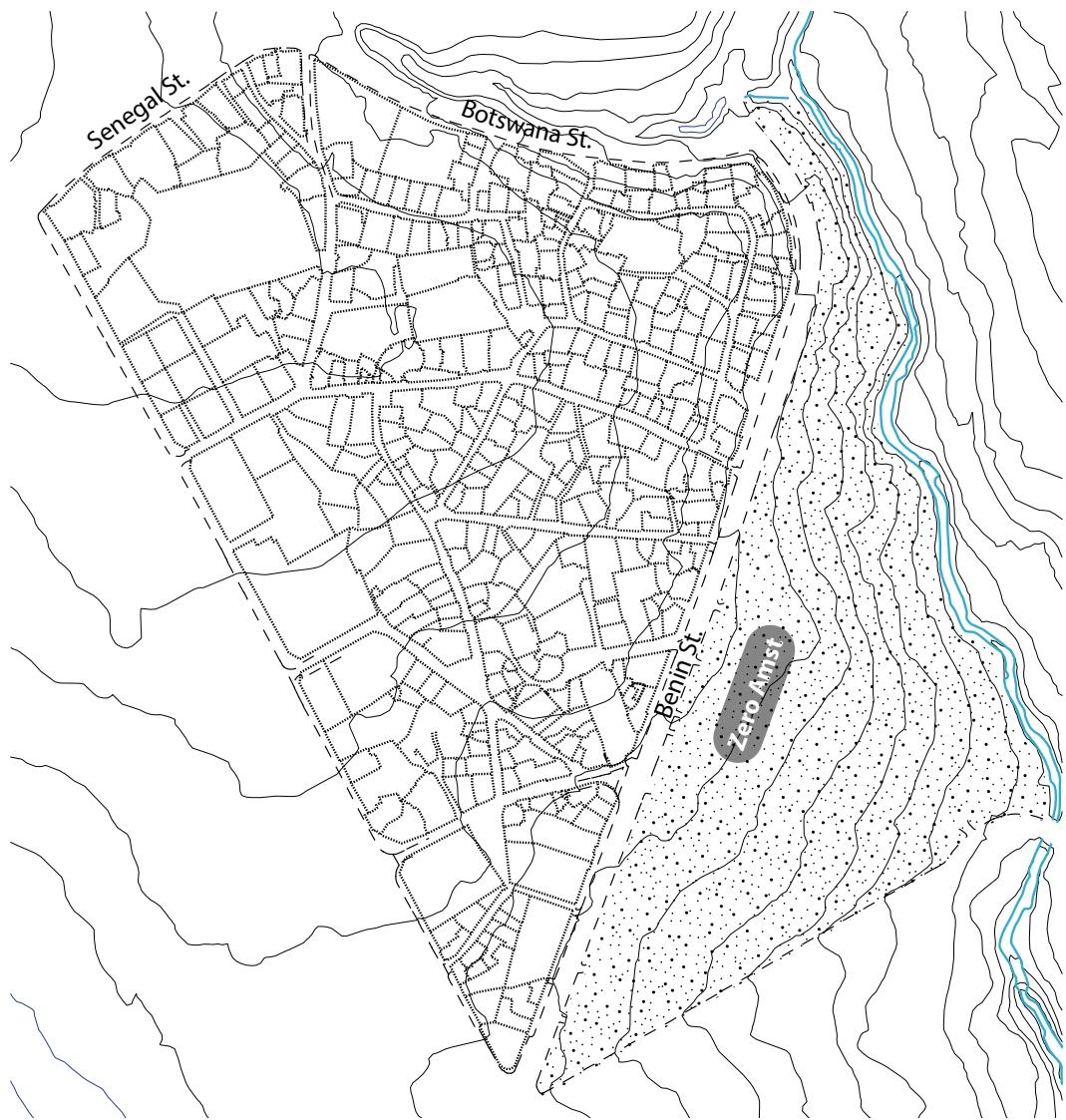
FIG. 4.1 Dejach Wube *sefer*: Topography, alleys and plots.
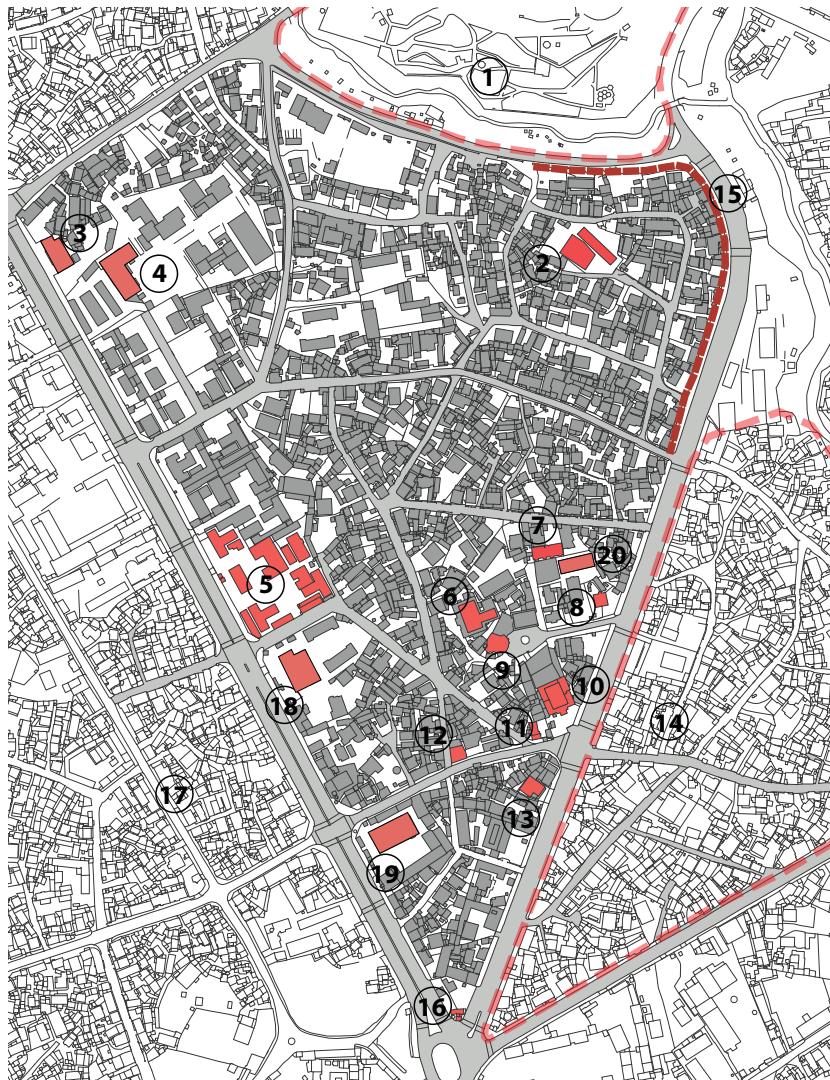
1   Afencho Ber park
2   Bilichta school
3   Semien hotel
4   Italian Cultural Institute
5   Addis Ababa Police Commission
6   Dejach Wube residence
7   Regency hotel
8   Abebe Aregay school
9   Addis Ababa restaurant
10 National Metal & Wood Workshop

11 Sheraton restaurant
12 Patrice Lumumba bar
13 Meqdela hotel
14 Zero Amst - demolished area
15 Retaining wall ca. 6m high at peak
16 Total gas station
17 Datsun sefer
18 Soramba hotel
19 Tele club
20 Ras Abebe Aregay primary school

FIG. 4.2 Dejach Wube *sefer*; landmarks, streets and reference points

FIG. 4.3 Approach to Axum *gebbi*, a small, gated compound in Dejach Wube *sefer* and fenced limits of neighboring *gebbi*.

Cognitive border conditions

Particularly after the 1950's into the 1970's, there was an attempt to rebel against the normative cultural order of the autocratic imperial state, and its modernizing prescriptions and impulses. For instance, ጨዋነት … (respectability) politics … of this autocratic imperialist state were really … rebelled against. … for instance, in places like *Wube Bereha* (*Dejach Wube sefer*), … which basically, in a sense, re-evaluated the values of that imperial order.[223]

As part of a wider discussion regarding Ethiopian sociopolitical dynamics of the third quarter of the 20th century, Semeneh Ayalew posits that *Wube Bereha* (*Dejach Wube sefer*) as a place, was significant in that, it offered a space for alternative cultures and resistance of the imperial order of the time. In a national socio-political dialogue, this is the most spacious definition in terms of space and physicality of the *sefer*. But also, it opens up a door to march further than what one identifies with preliminary

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223 *Tumultuous Times: Ethiopia Revolution and Derg Years*, The Africa Institute, 2020, 01:46:49-47:46, https://youtu.be/L-sWI0rZcD8.

observations. *Dejach Wube sefer* was considered the heartbeat of the modernity that was yet to ingulf Ethiopia. This period defines *Dejach Wube sefer* larger than both its foundation, and current restructuring do, as it was then that it quickly transformed into the city's most dynamic place, dominant on many aspects of life not only in Addis Ababa but Ethiopia in general. As can be seen from the irony that a place of protest, at least in cultural sense, albeit the alteration that avoided the possessive connotation (the colloquial use of *Wube Bereha* instead of *Dejach Wube sefer*), the *sefer* retained its imperial landowner's name till date; it is not a single story or period but a palimpsest of meanings that characterize the *sefer*. Multiple histories and relationships have rendered it the complexity whereby borders are made agile, and identities and distinctions morph and endure, tested by time and changes.

Dejach Wube sefer is also a place where a sense of pan Africanism was cultured, as can be detected in the naming of living compounds such as *Katanga gebbi* or the popular bar called *Patrice Lumumba*—named after the Congo's freedom fighter, who became its first prime minister after liberation from Belgium. Korea *gebbi* on the other hand refers to the Ethiopian military engagement as part of the United Nations Command in the Korean war, whereby a battalion was deployed in the early 1950s. With names of *gebbi* that are borrowed from places within Ethiopia such as *Meqdela* and *Axum gebbi*, and in some cases adopted from other *sefer* within Addis Ababa such as, *Saris gebbi*; multiple degrees of local representation and identification are witnessed. The numbered identity through the *kebele* system that was introduced by the *Derg* military regime, has also set its marks in areas residents identify with numbers such as *Zero Amst* (Zero Five); a now demolished part of *Dejach Wube sefer* that persists in everyday popular narratives of nostalgia and loss. The act, by the state, of physical interventions; the erection of new structures such as the condominium blocks, and the recent demolition of *Zero Amst* to give way to new developments, impregnate the *sefer* with more narratives of borders as residents grapple with the changing realities. Thus, there are multiple, intense, chronological moments that are constant shapers of border narratives and the physical reality thus far. Its foundation, and introduction of land tenure system and social strata; social, political and cultural turbulence of the 1950's-70's that culminated with the 1975 nationalization of private properties; and contemporary developmental interventions are some main examples that are popularized and narrativized. Accessing these border narratives that influence identities, distinctions and relations among residents of the *sefer* demands digging into their lived experiences and daily practices.
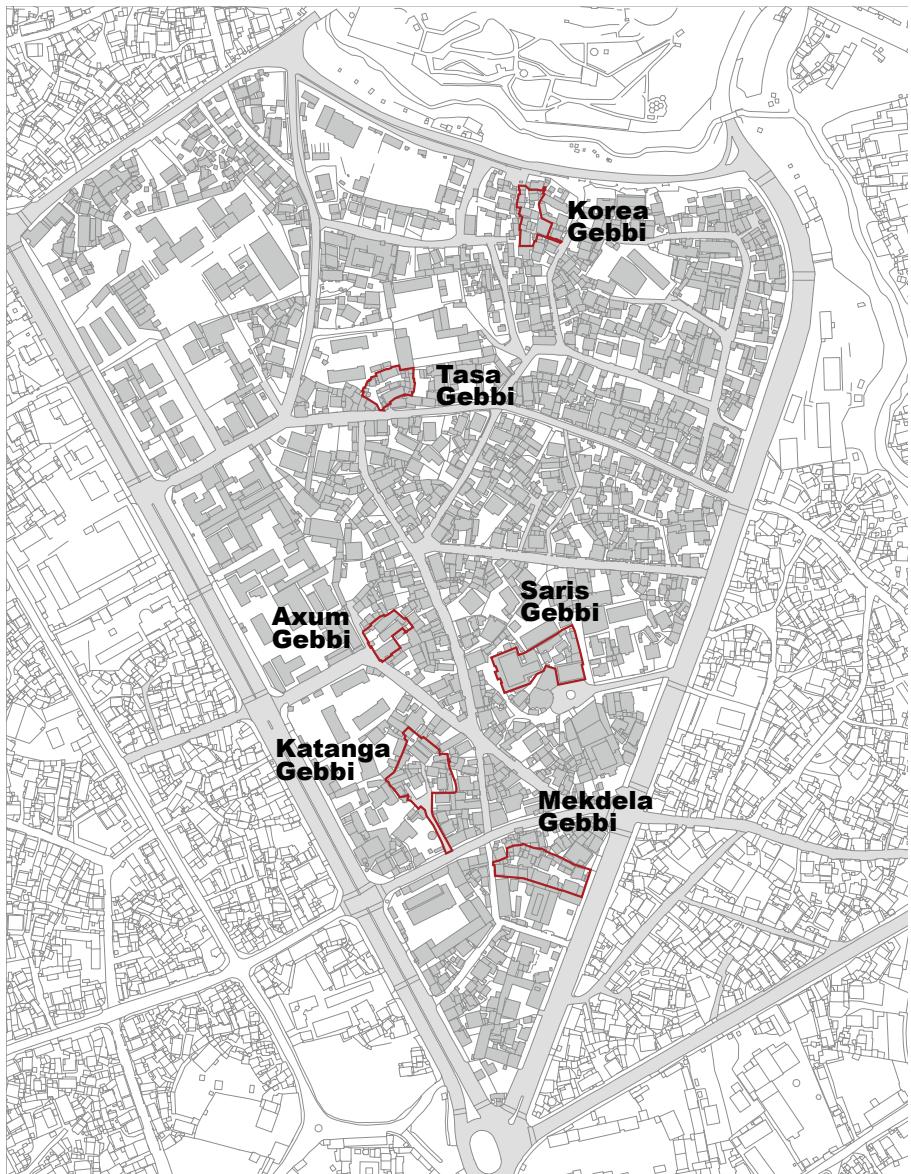
FIG. 4.4 Dejach Wube *sefer*; exemplar *gebbi* (compounds) as borders.

Stories and maps tracing cognitive borders

To further illustrate the border making processes and identify both cognitive and literal logics and features of distinction and demarcation, this section presents a selection of responses to in-depth interviews, and results of on-site mapping work that accompanied them. The texts are excerpts from lengthy interviews that pertain to the lens cognitive borders. With the allegoric nature of the stories the respondents told, and with the first hand translational and transcriptional intervention by the researcher in mind, it is useful to enter residents' 'own' description and synthesized field notes and reflections, all with equivalent weight. The maps presented are not precision oriented, rather they represent, in some cases verbal and gestural descriptions, and in other cases walk along mapping work performed with interviewees who agreed to engage in such.

Interviewee GA is a sixty-eight years old male, a retired lawyer who lived in the *sefer* for more than 60 years. He prides himself on being leader of various communal associations in the community.

.... So, there were a lot of bars and dancing places around here, mostly owned by women such as W/ro Gadissie. It was fashionable to own a dancing club, it was a big thing to be regarded as a person who owns a bar or a club. It was also an area known for a lot of bar fights, and some famous boxers such as Abdissa and some others used to frequent here. Most of this is anchored around Partice Lumumba bar/club. If you start with the street where Patrice is and go down toward Zero Amst, but then turn right avoiding it, and you turn up towards St. George round about, then you turn right again to Tele Club, just by your right, also passing by Soramba and continuing until the next turn to your right. It will then be a loop, when you continue down the alley. This is the yolk of this *sefer* as we know it. This is where Patrice Lumumba is, a number of other dance places one after the other too, so that is the center. Back then it was a place of entertainment, where people come for joy.

... [p]eople of all walks of life came here, even shoe shiners, guards, soldiers, and the like. So it was all about dancing with just a small amount of money. Back then a beer costed only forty five cents in bars and a birr if it is in the dancing places. You can have an all-night out with just a few birr.

… My good memories of this *sefer* are all what I share with my neighbors and friends of many years. But, all parts of Dejach Wube *Sefer* are special, you won't be able to choose. We are very sad, for example, Zero Amst is demolished just like that. It was a stable community with strong social relations and a lot of history. It was a lively place in the city where everybody came from everywhere to enjoy. But also the community is tight and if you go to anyone's house you are welcome for a meal or coffee. So all that is denied by time. Times have changed and the *sefer* is challenged. Currently, there is Meqdela Hotel, Patrice itself, also Betty Hotel (about 20 years old hotel), and next to that there is Pankhurst Hotel (named after a British Historian). In front of Semien hotel there is a place called Hiwot hotel where I spend part of my days playing billiards. These are *sefer* wide points that I can mention that I hold dear at my age right now.

… You know what, I associate with many all over the *sefer*. Indeed, I live in the heart of the *sefer*, close to many activities but I am also well connected to the whole *sefer*. All the landmarks I mentioned to you earlier have their historical importance to me. There may be good times and sometimes bad ones, but I can dare say the whole *sefer* is where I belong. It would be difficult for me to narrow it down. But, if you insist I can list places like… Betty Hotel, Asres, St George church, and most importantly the banquet hall. The banquet hall, is like our emblem, it is a significant place around which the *sefer* is formed and even today, it's a tourist attraction for us, so we are proud of it.

GA tells a story which puts the night life of the 1950s-70s as a main drive to forming the identity of the *sefer*. In doing so, he places the bar *Patrice Lumumba* and the street that runs along it, as the epicenter of this identity—features from where he started to explain the limits of the *sefer*. Furthermore, he explains with pride how people of different background were able to enjoy the *sefer*, suggesting this identity is not reserved for locals or rather a shared and elastic one. GA also finds it difficult to say which specific part of the *sefer* he feels most attached to. Considering the weight of the emphasis he gave to the effect of *Patrice Lumumba* in meaning making, it may appear his choice would be a straightforward one, but he repeatedly iterates "you won't be able to choose," as he underscores his connection and sentiments to the wider *sefer* area. Even though he mentions the Banquette Hall at the end as the 'emblem' of the *sefer*, his main body of narration had ignored it and much focus was given to the night life there was and its distinctness in atmosphere and features. In both instances—not being able to choose a specific place and submitting the banquette hall as the emblem of the *sefer*—he presented a grey zone outside of what he described as 'the yolk' of the *sefer*—the street full of night life. He uses distinct descriptions to both and establishes between them, but not in the strictest sense. In addition, he shares his worry with the statement "times have changed and the *sefer* is challenged," especially reacting to the current events of redevelopment and resettlement. This can be highlighted as a narration of changing borders and identities.

Cognitive borders map
Interviewee - GA

- Interviewee's residence
- Frequented function (School)
- Interviewee's Social relations' residences
- Favored and frequented places
- Interviewee's assumed area of belingingness

① Patrice Lumumba street (locally named)

② Pass time location (plays billiards with friends)
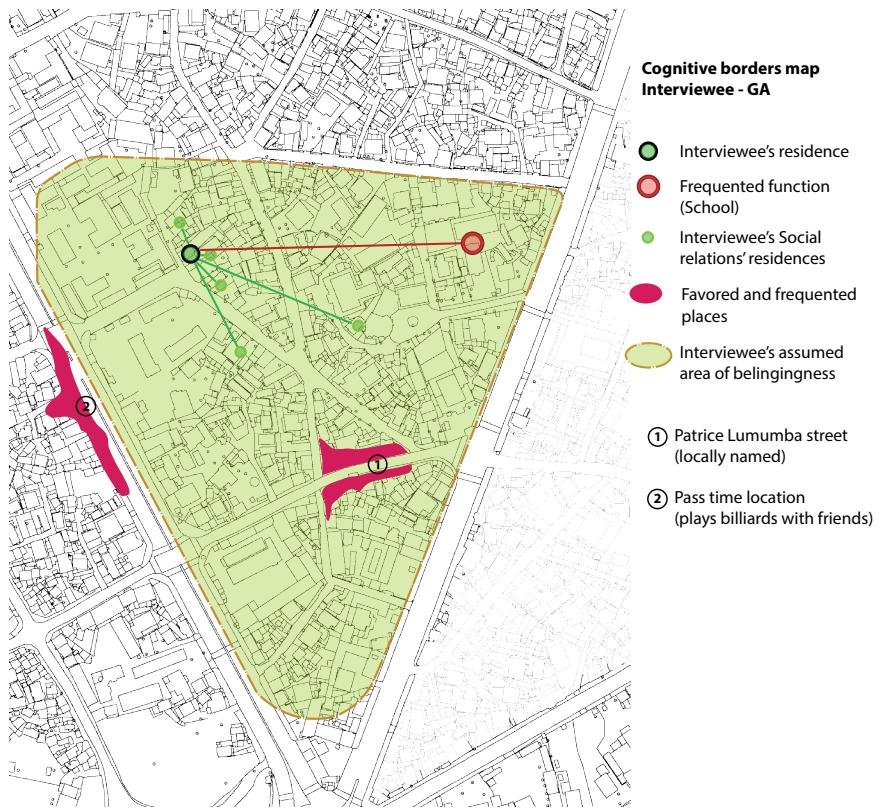
FIG. 4.5 Map showing Interviewee GA's cognitive border, Dejach Wube *sefer*

Interviewee AA is a forty-nine years old unemployed woman who lived in the *sefer* for more than forty years.

Most of the people with whom I grew up are either deceased or have recently moved out to the new condominium projects. Right now, I have a close relationship with just my immediate neighbors with whom I share the same religion as well. We are protestants. In general, I have a good relationship with the wide *sefer* area but it is much tighter with my close neighbors. I have a sister who lives just behind a wall and I meet with her quite frequently. In good days or bad, of course, we support and associate with other compounds too.

… My *sefer* is just this area [points to the shared space within the *gebbi*], those who are deceased were good neighbors of mine but I was not as close to them so … On special occasion, celebration or on incidents of funerals and also just as neighbors we organize to help and support each other, in these ways we bond.

… It is basically this area [points to *gebbi* fence]. The one I can say is my *sefer* is, the part I told you, it is just below here and then going up and turning around like so [points a looping area circumscribing Axum *gebbi*]. Its where I grew up and have attachments with, just along the street here.

… We share 'edders' and 'equbs' with the *gebbi* in front of ours, one down the street and another one next to [ours], there is a bigger one just when you get out of here, you see the last household close to our gate is number 299, so the *gebbi* just next to it.

… we are separated by just a fence, right over here, below the construction site W/ro G's *gebbi* and A's *gebbi*, just below the construction. And also there is a shop just up front, when you leave this *gebbi* and walk upward the narrow alley, then you will see the shop close to the pension; they are also members to our *iddir*. In addition, with my protestant neighbors, I am also part of an *iddir* we set up separately. There are members from within this compound, neighboring *gebbi* and even as far as Zero Amst, there is a member woman from there. We meet once a month for that *iddir*.

… We switch among members as to where it should be hosted. One month it can be at my house and the next can be next door.

The first two sentences of AA present a contemporary reality—shrinking relations resulting in shrinking imagination of borders. As her relationship circle is affected by either death or resettlement of companions to new housing project areas, her ties to the community contracts to just within the *gebbi* she lives in. In the statements that follow she asserts her relationships define the area she assumes belongingness to. In her description of relationship that currently dictate the borders she perceives; immediate neighbors within *gebbi*, religion-based relationships, communal associations such as the *iddir* and *equb*, and biological kinship persist. Furthermore, she insists much of her daily life is tied to the *gebbi* she lives in, and the space in the middle of it that she shares with other households. Other than the few incidents in which she mentions the neighboring *gebbi* while describing her area-wide relationships, she hardly referred to the larger *Dejach Wube sefer* or its landmarks as anchors, markers, limits or relations.

FIG. 4.6 Map showing Interviewee AA's cognitive border, Dejach Wube *sefer*

Interviewee TK is a fifty-eight years old person who earns a living for his family as a driver in a non-governmental organization and has lived in the *sefer* for more than 25 years.

… Primarily, Addis Ababa restaurant, then comes Meqdela Hotel. I have never entered Patrice Lumumba. We see others partying there but I never went in. Instead, in the demolished area (Zero Amst) there were nice places like Haile Kitfo that I used to frequent.

… My life is around Saris *gebbi*, and the Addis Ababa restaurant. That is where I spent the earlier period of my life in Addis Ababa. Then I moved to this *gebbi* when I got married. I go to Meqdela hotel because, I seldom play billiards with friends there. So these places define the *sefer* for me.

… It is very conveniently located and connected, convenient for mobility in the city; the social life is good; it is quite a popular area; and it is a historical *sefer*. It is a *sefer* you can mention anywhere in Addis and everyone recognizes it! Haven't you heard the lyrics to Ketema Mekonnen's song?

መገን ደጃች ውቤ እነ ድንጋይ ኳሱ
ከመቼው መጡና ከመቼው ደረሱ

(people of Dejach Wube, who use stones for football
When did they even come, and when did they even arrive)[224]

TK makes clear distinctions with his first statement, that he likes places such as Addis Ababa restaurant and *Meqdela* Hotel and has avoided *Patrice Lumumba*. Within the statement "we see others partying there, but I never went in," he shows his preferences that instead of the historically dynamic party places, he chooses to spend his time playing billiards at *Meqdela* hotel. He later invokes the lyrics of a popular song by a singer who must have performed at *Patrice Lumumba* bar, to express his pride in the *sefer*, and seeming to embrace the *sefer*'s popular identity that he, as a daily practice, avoids. Similar to GA, he showed his personal inclination to a certain essence of the *sefer* and in the same sentiment he expands a secondary territoriality to other parts. Having lived in a *gebbi* that borders Addis Ababa

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[224] This song is a sort of bravado about the active, fast-paced and sometimes dangerous kind of life the *sefer* was known for. Playing football with stone, refers to the obvious risks taken, while 'when did they come, when did they arrive' refers to its dynamic nature.

restaurant, before he moved to the house he lives in now, he has good relations and attachment to that area of the *sefer* too. Furthermore, he highlights a place in the demolished part of the *sefer*, *Zero Amst*, as a once lost place of his choice. He later forwards some pragmatic assessment of the *sefer*—its locational advantage, and the benefits of its popularity. Within these rather short statements he provided three distinct borders within a *sefer* wide identity he embraces. These are a) the *Patrice Lumumba* bar and street, 2) Addis Ababa restaurant and *Meqdela* hotel environs, and 3) *Zero Amst* in absentia.

**Cognitive borders map
Interviewee - TK**

- Interviewee's residence
- Frequented function (School)
- Interviewee's social relations' residences
- Favored and frequented places
- Interviewee's assumed area of belingingness

1. Addis Ababa Restaurant (formerly Dejach Wube's Banquette Hall)
2. Pass time location (plays billiards with friends)
3. Former gebbi of residence
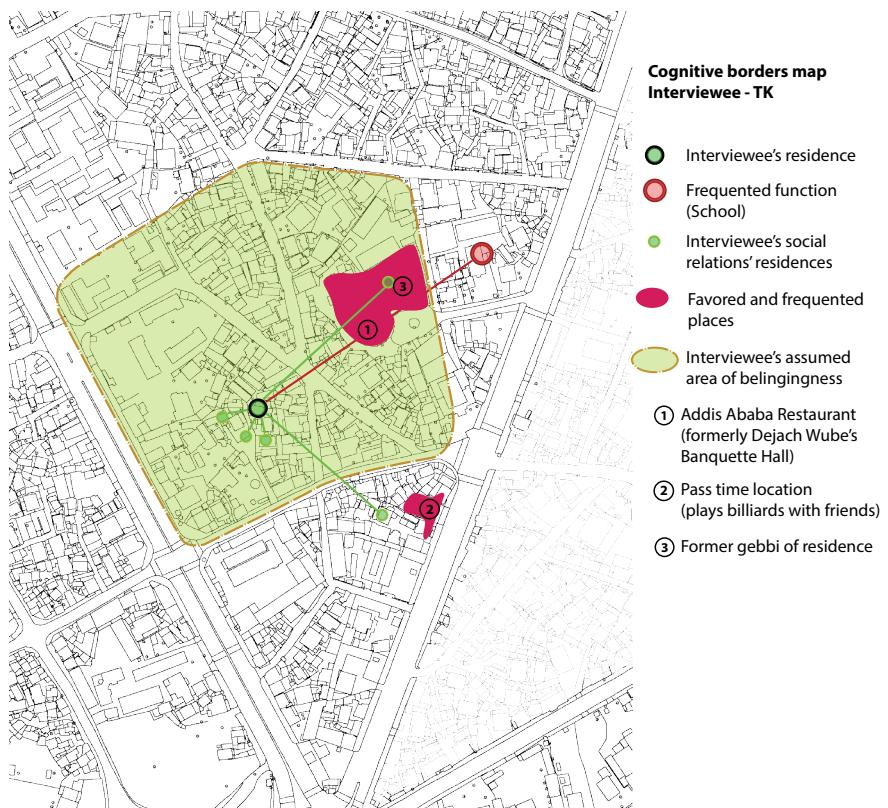
FIG. 4.7 Map showing Interviewee TK's cognitive border, Dejach Wube *sefer*

Interviewee TB1 is a sixty-seven years old veteran singer and song writer who lived in the *sefer* for more than forty-four years. In the 1960s, he used work for the police orchestra as a day job, while performing at the night clubs of *Dejach Wube sefer* regularly. He moved to the *sefer* from the fringes of the city, because he preferred to "get home to sleep in time than commute."

… My area starts from Meqdela hotel, down to Patrice Lumumba, including Addis Ababa medical college and making a round, I would say that is my area. Show me Patrice on the map, where are we now? [interviewer explains]. So, including the police commission office and Soramba as well, but excluding the Sheraton restaurant area.

… By the way, Patrice Lumumba was named after the African freedom fighter. On the occasions of the assembly of Organization for African Unity, OAU (currently, African Union, AU) here in Addis Ababa, a lot of journalists from various African countries came to this bar. There were stories of the brutal killing of this leader and the naming of the bar was in memory of those incidents and times. This shows you the significance of the bar even on a continental level. Of course the ladies at the bars were attracting these guests too. A beer in a bar where there is a full band playing costed two birr, whereas if they are playing from vinyl records, it costs just one birr. There were beautiful women here, the university is also close by, thus it was also part of the student life back then. Overall, it was a center of the highest significance.

… There is no area that shouldn't be demolished in Dejachwube. Be it Gedam *sefer*, Talian *Sefer* and the rest of it all. If you have a look at it from a high building, you feel like you would be tempted to just plough it with a grader. But I must say Patris Lumumba, Addis Ababa restaurant, the printing press next to Meqdela hotel, the old metal workshop, these are heritages that shouldn't be destroyed. There are some obvious important heritages that should not be demolished. Also, the two-story building next to the metal workshop should not be removed. These parts of Dejach Wube are exceptional.

After a short exchange of indicating his most frequented and favored places in the *sefer*, TB1 goes on to add more credence to the social and political position of *Dejach Wube sefer*. As he introduces a story to the origin of the name of the most popular bar in the area, and later indicates that it was frequented by the students of the Addis Ababa university, who were emersed in a consequential political movement in that period. He provided a view into the significance as an urban spatial, of the *sefer* at scales larger and more ambitious than Addis Ababa. His appreciation of the *sefer* seems detached from the overall physical conditions and the dilapidation he says needs to be ridden off. Yet, he offers a list of places he deems should be kept as heritage.

While he anchors the essence of the *sefer* on Patrice Lumumba Street, both within and beyond the *sefer*, his heritage list set out the limits beyond just that street alone.
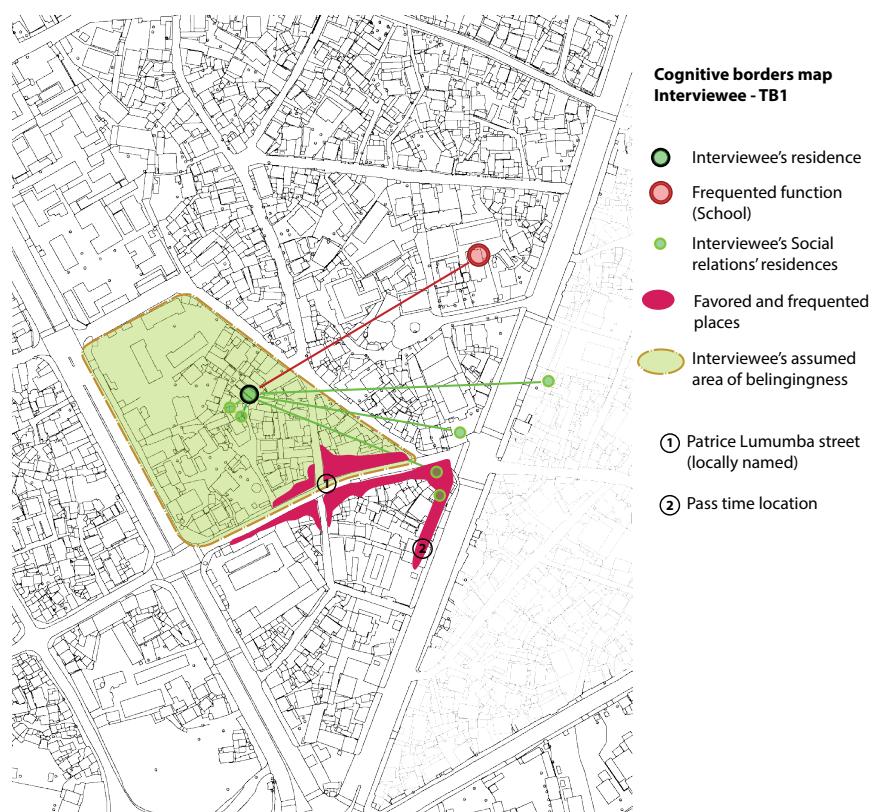
FIG. 4.8 Map showing Interviewee TB1's cognitive border, *Dejach Wube sefer*

Interviewee TB2 is a twenty-two years old university student who grew up in the *sefer*'s Northern most part. Initially, he resisted the interview and asked if the interviewer was working for the government to later agree as he learns otherwise. With the time he can spare from his studies, he engages in small trade activities with his peers from the *sefer* to earn a living and support his family.

… Those with whom I grew up live close by, most of them within this *gebbi* and there are a few outside of the *gebbi*. So from within the compound, there is one just behind us, turning the corner, and also another one up there in front. They are about seven I would say. Then from outside, there is a friend next to the shop that you find when you are heading toward this compound from the main streets.

… I have great respect for the *sefer*. It is the *sefer* I grew up in but also it is a historical area that we value. In addition, it is Arada you know.

… Firstly, 04 kebele, and then some friends live close to Addis Ababa restaurant area, another friend lives close to the Police offices, so if you loop back here encircling the former football field then I would call that my own *sefer*.

… I would say, if it was possible to make changes but keep the dwellers here in the same community, that would be ideal. I worry for my community to be eradicated as did Zero Amst, no one was left to even tell the history there. When people are disbanded then the history also gets lost.

The last remarks TB2 gave regarding changes and the fear of 'eradication' from the *sefer* were boldly present throughout the interview. An argumentative resistance to the changing borders and the lack of agency for the residents, especially youth, to push back government policies that seldom ignore their interests. In his comments regarding the limits of his *sefer*, he hardly mentioned the places that the *sefer* is popular for—those that are in the Southern half of the *sefer*. When he said "it is *Arada* you know" though, he makes clear he recognizes and endorses the overall identity. The word *Arada* can be interpreted in different manners, but in this context the interviewee is projecting a sense of pride with the progressive attitude the larger area is historically known for. In addition to exposing a less known-about local/ center, this remark further enforces residents good will towards the larger territorial identity of the area.

**Cognitive borders map
Interviewee - TB2**

○ Interviewee's residence

● Interviewee's social
relations' residences

▬ Favored and frequented
places

⬭ Interviewee's assumed
area of belingingness

① Afencho Ber park

② Former playing field
(played football with peers)

③ Frequented street since
childhood
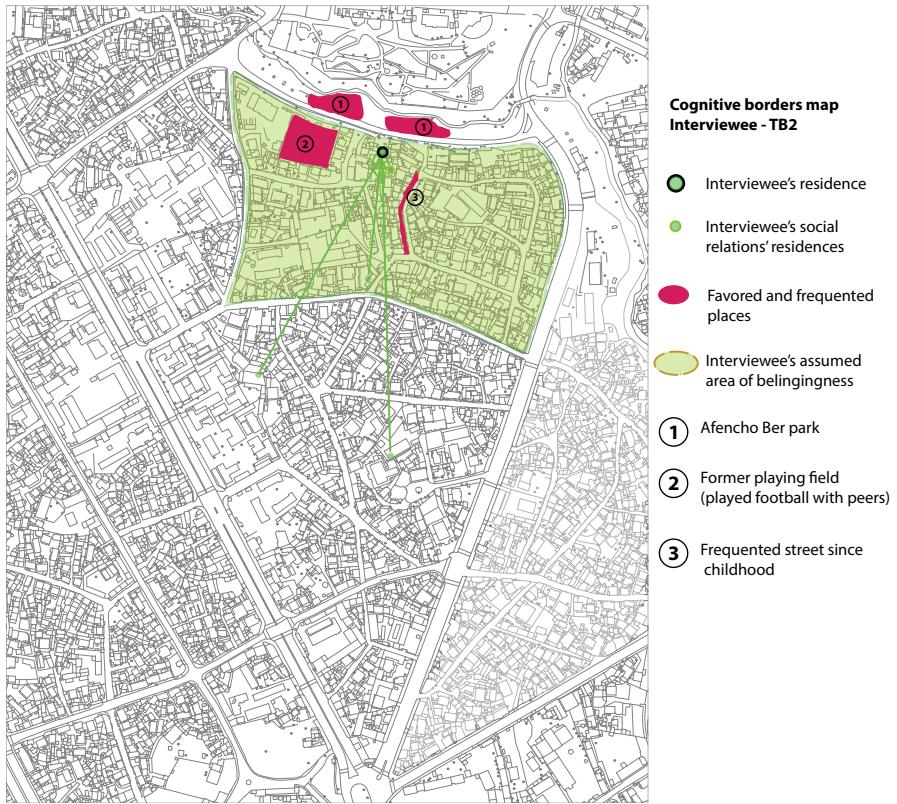
FIG. 4.9 Map showing Interviewee TB2's cognitive border, Dejach Wube *sefer*

The following are responses from **interviewee YT**, a thirty years old marketing graduate who grew up in *Dejach Wube sefer*. The interview was conducted at a local bar where he was playing cards with his friends from the area. His comments were influenced by the setting as there were intermittent entries from his peers in the room—some clarifications and some additions or affirmations.

… Primarily it is the love with the people you spent much of your life with. Growing up, as friends we enjoyed playing football, as children, we would just block the street to use it as a football field because we don't have the appropriate place for that. But as you grow up you go to other neighborhoods who have a pocket of space. As you grow even older, you go as far and high as Sululta hill. You love this place because it is where you found people that you fell in love with but it is difficult for me to spot out a place within the neighborhood as special. On the other hand, when you know the ins and outs of the *sefer*, all the noise, chaos itself creates a form of attachment.

… Currently, I don't think there is an attractive place here, but prior its demolition the environment in Zero Amst area was great. People come from different parts of the city, you interact with many who are not necessarily from here. Now we have this place as a gathering location with friends. It is a small bar, Mebreq Grocery is its name, it resembles those famous places people came to enjoy. There were some shops, and bars where people gathered for business or leisure. Now a days, may be you can find one or two similar places. So when that area got demolished a few small businesses like this one, moved to this side of the street. I used to spend much of my time in Zero Amst, I hardly came to this side, except to eat or see my parents, I spent most nights for about fourteen years in that *sefer* with friends. It had many options for entertainment, many have found love and got married because of it. Big holidays too, like celebrating Demera together with bon fire, for epiphany, all of these things. Even though my residence was on this side of the street, my life was on the other side. So these are the memories that remain in me when I think of the *sefer* in general.

… Well my friends are all over this area. Starting with the square in front of St. George church, from the gas station at the corner, you can find my friends all across this place. Ganchure, and Merkeb for example are friend who live over there, and Baricho lives here, and some whom I support Ethiopia Bunna football club with, are over here. And, for deep everyday life context I have friends like Tofik, Ismael, and Tsega who live on this street. Next to Tsega's house is Zelalem a good friend too. All of these places mark our territory as friends and neighbors, we grew up together, those younger than us also join in every now and then, we have to coach them, you know.

By stating that he does not think there is an attractive place in the *sefer* anymore, YT creates a contrast, a before and after, to highlight his appreciation to the place that is lost—Zero Amst. With detail description of relationships, memories, and the daily struggle, as youth, to find a fitting place for daily practices such as playing football, he succinctly describes the dynamic nature of space and place in recent history of the *sefer*, and how these experiences form their imagined borders within the *sefer*. Furthermore, in much stronger ways than other informants, he emphasized the importance of *Zero Amst* area, even for those who do not necessary reside in it, such as himself.

FIG. 4.10 Map showing Interviewee YT's cognitive border, Dejach Wube *sefer*

Interviewee GT is an eighty-one years old man who came from Tigray region and settled in *Dejach Wube sefer* in 1958 EC (1965-66 GC). Upon arrival in the city, he established a car repair garage, together with his siblings, and worked as a mechanic until he later joined another private company where he met his wife. Having lived in the *sefer* for about fifty-five years, he tells stories that cross three changes in the political order of the country.

… Well, what is now Addis Ababa banquet hall was owned by lords such as Dejach Wube and later his son Dejach Mengesha. And also Ras Abebe Aregay school is historic and in close proximity to it. Behind the banquet hall, a lady called W/ro Ermejachew Hailemariam used to live, there are also other names I may have forgotten, may be W/ro Rosa, W/ro Meri, and Almaz; it was an extended family related to the royals back then. I might add, a football player of St. George football club called Fiseha Woldeamanuel was married to a member of the family, if I remember correctly. Another feature of the *sefer* is Tessemae Chakka (Tessemae woods), it is the green area next to Afencho Ber but on the *sefer*'s side. It was named after a lady who was a servant to the lords' households and became popular as her relatives settled and reproduced in that area. That is also part of the Dejach Wube then. It is by these two, Dejach Wube and Tessemae Chakka the story of the *sefer* is told.

… The owner of the property was Dejazmach Ashebir Gebrehiwot. Currently, there are 36 households here. The house we live in now, together with three others used to be the kitchen, we, ourselves, fixed it up into a residence like you see. The rooms upward of ours, leading to the end of the compound were rented out to the sex workers of the nearby bars and clubs. So, Dejach Ashebir was the landlord who rent it out to them and later to us as well. He didn't live here, I think. The main house was the one right at the entry gate, on the left side. It is now partially demolished and Meqdela Hotel took it for expansion, but the old house is still partially there. It Started from where you have entered. And this house, four houses in a row, had served as kitchen area before we rented it from him. There were two prominent buildings and the rest were rented out. The whole compound was owned by him and he had servants who administer the renting business, they collect rent, make renting arrangements and so on. I was working at a private company, after I quit working as a mechanic, together with my wife, so we rented this house here and have been living here since.

In the first section of his response, GT establishes two distinct places to view the *sefer* from—Addis Ababa banquette hall and *Tissemae Chakka*. It appears to be there were two class of residents with specific locations that they settled in. While the royals and 'elites' are associated with the banquette hall and its environs, the working class, those who serve at the royal establishments were set at *Tissemae*

Chakka. This is also traceable in the composition of the dwellers of today, as the ethnic lineage of most of the residents in the Northern most part of the *sefer* is from the Southern parts of Ethiopia whereas the Southern parts of the *sefer* are mostly composed of those from the central and Northern regions. Though not included in this excerpt, GT goes to great detail describing the night life and the atmosphere during 1950s to 1970s surrounding places like *Patrice Lumumba* bar and street as well. This makes up a third focal place that he depicts to have a meaningful story behind historic borders and social orders of the *sefer*.

Furthermore, in the final section of his statement, he describes the mechanisms of place-making related to the specific *gebbi* he resides in. This further enriches the understanding of borders, property and practices that enact them. By far, his remarks are the most exhaustive both in space orders and in historicized narratives.

Cognitive borders in Dejach Wube *sefer*

The excerpts of interviews presented above are selected based on their capacity of telling one or more border making stories regarding *Dejach Wube sefer*. Overall, thirty in-depth interviews were conducted, and fifteen maps were generated during data collection and analysis work. These individual responses and maps are then analyzed with the aim of developing a *sefer* wide account of the cognitive borders of the *sefer*. Consequently, while *Dejach Wube sefer* is accepted as a collective identity, five forms of collective cognitive borders are identified within its frames.

The smallest form of collective border that exists in all *sefer* is the *gebbi*. The morphology of *sefer* is a result of autochthonous processes of property demarcation based on topographic conditions. The streets and alleys within *sefer* are those that used to be organic footpaths frequented by the then public. As density increased and political regimes changed, the shape, size and composition of the *gebbi* also evolved to the form it currently has. In this sense, the *gebbi* is a physical border condition to begin with. Further observations through the other lenses of the trinocular will present more detailed account on its current qualities.

It is its omnipresence in daily narratives and identity-making processes that also qualifies it as a cognitive border. In almost all interviews conducted for this research, the *gebbi* is mentioned by respondents as the basis of communality. Some, such as interviewee AA, describe their personal understanding of limits and distinctions in the *sefer*, as conditioned, primarily, around the *gebbi* they reside in. Thus, the *gebbi* is a cognitive border condition that is strongly embedded in the conception of *sefer* by inhabitants.

FIG. 4.11 Dejach Wube *sefer*; Cognitive borders maps produced of individual responses of interviewees.

Tissemae Chakka is one of the identities that appeared at the foundation of *Dejach Wube sefer*. This is because it was a settlement established at a similar time as the settling of Wube in this area. Tissemae is the name of a woman who used to work as a servant at his residence, and Chakka, an Amharic word, can be translated to forest or woods. Old archival images confirm the suggestion within the name that, this area was covered with trees, contrary to the density seen today. Popular narrative among residents of the *sefer* is that, Tissemae was only the first few of those who migrated from the Southern Ethiopian region. Elderly respondents point to her as a bridge for others from her home region to follow suit and settle in the area. By gradually turning the woodlands into a settlement she is credited for forming a community that is distinct, especially from the Addis Ababa Restaurant area, in social class and ethnic composition. As the two earliest-most identities established in the *sefer*, the two parts, present both socially and morphologically distinct and storified border conditions.

The banquette hall of *Dejach Wube*, the main agent for the establishment of the *sefer* as a whole, is also an influence of sub-*sefer* identity making. With its current function as a heritage building, a traditional restaurant, and tourist destination, it sets a specific identity within the *sefer*. Older residents of the area that do not associate with the night life stories of the *sefer*, such as interviewee TK, and those who recognize the distinction with *Tissemae Chakka* as discussed above, mark this area with a sense of belongingness. They enjoy evening walks and playing billiards at *Meqdela* hotel or morning coffees at one of the smaller cafés and restaurants found on the street leading up to the restaurant. Younger respondents appreciate the broad social exposure and income generation opportunities the restaurant brings to their locality. With the presence of other less important markers such as Ras Abebe Aregay primary school and residences of those close to Wube and, by proxy, the then monarchy; persistent stories possess a communal narrative of pride.

Many residents do not pass a chance of mentioning *Zero Amst* when talking about their *sefer*. Middle aged and young respondents that currently reside in other parts of the *sefer*, tell a chain of stories about the good times they spent in that area: a place where they spent long hours of the day in cafés and bars, met people from all walks of life that do not reside in the vicinity, and the business opportunities that it pulled to their *sefer*. Most importantly, most describe with distraught the number and type of social bonds that is disrupted because of its demolition for redevelopment. Some hesitantly tell stories about how they attempted to question the city administration's redevelopment intentions from the outset. Overall, sense of loss of a once affectionately held place and identity, meaningful associations that crossed the Benin street, and passionate rejection of redevelopment that disrupted neighborhoods and puts livelihoods at risk, insist on recognition as cognitive border conditions of collective memory.

The fifth cognitive border condition is a reflection of the most consequential stories related to *Patrice Lumumba* bar and its surrounding. The reputation of this specific area, not just in the city, but across the country, as a harbor of popular culture, modern music, and literature in the 1960s and 1970s gained *Dejach Wube sefer* national popularity. Those who lived in the vicinity prior, because of, and since those days share a nostalgic and continued affection to the place they once "saw life" at. A number of musicians, street vendors, bar tenders, sex workers, and those who just moved there for the dynamic life it offered, still reside here and tell the stories of a place that once was an epicenter of modernity. Even current popular culture, especially in music, samples and retrofits some of the iconic elements produced in this *sefer*. While this remains to be a source of pride in daily interactions, the turn of events from a once indispensable place in the city to an opportune location of redevelopment consumes many with uncertainty and frustration. Yet, the sense of belongingness that emanates from a shared history and identity remain evident popular discourses and local legends.

**Cognitive Borders Identified
Dejach Wube Sefer**

— 'Gebbis'

- - - Tissemae Chakka area

- - - Addis Ababa Restaurant area

- - - Zero Amst area
(demolished part of the sefer)

- - - Partice Lumumba bar
and surrounding area
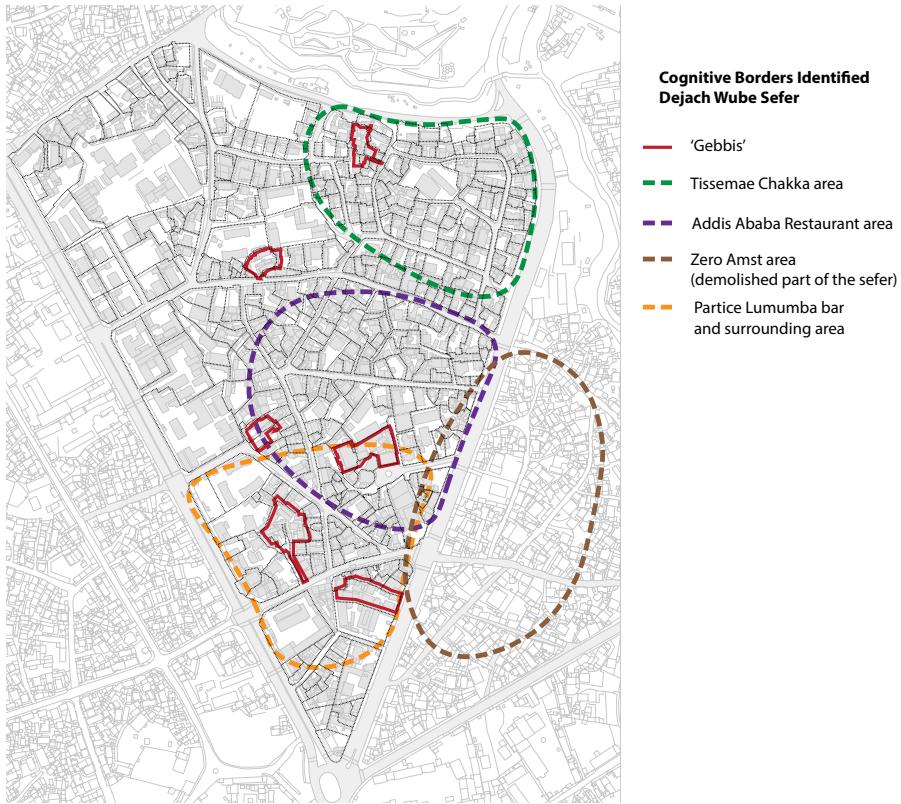
FIG. 4.12 The five cognitive borders of Dejach Wube *sefer*

4.2 *Serategna sefer*

As mentioned in the introduction section of this chapter, locating *Serategna sefer*'s limits was a process of reduction whereby the area marked at the outset, based on popular recognition, was revised because conversations with its residents revealed rather a located logic that conceives it as one of a cluster of *sefer* with shared identity. *Serategna* is also not a *sefer* with strong sub-*sefer* identities as in the case of *Dejach Wube sefer*. This section will further expand on these specificities; beginning with orientating description of physical border conditions of the *sefer* and followed by illustrations of the cognitive logics.

Physical border conditions

Serategna sefer is one of a cluster of *sefer* that are bounded by three rigid borders in the form of Haileselassie Street, *Dejach Jote* Street and *Bantyqetu* river, on the North-western, South-western and Eastern sides respectively. A series of multi-purpose buildings that follow the streets strengthen the physical nature of the border and a lower grade street penetrates the *sefer* as a main corridor of access to the communities. *Bantyqetu* river is a seasonal stream that channels wastewater for about two third period of the year. Residents at its bank use it either for farming, such as bee hiving, and false-banana plantation, or as is in most cases, for disposal of household waste including shared latrines.

There exists a height difference of about sixty-three meters between the highest point, on the Haileselassie Street, and the bank of *Bantyqetu* river. In keeping with the logic of the *sefer* of Addis Ababa, access and plot parcellation are dictated by this topographic condition. Compounds are thus defined by erected fences where the slope allows, while, in steep sloped areas, retained level differences are used to define properties, thus *gebbi*. As is the case in all *sefer*, the *gebbi* are witnessed as physical border conditions.
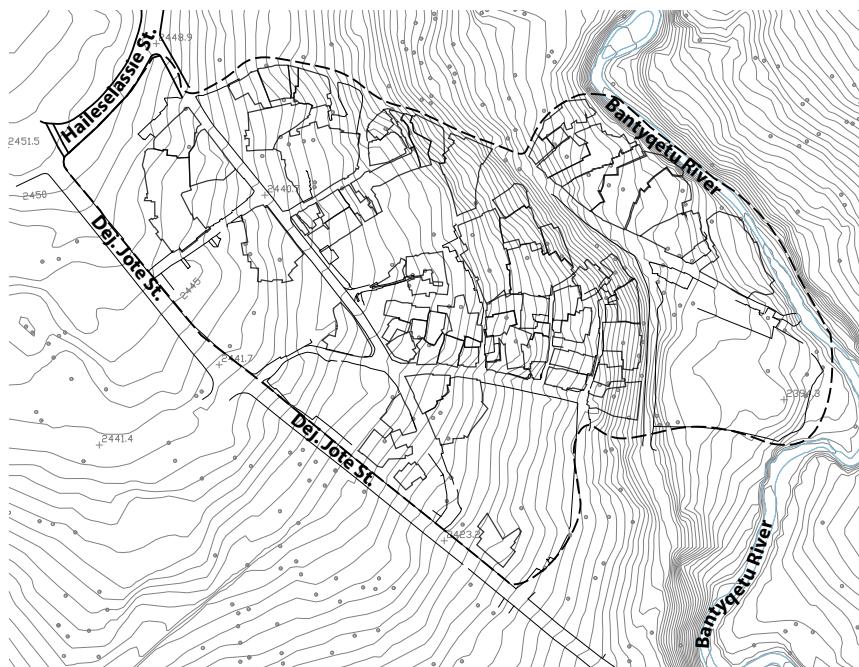
FIG. 4.13 *Serategna sefer*; topography, streets, alleys, and identified plots.

FIG. 4.14 The wider *Serategna Sefer* as seen from across *Bantyiketu* river.

Being located at the historic center of the city, *Serategna sefer* is endowed with reference buildings and places of heritage; both from within and outside the *sefer* limits. Regarded as the first hotel establishment in Ethiopia, Empress Taytu hotel is one heritage building in close proximity, whereas Mussie Minas residence building, within the limits of the *sefer*, is deemed as the first multi-storied building in the country. Cinema Empire, an establishment of the Italian occupation period, and Indian International school are testimonies to the cultural and economic exposure the *sefer* had experienced. *Yekatit* '66 secondary school, named in honor of the 1974 revolution and briefly used as a Marxist politics training center, stands between the *sefer* and the river. And as most recent additions the IHDP housing condominium blocks herald the current trends of redevelopment.
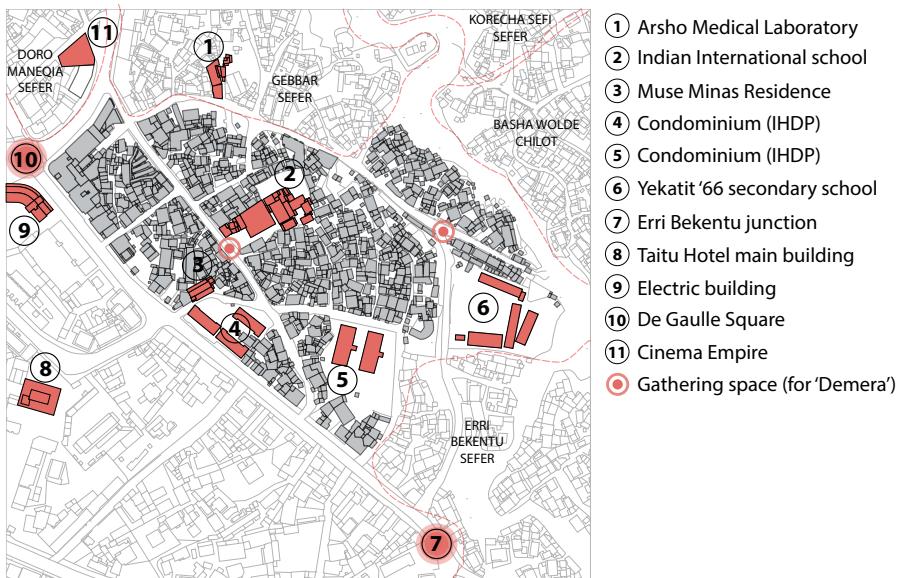
FIG. 4.15 *Serategna sefer* landmarks and reference points.

Legend:
1. Arsho Medical Laboratory
2. Indian International school
3. Muse Minas Residence
4. Condominium (IHDP)
5. Condominium (IHDP)
6. Yekatit '66 secondary school
7. Erri Bekentu junction
8. Taitu Hotel main building
9. Electric building
10. De Gaulle Square
11. Cinema Empire
◉ Gathering space (for 'Demera')

Cognitive border conditions

Serategna, as an Amharic word, can be translated as worker(s). With the establishment of Addis Ababa as Emperor Menelik's seat, sited at *Eka Arara* hill, came the settlement in service of his palace. The popular perception is that this location, where all workers that are loyal or subjects to the monarchy, is to collectively be referred to as *Serategna sefer*. But residents are quick to point that *Serategna sefer* is one of a cluster of settlements that indeed served the monarchy with specialized trades. And, that *Serategna sefer* refers to only the area where migrants from *Ankober* area who are armorers, mending and trading weaponry settled. Another example of specialized settlement with its own territorial identity but in cluster with *Serategna sefer* is *Korecha Sefi* (saddle makers) *sefer* located on the Eastern side of *Bantyqetu* river.

Interviewee DA, a 90 years old resident describes early settlement conditions as follows:

The first settlers of the area were skilled workers, because of that it was named *serategna sefer*. Each, as per their skill were accorded places to settle. When I first came here in 1950/51 (1943 EC) there were only a few residents. For instance, the owner of this house I live in now was Basha Mulat, he inherited it from his father. There was also Fitawrary Yiberta just above here, the residence in front of Arsho. And close to the river, there was Basha Yigletu's residence. Balambaras Tilaye was another property owner, they were only a few of them, not even more than ten households in the whole area. So I knew those early settlers very well, some of them were alive when I came here. Initially, most of the houses were huts with thatched roofs and only few building had more than one floor. It is through time that people bought or were granted land to settle, to densify and urbanize the *sefer*.

… they were serving the palace, they were providers, they have their division of roles based on their skills. The military titles they had and the land that they were given by the Emperor was for these purposes. This is *Serategna sefer* and the following one is Gebar *sefer*. *Serategna sefer* is for the armorers, so they fixed and mended weapons. And Gebar *sefer* is named after those that are obliged to pay taxes [not exempted, thus possibly non-military persons given the land for their skills and with the condition of taxation]. The *sefer* names are given based on either their occupation, or the countryside they came from. For example, the area known as Sefi *sefer* is where they make korecha (saddle).There is Menze *sefer* next to Gebar *sefer*, and on the Arat Kilo side there is Jirru *sefer*. Jirru *sefer* is an area where people from Jirru settled as is Menze *sefer*. And also, down below there is Sodo *sefer* similarly named after the place from where the settlers came.

And **interviewee AT**, another elderly resident and a community organizer qualifies three of these *sefer* by saying:

… Gebar *sefer* is something else! It is outside the limits of *Serategna sefer*.. It starts from Arsho laboratory going to the opposite side of *Serategna sefer* toward the Ras Mekonnen bridge. And the *sefer* across the river, where there is a TVET now, is called Korecha Sefi (Saddle makers) *sefer*. All these were settlements of the Ankober people who had ties with the military and came with the emperor. They would fix weapons and sew the saddles for the military here. So all these are different *sefer* with different function to the military and the emperor. So Gebar *sefer* is next to *Serategna sefer* and is of people who worked as craftsmen and blacksmiths.

In addition to the historic accounts, told by the elderly above, current residents confirm the above stipulated distinctions as present-day conditions.[225] Yet, these conterminous *sefer* as specialized as they are, and withstanding their individual identities, co-constitute each other collectively. Thus, *Serategna sefer*'s cognitive border conditions can only be fully captured with the broader cluster of early settlements in mind.

Another cognitive border condition is the emergence of active businesses along the main street that border *Serategna sefer* and characterize *Arada* area as a whole. These were catalyzed by foreigners who established businesses such as boutiques, jewelers' shops, cinema, bakeries, and pastries along the main streets. The availability of jobs at these businesses added another group of residents who migrated in pursuit of opportunities.

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[225] See section 5.3.3

Interviewee DD, a 53 years old resident describes this condition as follows:

There were two types of work you could do on the main streets. Either you are selling items on the streets or you are employed at one of the shops owned by Armenians, Greeks or Italians.

… there were a lot of jobs in the whole area back then. With the population being low, opportunities were abundant. The foreigners had a lot of jobs to offer; there were bakeries, there were [Pinocera] those who imported roles of fabric, and Paulos Cordas who brought readymade clothing articles, there were a lot of such shops to work at. Most of the youth wanted to work for these shops because it paid well. The more important job with prestige was joining the military or the police force so my father chose to join the police. So, the fact that the foreigners set up business here was attracting many to come and stay here even permanently till date. There were possibilities for people to get land at the then peripheries of the city for really cheap price, but many, including my father, chose to stay around here because of the business opportunities and the life style. There was 'tej' (traditional alcoholic beverage made of honey) right here, there were pastries, hotels, it was a very much liked place. In addition, 'mercato,' with all its trading intensity is close by. So what started with my father moving here, led to me growing up and getting married and raising my children, who have joined college, right here in this *sefer*.

… The foundation of this *sefer* is basically laid by those low ranking followers of Emperor Menelik. His palace is up the hill that used to be called Eka Arara / የእርቅ ስፍራ / and all his followers settled surrounding his compound. Then the next bright moment of the area came as Italians set out Piassa area then the Armenians and Indians gradually settled through their kinship with the royals at the palace. Especially the Armenians are tightly related to the monarchy and the dukes, and what not. The Arsho clinic family is for example Armenians, the main person being Paulos Cordas who had close relations with the royal family.

Located between *Arada*, the commercial center of the city, and the royal palace, *Serategna sefer* had been a nexus of political, cultural and economic interactions among disparate social groups. Basha Mulat Belayneh was an aristocrat, who inherited properties in *Serategna sefer* from his father who was an armorer. Currently, he is well known as a former owner of multiple properties in the *sefer* and a trader across distant territories in Ethiopia. He owned large tracts of farmland in areas such as *Ada'a* (around present day *Bishoftu*) and owned a number of houses in *Serategna sefer* that he rented out to those who usually are newcomers to the area. Respondents said that he was killed at the wake of the 1974 revolution. **Interviewee DA**, moved to Addis Ababa from a central Ethiopian region called *Selale*. As a young man who had just lost both his parents and in need of new beginning to life, he quit his education

in *Debre Libanos* monastery and came to Addis Ababa hoping to join the royal palace guards *(ከቡር ዘበኛ)* in Addis Ababa. His wish was not granted as he was "too young and short" as per the standards of the palace guards. He thus, got employed at Cinema Empire, then under Italian owners, for five years living in the room he rented from Basha Mulat. Seeking a secure and "dignified" job he became a police officer, registering the same day and together with Basha Mulat's son. A number of families of Italian, Armenian and Greek descent still reside or have businesses to run in and around the *sefer*. Meri Armide, a popular singer and fashion icon lived in *Serategna sefer* while working in bars and night clubs in *Arada* area, especially *Dejach Wube sefer*. And **Interviewee AT2** is one of the residents who came to the *sefer* after the 1974 revolution through the redistribution of nationalized properties as per the 1975 proclamation. Most residents like her engage either in the informal economy or as civil servants in local administration offices. These are only a few examples of individuals from the diverse social and economic groups that lived together and formed a social system driven by diverse forms of economic activities, and daily negotiations.

Serategna Sefer historical context map

① Gebar Sefer
(the taxed's sefer / crafts workers)

② Menze Sefer
(migrants from Menz, Central Ethiopia)

③ Sodo Sefer
(migrants from Sodo, Southern Ethiopia)

④ Jirru Sefer
(migrants from Jirru, Central Ethiopia)

⑤ Korecha Sefi Sefer
(Saddle makers and menders sefer)

⑥ Basha Wolde Chilot/court/
(Named after a traditional court where Basha Wolde presided over disputes and cases)

⑦ Erri Bekentu Sefer

⑧ Doro Maneqia Sefer

- - - Street side businesses
(Mostly owned by foreigners)

FIG. 4.16 *Serategna sefer* and its conterminous *sefer*.

Stories and maps tracing cognitive borders

The defining aspects of *Serategna sefer* that are discussed above, and the storified experiences of residents specific to it, form a strong *sefer*-wide identity than the ones they mention as internal distinctions. It required successive probing queries and encouragements for respondents to highlight a few internal border conditions. Those who did, assert that they would still say the larger *Serategna sefer* is where they belong and what they consider to be their own.

A 50 years old **interviewee AB**, for instance indicates her association with the *gebbi* she lives in, points to specific social events and locations but she insists that it is *Serategna sefer* that she calls her *sefer*.

I celebrate most holidays at home, I invite my neighbors to my house, we eat and feast together. But on the 'Mesqel' celebrations we gather at the small square by the Indian International school for a larger bon fire. We also arrange smaller ones right here for our own, but the warmer celebration with all the *sefer* residents gathers next to the school. The smaller celebrations happen at the gate or inside of each *gebbi*.

… Soon we will be celebrating the May St. Mary's day (Ginbot Lideta/ግንቦት ልደታ) together. We all chip in some money and make a feast together on the field in front of Asegedech's house.

…. So my *sefer* is *Serategna sefer*, and within *Serategna sefer* I would say this area, Ketena Amst, is where I belong. The main name I mention as my *sefer* is still *Serategna sefer* as a whole, but in the narrowest sense I belong to this area; starting from Atsede's house as you approach from the place where the charcoal sellers are and all the way here.

**Cognitive borders map
Interviewee - AB**

◉ Interviewee's residence

● Interviewee's social
relations' residences

━ Favored and frequented
places

◯ Interviewee's assumed
area of belingingness
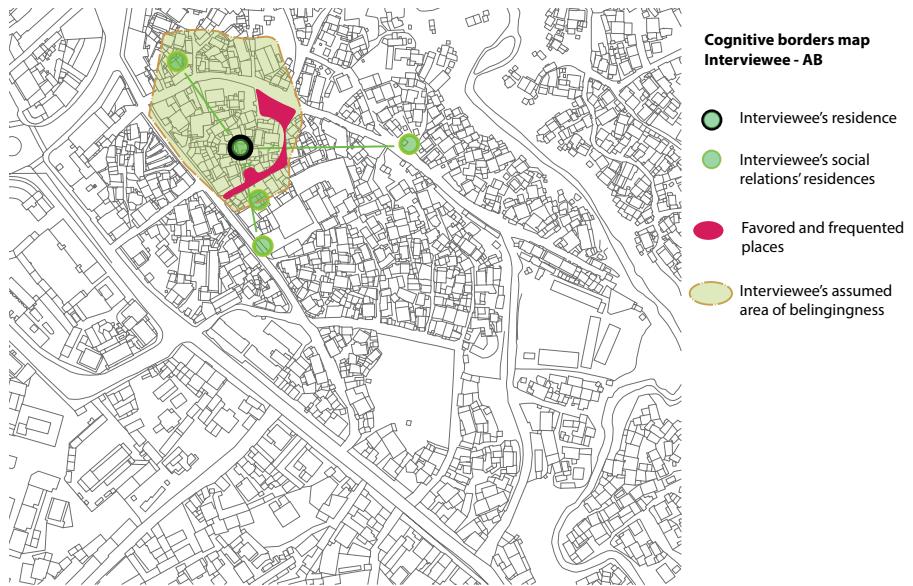
FIG. 4.17 Map showing interviewee AB's cognitive border, *Serategna sefer*

The area pointed out by interviewee AB as a place of belonging, and the street side markets that she indicated as places that she frequents, point to her connection to her immediate *gebbi*. Whereas her conviction for *Serategna sefer*, as in her statements, present a larger territory to her belongingness.

Similarly, **interviewee AT2**, a 65 years old woman, attests to the strength of the *sefer* wide identity by making reference to the changing administrative borders that merged *serategna sefer* with other localities like *Kebele* ten; yet insisting what she calls her *sefer* is *Serategna sefer* or *Kebele* thirteen as in her description below.

This whole area below Arsho clinic, *serategna sefer*, I know it very well. The whole area is my *sefer*. Because we all know each other; we are of the same Kebele, it is Kebele thirteen. Even though it is merged with others now as Woreda ten, it is still Kebele thirteen; so we are of that one Kebele. We also meet at the community discount-market (ሽማኞች ማህበር) while shopping for daily supplies.

… The whole area from the street to the river is my *sefer*. I know people who reside here and there across the *sefer*. Formerly that side was known as Kebele ten; now it is merged with ours into Woreda ten. So Kebeles thirteen and ten have officially become one into Woreda ten.

Cognitive borders map
Interviewee - AT2

⬤ Interviewee's residence

🟢 Interviewee's social relations' residences

⬭ Interviewee's assumed area of belingingness

FIG. 4.18 Map showing interviewee AT2's cognitive border, *Serategna sefer*.

Other respondents, from different parts of the *sefer*, use reference points and activities to mark the area they say they belong to. Mostly, these are also landmarks that make up the *sefer* as shown in FIG. 4.15. Responses such as 'my *sefer* is across Cinema Empire and covers the area from *Arsho* all the way to *Erri Bekentu* or *Yekatit '66* school,' are used to such effect. The Indian International and *Yekatit '66* school are also identified as places of social events where residents gather in celebrations such as *demera*, thus contributing to enhance a *sefer*-wide tightening of communities.

The area, **interviewee AT2** pointed to, and said "that side was known as *Kebele* ten" is the Northeastern most part of the *sefer*, placed between a street and *Bantyqetu* river. For some who live in this part of the *sefer*, clarity of distinction is not as straight forward as it is for the aforementioned interviewees. For instance, **interviewee AK** describes it as follows:

… Kebele ten is below this street towards the river and thirteen is what is across it. From Arsho until Erri Bekentu is kebele thirteen, whereas the left side is Kebele ten. I am not certain if the whole area till the river is part of kebele ten or thirteen. You see, it is difficult for us to precisely indicate the borders and tell you where is what.

… This area you can say has no name because we refer to it in many ways. When you go up this street, those over there call it Arsho area. Here in my area, it is named after the school; either the former name, Alem Berhan school, or current one Yekatit '66. So, we say like Yekatit '66 area.' Even though the nucleus of *Serategna sefer* is on the other, parallel street, it includes this area too. Everything to the bank of the river here is part of the larger *Serategna sefer*.

The non-definitive description given by interviewee AK is shared with many residents in this part of *Serategna sefer*. Many residents had to pause and think before describing or naming their surroundings, including responses such as "I do not know." And different forms of their responses point to the existence of suspended distinction regarding their neighborhood in comparison to the certainty shown by dwellers in other sections of the *sefer*.
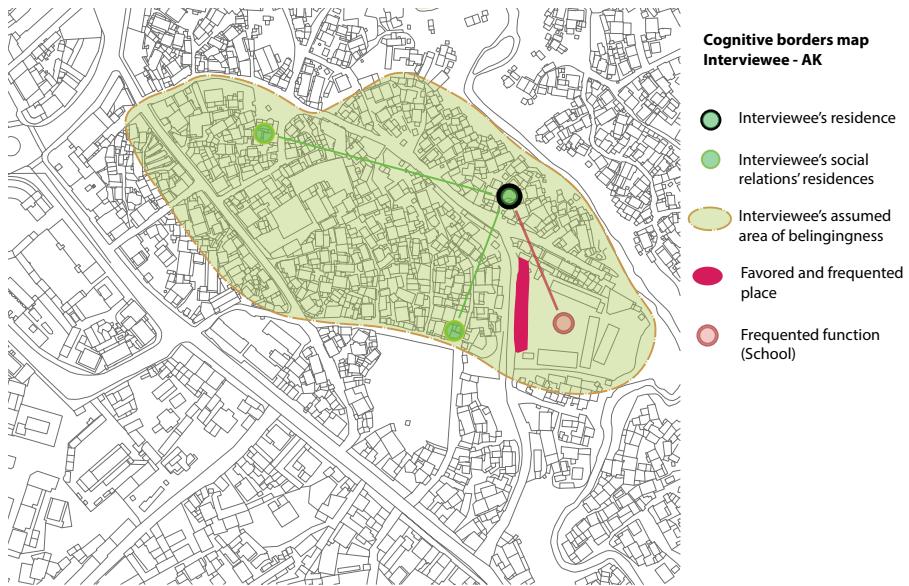
FIG. 4.19 Map showing interviewee AK's cognitive border, *Serategna sefer*.

Cognitive borders in *Serategna sefer*

Three forms of cognitive borders are identified in *Serategna sefer*. Firstly, its evolution as a destination of continued in-migration of populations that are of various ethnic, national, financial, and professional backgrounds, coupled with its presence among the cluster of *sefer* discussed above, in close proximity to both the political and commercial centers of the city, has helped it consolidate an identity that its residents affectionately associate with. Thus, the *sefer* itself is one identity that is cognitively marked by the residents. This is witnessed in the way residents describe their place of belongingness by using anecdotes, experiences and daily practices that are not specific to an area within it, but the community at large. Respondents may use a specific place or building but only to describe the wider *sefer* than just a part of it. This is in contrary to, for instance, those in *Dejach Wube sefer*'s *Patrice Lumumba* area, who affectionately describe their association to their area, while, at the same time, endorsing *Dejach Wube* as a collective identity.

The limits of the *sefer* on three sides are straight forward: *Haileselassie* Street, *Dejach Jote* street, and *Bantyqetu* river. For an outside observer though, the Northern, and to a certain extent, the Southern limits may not be self-evident. The residents, on the other hand, have a consistent understanding of where, for example, the border shared with *Gebar sefer* is. Internal alleys, perpendicular to the imagined borders, landmarks such as *Arsho* and stories are used to point these limits out.

The second cognitive border identified is the loosely cognized area close to the bank of *Bantyqetu* river. A number of factors affected such an obscure or unsettled identity of this part of the *sefer*. First, the former contiguous administrative areas, *Kebele* ten and *Kebele* thirteen, had a shared border in the form of the curved street that passed in front of *Arsho* and ends at the bank of the river, next to *Yekatit* '66 school. The area North of this street, including *Gebar sefer* and *Menze sefer* was named as *Kebele* ten; and the rest of *Serategna sefer* that is South of this street was part of an area labeled as *Kebele* thirteen. Secondly, this is the only part of the *sefer* that reaches the edge of the river. To the residents, this comes with a sense of precarity in the rainy seasons, and to the river, pollution by direct disposal of household waste. But it also allows small scale farming as means of income for some of the residents. And thirdly, it is a late expansion of the *sefer* towards the river; hence, the furthest away from the main street businesses and the active center of the *sefer* itself.

These uncertainties have led to an identity that is either fragmented or suspended. During interviews, names such as *Balambaras* area, *Arsho* area, *Yekatit* '66 or *Alem Berhan* area, and simply *Kebele* ten were used to describe this part. *Balambaras* is a name taken from Balambaras Tilaye, an early years aristocrat, who is believed to have owned much of the land prior 1975 and a *gebbi*, where he lived in, exists in the area. *Arsho* (an in site medical laboratory), *Yekatit '66* or *Alem Berhan* (school) are names attained because of the daily use of these landmarks merely because of proximity. Those who call it *Kebele* ten, do not subscribe to *Gebar sefer* and clarify that they call it so, just as a distinction within *Serategna sefer*. This situation offers an opportunity to assess the social impact of administratively enacted borders, and how they are tailored and adapted to everyday use.
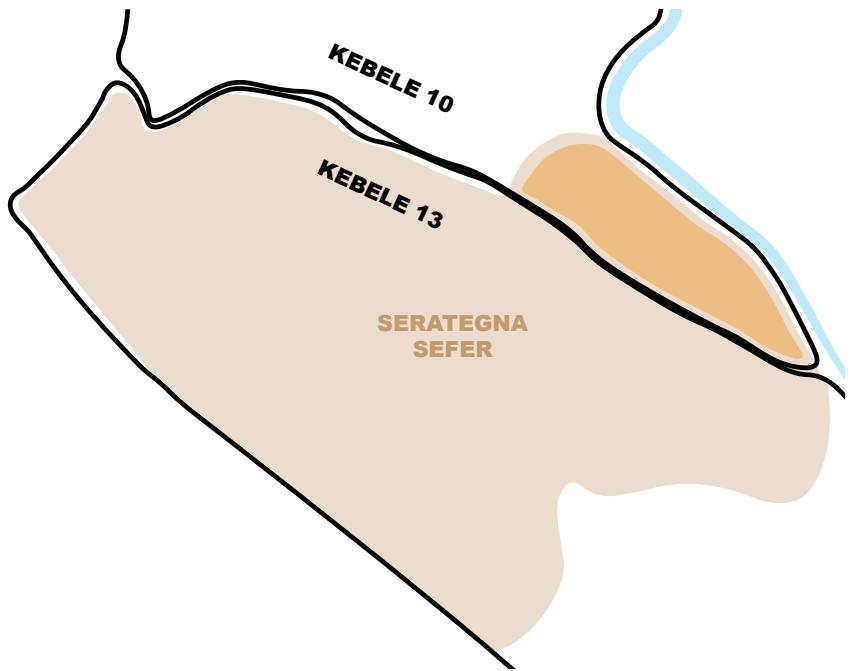
FIG. 4.20 Diagram showing an area of suspended identity in *Serategna sefer*.

The third cognitive border is, by now, a straightforward condition—the *gebbi*. As in the case of *Dejach Wube sefer*, the *gebbi* in *Serategna sefer* appears as border conditions of both physical and cognitive nature. Because of the steep slope of *Serategna sefer* the spatial definition of the *gebbi* is relatively loose. Level differences serve much of the function of fenced borders of *gebbi*. Most compounds are, at least, visually accessible from the streets that pass through, and at higher levels than them. This in turn fosters opportunities for cross-*gebbi* relationships to advance. This higher degree of flow of space affects the functional and relational organization of each *gebbi*. It is thus usual to see a border condition of a *gebbi* within another *gebbi*, or a group of *gebbi* forming a larger *gebbi* with shared access, such as in *Balambaras* area shown in FIG. 4.21.

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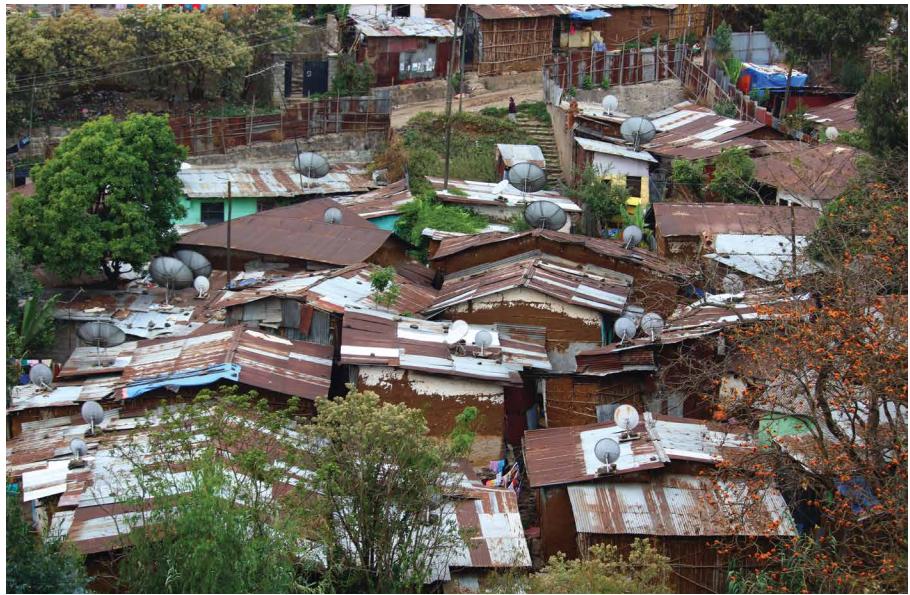
FIG. 4.21 A case of *gebbi*-within-*gebbi* in *Serategna sefer*.

**Cognitive Borders Identified
Serategna Sefer**

— 'Gebbis'

--- Balambaras area

--- Serategna sefer

FIG. 4.22 The three cognitive borders of *Serategna sefer*

4.3 *Geja sefer*

Contrary to the visual appearance of dilapidation and pertinent urban poverty, the young city that Addis Ababa is, becomes apparent when studying *Geja sefer* through its successive socio-spatial changes, the dynamic tradition of work, trade, and ingenuity that characterize it. Even though, the migration and settlement of people from different parts of Ethiopia into this area had started during the reign of Emperor Menelik II, this research has discovered that the formation of the identity known as *Geja sefer* happened as recent as the early 1940's—right after the end of the second Ethio-Italian war, during the reign of Emperor Haileselassie I. Its location in close proximity to *Merkato*, and the residents' resourcefulness in dealing with socioeconomic uncertainties with work and trade agility, are recognized by the communities of the *sefer*, as senses of identity and livelihood at once. The everyday hustle is thus a source of prideful identity that is narratived to create inter-*sefer* distiction instilling cognitive borders.

The role of these conceptions of *Geja sefer* in establishing cognitive borders, as discovered from residents' narratives, will be dilated in this section. Starting with a description of the basic physical border conditions, in this section, a *sefer* and sub-*sefer* level illustration of cognitive border conditions will be presented. Moreover, the cognitive borders identified in the *sefer* will be demonstrated in summary to the section.

Physical border conditions

A walk from the Southern edge to the Northern tip of *Geja sefer* entails an ascent of twenty-eight meters. With a consolidated morphology, that has streets and alleys that do not strictly follow this direction, such a climb is made less steep as a street level experience. A relatively recent and unnamed street serves as the Southernmost border: across which, the *Lideta* Condominium site is found. While on the West side, it is defined by the *Dejach Bekele Weya* Street, its Eastern side is framed by a seasonal stream, that is a tributary to *Tinishu Akaki* river. And its North-western limit is Uganda street. Sao Thome and Principe Street provides access through the *sefer*: an active corridor with high commercial activity, articulated by intermittent public spaces such as the *Adebabay* (community square). Established businesses with street side shops, street venders, and community open markets, add to its ever-dynamic character. Auxiliary alleys that lead into the tissue of the *sefer* continue on this characteristic with an added function by the residents—an extension of domestic production activities, such as malt processing; especially typical to an area within the *sefer*, known to locals as *Dobbi sefer* or *Beqel Tera*.

FIG. 4.23 *Geja sefer*; topography, streets, alleys and plots.

In a similar manner as the previous case *sefer*, *Geja sefer*'s morphology displays organic settlement patterns; meandering alleys provide access to the inner parts, where daily activities of dwelling and small-scale production are performed. Parcellation logics, thus are dictated by topographic conditions and a series of regulatory attempts by the state. The *gebbi*, as a physically border condition, reappears as a place of dwelling and production activities that define the smallest scale of communal identity. Various forms of fencing, vegetation and building

arrangements mark its limits. In comparison with the other case *sefer*, *Geja sefer* exhibits the highest degree of home-based production and trade activities whose starting points are the *gebbi*.

This characteristic of *Geja sefer*, according to informants, is made possible by the presence of the *Merkato* market bordering it in the North. It is from this large open market that the residents access resources, such as wheat, that they process into products to be sold from within their residences, smaller markets nearby, or at the *Merkato* itself. Sections of the market known as *Min-Alesh Tera*, and *Chid Tera*, popular for their specialization in the labor-intensive trade of recycling, are found across Uganda street. Thus, *Geja sefer* is an identity that marks the end of the ever-expansive market; standing out as a dominantly residential area yet qualified by small scale trades that are daily practices of residents. In addition, the proximity to popular religious institutions such as *Lideta* St. Mary's, *Teklehaimanot*, and *Kale/ Meserete-Hiwot* churches, and *Geja sefer* Mosque is repeatedly noted by informants as a condition of identity formation.

Within the *sefer* are a number of schools. The most the residents use as a landmark being *Woreda Arat* (OXFAM) primary school, and *Karamara* kindergarten. According to interviewees, *Woreda Arat* school was built with participation of the residents and financial support of the NGO—OXFAM. They say this process of shared engagement has contributed to a sense of ownership that they pride themselves with. Currently, the school shares the property with a subsidized community market that adds functional and social value to the facility. Smaller markets (*'Gulit'/ ጉልቶች*), when they are found in a consolidated manner, are also used as reference points. The most visible public space, that is considered as the center of the *sefer*, is a community square that the residents refer to as *Adebabay*. It is a nexus point along the Sao Thome and Principe Street, where an open space links smaller alleys to the bustling street. *Molla Maru* warehouse and a YMCA facility are located at the Southern border of the *sefer* as prominent reference points marking the current limits of the *sefer*. Across the street to these landmarks is the *Lideta* condominium. Previously, this area was called *Chaffae Meda*; a community ground for sports and festivals and considered by residents as part of the *sefer*. The recent addition of the condominiums has resulted in the detachment of this area from the cognized borders of *Geja sefer* as the following sections will illustrate in depth.
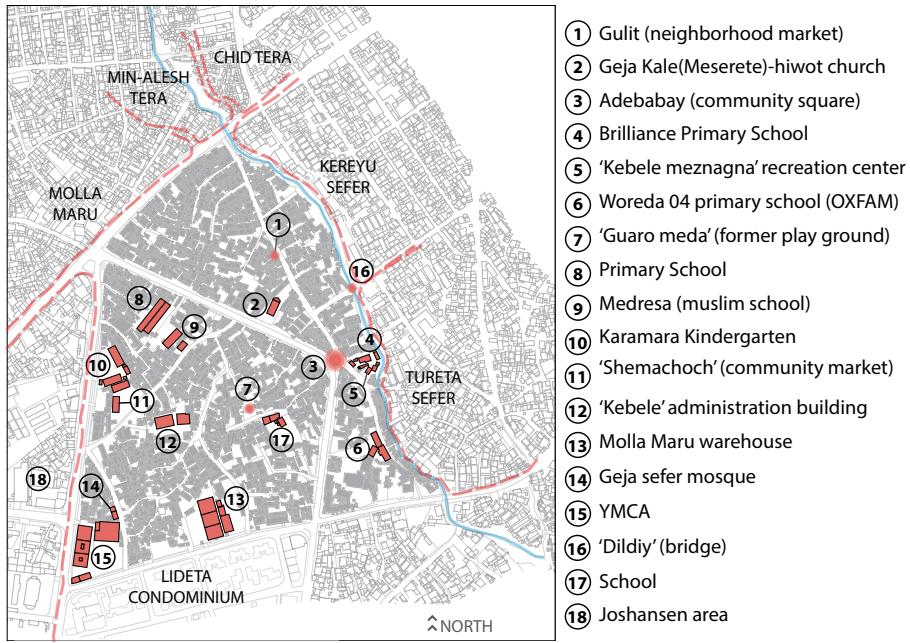
FIG. 4.24 *Geja sefer*; Landmarks and reference points.

Cognitive border conditions

The inherent characteristics of *Geja sefer* are evidence to the consolidation and rapid densification of Addis Ababa through labor, trade and migration. As the city expanded South and South-westward, *sefer* such as *Geja* became places of settlement for those who came to the city attracted by the opportunities the new city availed. Especially, the labor migration of people from the Southern territories of the country was necessitated by the emerging needs in construction sector—the building of houses, palisades, and roads. In a later period, as discussed in Chapter 2 , the housing shortage that arose post-1941, was primarily managed through subdivision of large plots of land and the construction of privately owned houses to be made available through rent. These processes have established communities that are integral to the city today, and *Geja sefer* is identified as such.

Beyond the realms of scholarly discourse, these notions are part of the stories of residents that condition a complex identity—a distinction that informs cognized borders separating it from its immediate environment. The following accounts of interviewees will give a storified review of the evolution of the *sefer*, insight into internal conditions of border making these stories instill, and contemporary status of border cognition.

Interviewee YM is an elderly resident of *Geja sefer*. In the excerpt below, she first describes a context prior the establishment of *Geja sefer* and follows it with a story her own experience as a child after the settlements have emerged.

… before both the *Geja* and *Dobbi* people came, the whole area was known as Nigus Woldegiorgis *sefer*. From the Balcha area until Molla Maru *sefer* was all referred to as Nigus Woldegiorgis *sefer*. The area beyond the river was known as Etege Mesk. I was not here and do not remember what exact period the *Dobbi* and *Geja* Gurages settled in the area.

… I grew up close to the Molla Maru junction. As I child I used to play with mud and flowers in that area. When the Oromo people came to Merkato, the mud would be as high as the knees of the donkeys that carry goods. There were people who used to come from far places such as *Geja*, Sebeta, and Tefki, with donkeys loaded with produce to be sold at Merkato. As children, that all was exciting to me and my peers. When the Gurage people bring cottage-butter for sale they used to wrap it with false-banana tree leaves. As a child, I would sit and pretend to be selling butter by wrapping random things with the leaves of caster-seed tree (ጉሎ ቅጠል). When they pick it up and try to bargain with us, I would run away laughing with my friends. And in the summer, we do the same, but pretending to be selling sugar, while it is earth that we had wrapped instead of sugar. We just keep making trouble in the market and we enjoyed it. These are my memories as I grew up in the *sefer*.

According to informants such as YM, before the 1940s, Gaja *sefer* did not exist in the name and shape known today. Rather, they describe a context in which large tracts of land were owned by and named after aristocrats of the period. *Nigus Woldegiorgis sefer* was used to describe a much wider territory, 'from the *Balcha* area until *Molla Maru sefer*,' than what *Geja sefer* covers today and was named after King Woldegiorgis Aboye of Gondar. YM also points out an adjacent territory as *Etege Mesk* (can be translated as Princess's field) that is in the direction of what is currently referred to as *Tureta sefer* and *Golla sefer*.

This finding, regarding the period prior the foundation of *Geja sefer*, especially in contrast to the changed socio-political context, after the 1940s defeat of the Italian troops, and in the subsequently liberated city, offers an insight into how the *sefer* became part and result of the rapid urbanization that emerged. The personal account YM offers later on, of her childhood memories, paint a picture of flourishing trade among different territories of the country that *Merkato* became the center of. She sets the context of her story on the street that separates *Geja sefer* and *Molla Maru sefer*, the coming and going of people from various ethnic backgrounds and how she partook in it as a child.

Interviewee TU is an eighty-two years old resident, who lived in *Geja sefer* since his birth, during the 1935-41 Italian invasion. His account illustrates the period after this invasion, during which the *Geja* people of *Gurage* settled in the area. Drawing from his own memory and family history, he narrates the initial processes of settlement.

… Well, the area where we are in now is called *Dobbi sefer*. *Dobbi* is the name of a tribe in the countryside around Buta Jira. So our fathers came from that area and that tribe. This whole *gebbi* was owned by my father.

… The first owner of the larger area was Fitawrary Belayneh. He was awarded the land as a gift-land (rést meret/ርስት መሬት) for his bravery and skills as a military man. When my father and his countrymen came here, the whole area was just bare land. From here up until Teklehaimanot area, and downwards the *Geja sefer* was all empty land.

… the houses were built with thatched roofs; I was a child when that was the prevailing reality. So, I have seen and remember it myself. I was born during the war against the Italian forces in 1929 EC [1938/39 GC]. They were defeated and left four years later. It is after this war, that Fitawrari Belayneh was awarded the land and my father, and his fellows eventually came to settle here. My father's house was the one that you see behind me. He was working as a carpenter for Fitawrary Belayneh, he built his houses and that is how they knew each other. Then Belayneh told my father 'What am I to do with all this open field? Please bring your fellows and make them settle in this area. I have no use for it other than that.' So my father agreed and started bringing people one by one. He first took this area for himself in return for his labor and a small amount of money; just a symbolic one birr, nothing more. And for the area below here, he brought his friend Ato Gebre, and let him settle there. And above here there were only three or four houses with large tracts of land (gasha meret / ጋሻ መሬት) around them. From then on, the area gradually densified through kinships and friendships, by people pulling each other into the *sefer*. Even if the land was almost for free as Belayneh was collecting just one birr from the settlers, some of them did not want to stay here because they either did not like the city or feel safe in it. So, they chose to keep farming in the rural area they came from and left. When some left others were coming in numbers. So those who stayed took land in exchange for different forms of service and a single birr. It is not just our *sefer* but Addis Ababa itself was empty back then. That is what we heard.

… *Geja sefer* is of those who came from *Geja* and settled here, in that sense it is a specific area next to ours. But when referring to the *sefer* in the context of the city, we say it is *Geja sefer*, including our *Dobbi sefer*. And above the main street [Northward], the area is called Sodo *sefer*, named after the Sodo tribe and land.

The setting, among which is *Geja sefer*, is part of the areas that marked the South and Southwestern expansion of Addis Ababa. TU's depiction of a 'bare land' scene of the area fits the images of the cusp of the transition into a bustling city documented by various historians[226]—a settlement layout that centers palisades and houses of prominent figures of the period and characterized by expanses of open fields around them. His portrayal of Fitawrari Belayneh as the first owner of the land, as awarded to him for his military service, signifies that post-1941, land ownership has been modified; allowing the transfer of ownership from Nigus Woldegiorgis to Fitawrary Belayneh. Furthermore, the exchanges and deals between his father and Fitawrari Belayneh is presented as the starting moment for the migration of the *Dobbi* and *Geja Gurages* towards Addis Ababa. The simultaneous settlement of the *Dobbi* and *Geja* people and the spatial distinction this phenomenon instills is indicated in his response and continued to inform cognitive borders among residents as will be discussed later in this section.

Despite highlighting such internal border-making distinctions, overall, respondents to this research have given consistent descriptions of border conditions towards the North, West and East sides of the *sefer*. A relative ambiguity appears regarding its Southern limits. Different delineations and landmarks have been used to describe this condition. The most repeated responses concur with the following statements by **interviewees MM** and **SG** respectively.

… for instance, if you go to the corner across Abdella building and ask the residents, some of them will tell you they are part of *Geja sefer* and the other half would not identify with *Geja sefer*. And if you go upward, it is called *Beqil* [*Dobbi*] *sefer*, and its residents identify so. But we call the whole area *Geja sefer* too. So, you can say, *Geja* is the larger area and there are smaller identities, for example based on their work and relationship with Merkato as in the case of *Beqil Tera*.

… For us *Geja sefer* starts from Amstegna Mazoria, close to Lideta Church, goes all the way to the Federal High Courts building and up towards Molla Maru, excluding Chid Tera, and moving on to Teklehaimanot Berbere Berenda; maybe there are some distinctions to be made over there; the rest is what we call our *sefer*.

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226 Giorghis and Gerard, *The City & Its Architectural Heritage, Addis Ababa 1986-1941, La Ville Son Patrimoine Architectural*; Richard Pankhurst, "Menelik and the Foundation of Addis Ababa," *The Journal of African History* 2, no. 01 (January 1961): 103, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0021853700002176; Richard Pankhurst and Denis Gérard, *Ethiopia Photographed: Historic Photographs of the Country and Its People Taken Between 1867 and 1935* (Kegan Paul International, 1996).

These demarcations are of three forms as illustrated in FIG. 4.25. The redevelopment of *Chaffae Meda* area resulted in, what is currently known as *Lideta* condominium. The stories fondly told by residents in the remaining *Geja sefer* are nostalgic to a once enjoyed place of leisure, sports and festivities that gave way to the new housing function. Yet, the vibrant trade activity that manage to percolate into the new settlement and the accompanying job opportunities, have led to a relative acceptance of the fate of a lost public space.
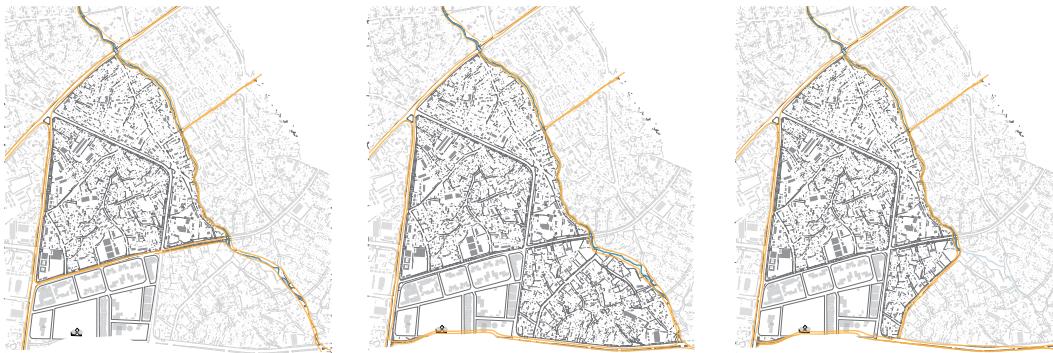
FIG. 4.25 The three ways the borders of *Geja sefer* are cognized by residents.

Stories and maps tracing cognitive borders

The prevalent domestic production and in-*sefer* and extra-*sefer* exchanges engage residents in high intensity mobility and interaction. Thus, neighboring *sefer* including sections of *Merkato* are livelihood-driven places of destinations for many residents, on a daily basis. In addition, religious institutions offer a different purpose of movement as daily practice. Deriving from personal experiences within the *sefer*, and daily, purposeful activities outside of the *sefer* respondents carve out a distinct identity to the *sefer* while cherishing the locational advantages and extra-*sefer* networks that they rely on for their livelihoods.

The following account of **interviewee GH**, a forty years old resident, exemplifies such an expansive comprehension of the *sefer*, that also captures specific distinctions within the *sefer* itself.

… There is a recreation center at the community square. When you go downward from there just before the narrow street; it is a street that starts wide and suddenly becomes narrow, just before transitioning into the narrow part, on your right; there is where I grew up as a child. Much of my childhood was there, I played ball games, 'dimo,' 'suzi' [games played outside in a group] with my peers and grew old with them. When I grew older the house we lived in was too small for our family so we moved to this house. It is adjacent to the main street. It was no more convenient for games to play with others, as it was a busy street, and I was also a bit old and focused on my education. My movement was just between my school and my home. Thus, the joyful life I had as a child was in the smaller house we were in earlier.

… Starting from Abdella Building until Molla Maru and following the street from Abdella building, you would find this area as an island. So, if you walk all the way to Joshansen, and continue all the way around until the river, then that is what I know to be *Geja sefer*.

… Except for a brief period when I was working at Lideta Sub-city office, all my life my workplaces have been within the *sefer*. I worked as a teacher at a kindergarten owned by the government, known as Karamara kindergarten. It was previously called Berhane Hiwot, but eventually it became part of the Karamara Primary school, a well-known primary school on the Joshansen side. The two are in separate compounds but with the same organization.

… I do all my grocery shopping in Merkato but may be depending on the market prices I may go to Piassa every now and then. The small neighborhoods (Gilit/ጉልት) is for small things of emergent need for the everyday.

… I go to both Lideta and Tekleye Churches, but Lideta church is my favored one. I don't know why, you know, a church is a church anyway, but residents of the community prefer Lideta Church, so I do as well. We go to Tekliye on special occasions like its annual celebration, or specific baptism.

… I live with peace with everyone in the neighborhood. We celebrate holidays according to the different religions. We do most of the celebrations, such as Demera, everyone makes the fire at the gates of the *gebbi*. We also gather all together with people from different parts of the *sefer* at the [Adebabay] for a bigger fire. I like standing by the street and watching all the festivities, the fire and the singing and dancing everywhere.

… This area, over there, is called Guaro Meda (loosely translated as backyard open space/ field). It was not like you see it now with a lot of buildings. It used to be a big open space, right there, where the container is. Better than I, those who grew up in this part of the *sefer* tell very sentimental stories about how they grew up playing in that open space. Now the government apportioned it out to new residents that they relocated from another *sefer*. There was an old Church/traditional School (ቄስ ትምህርት ቤት) adjacent to the field too. I think it is still running but in a very narrower plot than it used to have before the resettlement.

Cognitive borders map Interviewee - GH

- Interviewee's residence
- Frequented function (School)
- Interviewee's social relations' residences
- Favored and frequented places
- Interviewee's assumed area of belingingness
- Merkato (for Shoping)
- Frequented Churses
- ① Guaro Meda and street
- ② Karamara kindergarten
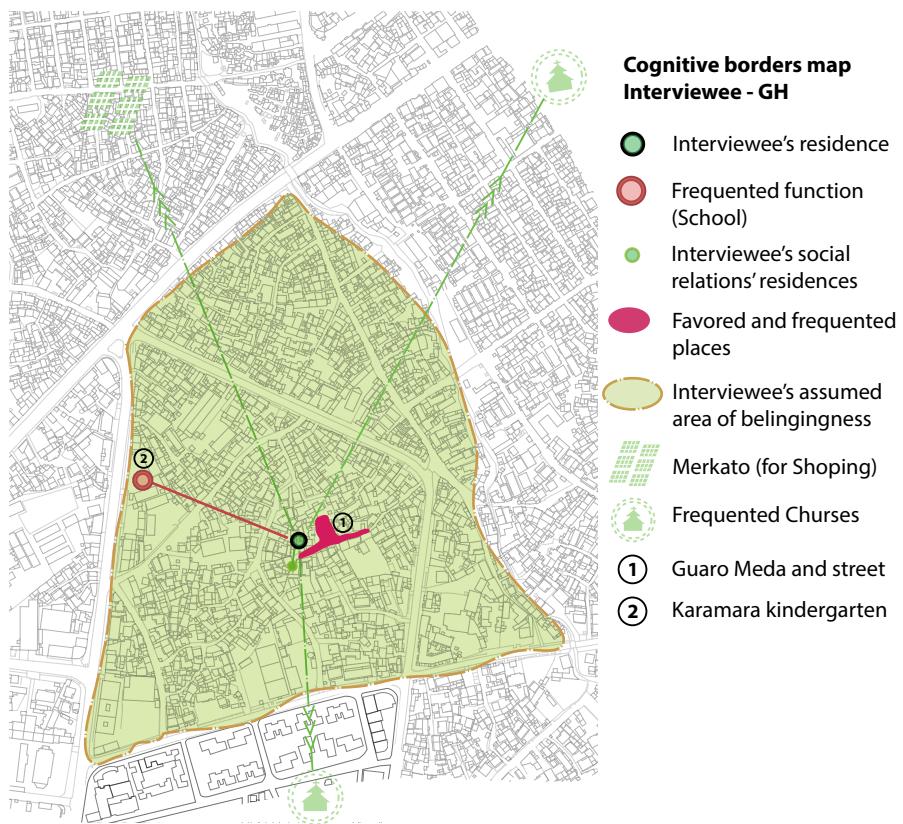
FIG. 4.26 Map showing interviewee GH's cognitive border, *Geja sefer*

By spatially describing her upbringing, in the first statement GH, points to an area where she spent different stages of her childhood. In the second statement she describes what she deems is the area defined as *Geja sefer*. Based on the purposes of work, shopping, and religion as agents she identifies reference points both inside and outside *Geja sefer* as places that she says made her life tied to the *sefer* as a whole. She also makes reference to a community space as a place of shared identity where she enjoys communal festivities. And finally refers to an area of distinction from within *Geja sefer* called *Guaro Meda*. Through this successive statement, she presents a multi-scalar narration of space-society relation that she perceives as a life-long resident of the *sefer*.

Even though she gives more weight to the *gebbi* as a main source of belongingness, **interviewee B**, also offers similar, expansive depiction of identity as seen in the statements above. She is a thirty-five years old resident of the *sefer* who lived in it for thirty years.

… I have tight-knit relationship with the families in this *gebbi*, especially the woman who lives at the highest level over there. We grew up here, together and we are still close friends.

… As a child I played with other girls just within this *gebbi*. Right here, we used to dig the earth and plant some plants or bring some worms and put them there and inspect them every day, those sort of things. I was never allowed out of the *gebbi*, so I never played outside of the *gebbi*. My grandmother was very strict about this, she never let me go to other friends outside the *gebbi*. If I ever left without her permission, she would whip and punish me. I run right back to the *gebbi* after any errand outside. So almost any memory I have as a child is within this *gebbi*. As an adult of course this has changed.

… I do socialize with others in the *sefer* now. The *sefer* for me is, do you know where the Gulit is? The one next to Abdella Building? The area above that is *Geja sefer*. Until Molla Maru area towards the [North] and Meserete Hiwot Church in the middle. And to the side, we call the area Guaro Meda, towards the YMCA (ወወከማ). YMCA and Guaro Meda are back-to-back, there is no straight access between them. Thus, the front or access point of Guaro Meda is towards Adebabay. When we lose sight of our children, sometimes we call out 'where are the kids? Please call the kids' and a common response is 'they are at Guaro.' They play there, it's a good, and trusting community.

With the use of reference points such as YMCA, *Abdella* building, *Molla Maru*, and *Meserete Hiwot* church, B indicates the whole *Geja sefer* as a cognized place of identity. Yet, the personal and detailed nature the description she uses to explain her attachment to the *gebbi* she lives in, emphasizes a rather narrower area of sentimental belongingness. Later, she reinforces *Guaro Meda*'s distinctness with the story about the routine use of 'they are at Guaro' response, which features a now lost playground frequented by children of the neighborhood.

**Cognitive borders map
Interviewee - B**

- Interviewee's residence
- Frequented function (Kindergarten)
- Interviewee's social relations' residences
- Favored and frequented places
- Interviewee's assumed area of belingingness
- (1) Adebabay and its surrounding
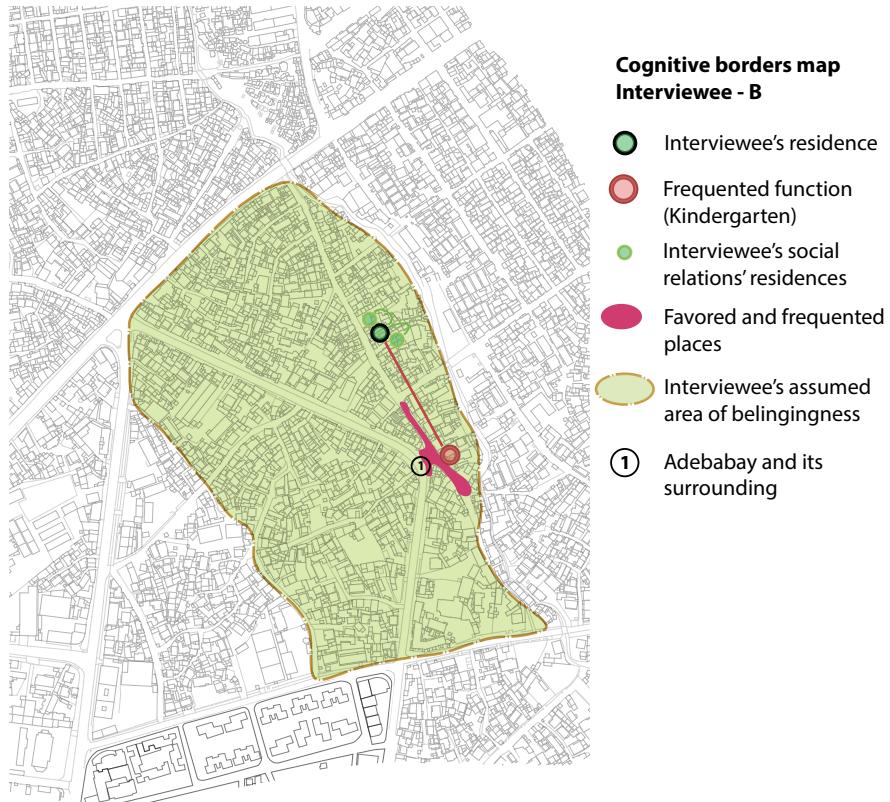
FIG. 4.27 Map showing interviewee B's cognitive border, *Geja sefer*

Interviewee AK2 is a sixty years old resident of the *sefer* who lived there for about thirty eight years. He had served as a *Kebele/woreda* administrator in the period of political transition in 1991.

… There is the kindergarten and also a recreational place next to [Adebabay]. The kindergarten was built with the support of Oxfam, an English [British] good-will organization. That kindergarten and the surrounding area was developed with the participation of the community. So we are proud of it, it is something that we built ourselves. Fortunately, I was a Woreda administrator during that period. Thus when the construction happened I was coordinating the project: Oxfam funded it, and the people built it. My role was bringing these together, especially mobilizing the residents of the *sefer*. The city municipality forwarded the project to our Woreda and brought me in contact with the people from Oxfam. Then the rest happened. The initial proposal was to build the Kindergarten and a community library. We built the kindergarten but we do not know what happened to the idea of the library; this was during the transition time after the Derg regime was ousted, so we don't know.

… So this side you see over there is known as Chid Tera, some even include it in *Geja sefer*, but the actual *Geja sefer* is from the spot where a number of shoe-shiners are sat until the condominium area there. That is what we call *Geja sefer*. But all over the *sefer*, when asked, residents say they are from *Geja sefer*, there is no distinction in that sense. There is an area called *biqil* tera or *Dobbi sefer* over here. Most of the residents in that area came from the *Dobbi* locality in Gurage. So most of them are guraghe by ethnicity. It is the area below Chid Tera, you know Chid Tera, right? There is a bridge by the river, right? From that bridge until the *gebbi* where I reside, until the church, is known as *Dobbi*. *Geja* is a wide area, *Dobbi* is a small area within. Both *Dobbi* and *Geja* are from the Gurage but in this locality *Dobbi* is a subset to *Geja sefer*, which is a larger *sefer* the circumscribes even other sub-*sefer*. *Dobbi* is a small area and *Geja* covers the wider *sefer* and it includes *Dobbi* as well.

… this *gebbi* I live in, is called Erbata *gebbi*, because of the cows here and the milk selling business. The old man; the owner of the whole *gebbi*, is like a father to me, we are very close. Other than that, outside of this *gebbi*, my relationship with all the people in the *sefer* is great. That is why I feel I belong to the whole *sefer*. The *sefer*, for me, is marked by places like, Meserete Hiwot Church, Yesetoch Baltena (women's shops selling food and home-made traditional ingredients), Oxfam area, Meznagna (reacreation center), Chid *Tera*, *Biqil Tera* or *Dobbi*, Chinqillo Sega Bet [Chinqillo's Butchery].

During his role as a local administrator, AK2 had the unique opportunity of working with an NGO and the community to establish one of the landmarks; a kindergarten, in the *sefer*. The first account above elucidates on the process of this task and his pride in his contribution to the community. In the second statement he offers clarification, as has also been done by other respondents, regarding the distinct condition of *Dobbi sefer* and its comprehension in relation to *Geja sefer*. Consistent with all the other interviewees' responses, he depicts *Geja sefer* as an overarching identity that engulfs *Dobbi sefer*. In other words, he locates *Dobbi sefer* as an identity within the frame of *Geja sefer*. He concludes by affirming that he belongs to the whole *sefer*, which can be a result of his role in the community that gained him high regards among residents. Even though he struggles to maintain relationships he has built across the years, because of a physical ailment that reduced his mobility, he insists that he enjoys a sense of belongingness and security among the community in *Geja sefer* as a whole.

Cognitive borders map Interviewee - AK2

- Interviewee's residence
- Frequented function (School)
- Interviewee's social relations' residences
- Favored and frequented places
- Interviewee's assumed area of belingingness
- (1) Woreda 04 primary school (OXFAM)
- (2) Adebabay (community square)
- (3) 'kebele meznagna' (recreation center)
- (4) 'Yesetoch Baltena' (diner owned by women's SME)
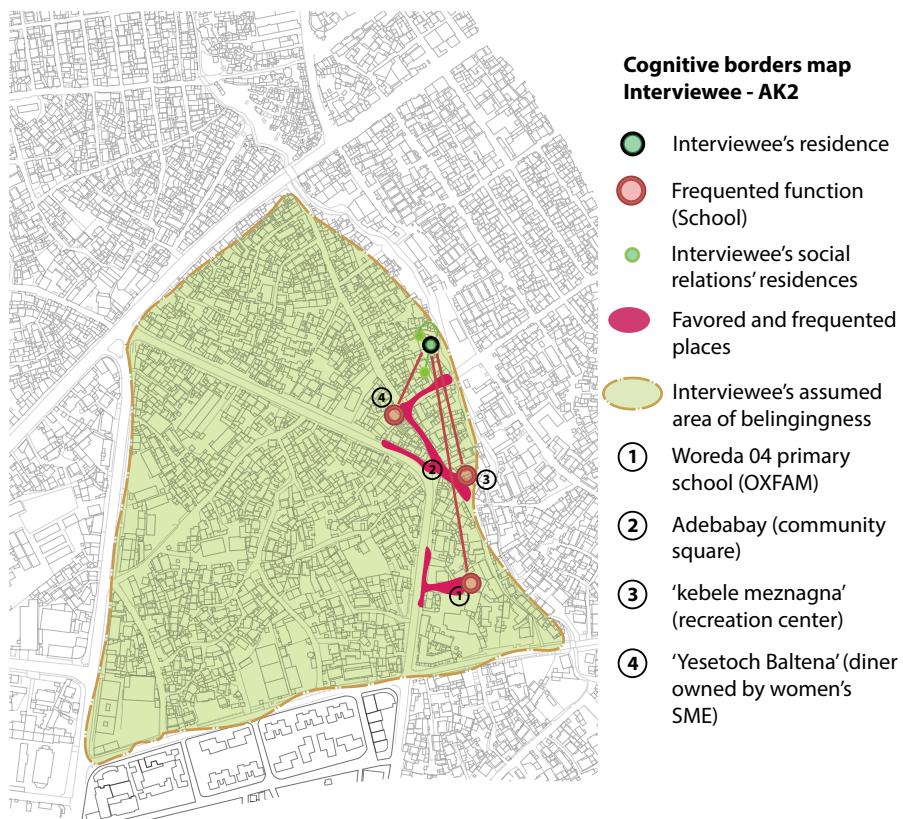
FIG. 4.28 Map showing interviewee AK2's cognitive border, *Geja sefer*

As can be seen in many of the stories presented so far, the *Dobbi sefer* distinction, and its relationship with the *Geja sefer* identity, is addressed by residents both within and outside the limits of *Dobbi sefer*. Those who live outside *Dobbi* area recognize this distinctness of *Dobbi* and those from within embrace the *Geja sefer* identity.

This can best be seen in the statements of **interviewee AA2** below.

… the area below here, close to the church is specifically known to be *Geja sefer*, our area is called *Dobbi sefer*. The common name is *Geja sefer*, there is no strict distinction between the two, but you can say *Dobbi* is a subset of *Geja*. You see, both *Geja* and *Dobbi* are localities in Gurage zone from where most of the early settlers of the *sefer* came. I am from another area and ethnicity, so I adapted to the life and understanding here since I moved into the *sefer*.

Cognitive borders in *Geja sefer*

Contrary to the initial assumptions of this research, *Geja sefer*, as a vibrant and industrious community, is an identity that is formed after the liberation of Addis Ababa from the invading Italian forces in 1941. What preceded this identity was largely forested land and a few settlements under the ownership of Nigus Woldegiorgis; a relative to Emperor Menelik II. The eventual migration and settlement of the *Geja* and *Dobbi Gurages* from the Southern regions of Ethiopia and the flourishing trade at both *Merkato* and *Arada* markets are credited to have formational impact on the *sefer*. Its residents affirm an identity that is distinct from its environs yet strongly networked through production and exchange.

The *Dobbi* community and its borders have been set out since the foundation of the *Geja sefer*. Beyond ethnic lineages at the period of foundation, this area is specifically known for the trade of malt. Dominantly performed by women as the main means of income, the production of malt, has earned the area an alternative name— *Beqel Tera*. As one approaches the *sefer* from *Adebabay* area going Northward, the malt production and sale activity that goes well out of the *gebbi* and onto the street making its territorial presence apparent. Thus, this storified cognitive border is a stable identity that is made visually evident through such activities. Though its residents adopt the general identity of *Geja sefer*, they are keen to express clear distinction from it. This is most witnessed especially when discussing the evolution of the *sefer* and initial settlement conditions.

Guaro Meda was a name given to an open space and its surrounding settlement located in the approximate center of the *sefer*. Even though this open space has recently been appropriated for new settlements and is rendered insignificant, communities in a sizable area preserve it as an identity, and spatially iterate it as cognized place on its own. In this case thus, a former playground has conditioned an identity that outlasted it and became larger in territoriality and sense of cognition.

Regardless of the acceptance of the *Lideta* condominium as an apparent reality, the presence of *Chaffae Meda*, in local narratives especially told by the youth, calls for its recognition as a place of value. It is considered by residents as a cut off piece of *Geja sefer* identity where a new identity is planted in a top-down manner. Compared to the *Zero Amst* area of *Dejach Wube sefer*, the stories of attachment to a place lost for redevelopment have to do with an open space than a community that had strong ties with the rest of the *sefer*. In addition, the fact that the redevelopment is complete, and new conditions have already been set, has readied residents to accept current realities and move on with new relations.

Once again, the *gebbi* appears as a place of identity and a border of both cognitive and physical nature. Similar to the previous case *sefer*, it is a consolidated place where routine activities of washing clothes, drying spices, and communal events, such as occasional coffee ceremonies and feasts happen. But what is particular to *Geja sefer* is that the *gebbi* level identity is also a source of livelihood for families.
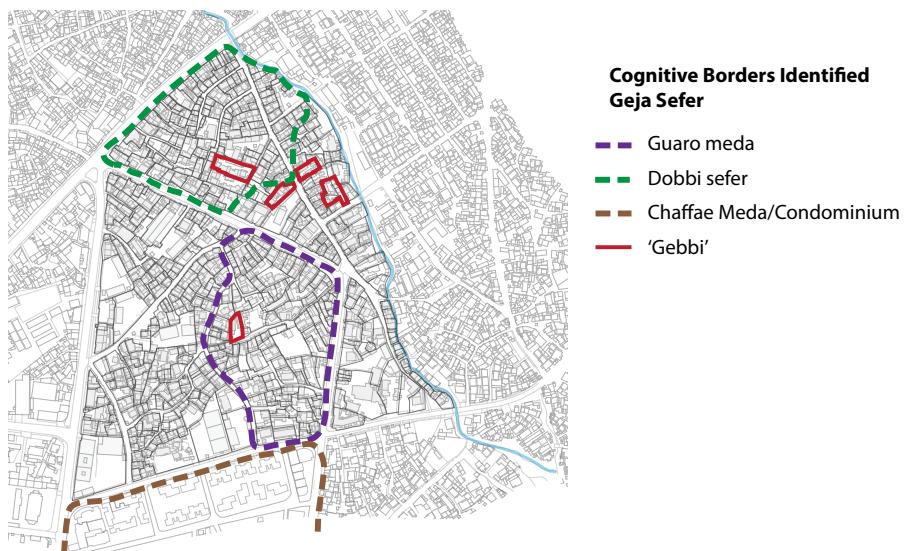
FIG. 4.29 The four cognitive borders of *Geja sefer*

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Processes and conditions that set cognitive borders

In pursuit of untangling the complexity that makes up *sefer,* this chapter sought to identify engrained distinctions and meaningful associations among communities by studying them through the thematic lens of cognitive borders. As a result, it submitted a list of cognitive borders discovered out of stories told by resident, and visual materials collected and produced on and off three sites of investigation. Furthermore, it illustrated on the processes that constitute, and conditions that characterize such borders. This section restructures the above *sefer*-by-*sefer* illustrations, into four principal categories of processes and conditions that make cognitive borders apparent.

Heritage and identity as active 'meaning making'

Among residents, heritage and identity are active means of making distinctions and meaning to places in and around *sefer*. In some cases, these identities are imported to location when rural cultures and practices are adopted to the urban context. This is exemplified by the case of *Beqil Tera* in *Geja sefer*, where a rural practice of producing malt is brought to the city, passes through two generations, and now, beyond being a means of income for households, is a distinctive character of the wider area. In other cases, a person; as in the case of *Tissemae Chakka* area, a place; as in the case of *Patrice Lumumba* area, or a phenomenon as in the case of *Gebar sefer* (neighboring *Serategna sefer*) can cause identities to be formed on-site. Whereas, in some other cases, identity and heritage can be adapted. The Addis Ababa restaurant area of *Dejach Wube sefer* presents both a literal and figurative case of adaptation of heritage. What used to be the banquet hall of the royal Wube, and the surrounding settlements of his followers is now functioning as a tourist destination as a traditional restaurant. The previous identity is treated as a legacy whereas the current state is considered an attractive opportunity, and the community prides itself with both.

It is relatively easy to identify cognitive borders whose identities are archived in their names. One just needs to ask, "who is Tissemae?" once they are told of the place by name and learn of its heritage. *Patrice Lumumba* area, on the other hand, is an un-named vicinity, that only becomes visible through the stories told of the bar and its historic impact in forming a cognizable place. It is active narratives, and

their application by residents, as markers of cognized places on a daily basis, that keep them discernible. Through such application, heritage and identity values are harbored in communal narratives that consolidate cognitive borders that can be discovered through such ethnographic work.

Physically conditioned cognitive borders

The *gebbi* is both a physical and cognitive border that is present in all the *sefer* under study. What was intended to demarcate individual property prior the nationalization of land and property in 1975, is since then, a spatially defined communal living environment for an average of 17 households per *gebbi*. In this case, the border precedes the formation of the community, but its prevalence as a cognized place of meaningful association qualifies it as a cognitive border.

The organic process the *gebbi* is shaped by, following topographic conditions and accessibility, also creates variations in the type of *gebbi* themselves. In simple terms, when the location is of gentle slope, additional border defining materials, such as the corrugated iron sheet fence, are needed. And, when there is steep slope, retaining walls that are built to shore up soil that is dug to create a leveled ground for building houses, and the level difference that it is separating serves the purpose of space definition. This form of definition is sufficient as physical barrier, but the possibility of visual access, characterizes the level of publicness of the *gebbi* differently. Such processes of altering topography thus create variations such as the condition whereby a number of *gebbi* agglomerate, define a larger *gebbi* with shared border and access and establish *gebbi* within *gebbi* conditions, such as in *Serategna sefer*. This in turn forms a variant of the *gebbi* as cognitive border.

Conterminous cognitive borders

Cognitive borders in close proximity, that are defined together or against one another, form conterminous places that validate each other. As discussed in detail in section 4.2, co-constitutive meanings are shared among the cluster of *sefer* that *Serategna sefer* is one of. These *sefer* that are found on either bank of *Bantyqetu* river, give meaning to and validate each other as settlements that are established in service of the monarchy. Their shared history afterwards, of urbanizing by taking advantage of their location between the royal palace (South-east) and *Arada*, the commercial center (North-west), further enhanced both collective and individual identities.

TOC

In *Dejach Wube sefer*, on the other hand, Wube's former banquette hall, or Addis Ababa restaurant as it is today, and the surrounding settlers' residences caused the establishment of *Tissemae Chakka* area by those who migrated to the *sefer* as servants at the formers' households. Added to the social structure that happened on the site, the fact that these groups originate from different regions in Ethiopia and differ in ethnic and cultural background furthers the differentiation. The distinction that resulted from this initial socio-economic setup is active in today's narratives as communities define one against the other.

Suspended cognitive borders

Successive and socially oblivion changes in delineation of administrative borders, and aggressive redevelopment ambitions pursued by governance policies have caused a state of cognitive ambivalence in *sefer*. This is illustrated in the cases of *Balambaras* area of *Serategna sefer* and *Zero Amst* area of *Dejach Wube sefer* respectively. *Balambaras* area is in a physically present but cognitively fragmented state; while *Zero Amst* area of *Dejach Wube sefer* is physically absent but, alive in collective memory and communal narratives. The implementation of numbers-based identification of areas, especially when the community, already has an established sense of place, disrupts the development of cognitive awareness of the environment. All interviewed residents of *Balambaras* area are certain that their neighborhood is not part of *Gebar sefer*, but former administrative demarcations associate them with it while their preferred and reasoned association is better aligned towards *Serategna sefer*. Against the facts on the ground that *Zero Amst* area is demolished, dwellers of *Dejach Wube sefer* adamantly storify and keep it and its relocated communities in collective memory and narration.

In the case of *Dejach Wube sefer*, narratives are actively used to archive and advocate for a sense of identity that is disturbed by the state. As a form of resistance against actions by the government and frustrated with the uncertainty that their current *sefer* is also under similar threat, residents' narratives are used as socio-political agency and advocacy. Whereas, in *Balambaras* area of *Serategna sefer* narratives are found in an uncertain and disintegrated state. Respondents to this research recognize the area as a cognitively present agglomerate but name it differently based on where in this area they reside and what landmark is closer to them. They also consider it part of *Serategna sefer* but refer to it as *Kebele* ten to inject a distinction. These transient processes of narrativizing an uncertain condition due to change or disruption suspend a sense of place and enforce a cognized state of border.

Embedded in the discussions of location-specific processes and conditions of cognitive borders discussed above, are implicit and explicit manifestations of sociality in spatial terms. Through two forms of inquisitions of borders as narrativized by residents; one that asks for the markers from a resident's house towards the limits, and another locating borders through walking-along and mapping exercises, these findings have illustrated the notions of 'thereness,' 'placeness' and 'belongingness' by paying due attention to the cognitive nature of border making, as James Wiley Scott invites us to do.

Furthermore, studying cognitive borders as practices of place making is useful to understand scale in spatial terms. Scale of a community is an element of space-society relation that, disciplines tasked with the making of the built environment strive to comprehend in the contexts they engage in. Such empirically demonstrated findings inform design and planning practices with contextual insights that capture nuances and enable projective efforts to be extensive. Understanding the size, density, socio-spatial make up, and its relevance as an identity on its own, and together with neighboring areas, can apprise planners of the now demolished *Zero Amst* area to steer their efforts towards context specific imaginations.

5 *Iddir*: a social relation and a social capital in *sefer*

In order to comprehend *sefer* and its complexity, it is vital to form a critical understanding of *iddir*. It is the most ubiquitous and prevalent form of social network in all the case of this dissertation. In nearly all interviews conducted, respondents have noted the relevance of *iddir* in community identity, economic support, social security, and shared objectives of development of *sefer* in general. Be the questions of concerns such as borders, activities, or physical structures, residents of 's responses make a direct or indirect link to membership to an *iddir* or more. *Iddir* is repeatedly presented as one of the most essential types of social networks that foster a sense of community and belonginess among members. Its basic function relates to funerary events in a *sefer* during which, the financial and emotional burden befalling members who are bereaved is shared among members. But, as will be illustrated further in this chapter, it is instrumental in maximizing both individual and shared gains to members in other aspects of communality.

The second form of relationships, and those that are driven by household level economic needs are those of domestic production and exchange—home-based enterprises. Families employ financial, labor, and spatial resources to generate income through economic exchanges that are embedded in social structures. The home-enterprises as family mode of production[227] (FMP) and extended fungibility

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[227] Michael Lipton, "Family, Fungibility and Formality: Rural Advantages of Informal Non-Farm Enterprise versus the Urban-Formal State," in *Human Resources, Employment and Development Volume 5: Developing Countries: Proceedings of the Sixth World Congress of the International Economic Association Held in Mexico City, 1980*, ed. Samir Amin (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 1984), 189–242, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-17461-4_10.

(in reference to the "extension of fungibility between the economic and domestic spheres")[228] have been discussed in economics for long. But the notion of embeddedness in social structures and by extension the character of communality—communal resource, is of peculiar interest in revealing the practices in *sefer*. It is important to view the home-based enterprises in *sefer* as more than mere non-formal economic acts that are part and parcel of the networks and practices that duplicate social capital.

On a third degree, a notion especially related to social and economic relations, that residents point to as means of saving, credits and investing in betterments of households. As the Ethiopian form of rotating savings and credit association (RoSCA), the serves a means to advance purchasing capacity of its members and allows households to function with short and long terms household financial plans.[229]

These three practices are social capital for residents in *sefer*.[230] Members join them motivated by both individual and shared interests, to make the most out of social, economic, and spatial resources (in various forms and scales) that are rooted in their communal networks. For this dissertation, the focus of detailed discussion will be the *iddir*. The current chapter will reveal *iddir* as communal institutions of social capital order, that are integral to the. It will show further that *iddir* are a *sefer*-tied socio-economic institution that can manifestly be mapped as a spatial reality in communities of *sefer*. As a result of the exposition of *iddir* at the nexus of social capital and urban theories, an original reading of s and their complex social and spatial make up is made possible.

Section 5.1 introduces *iddir* through a review of the literature and first-hand accounts of informants to this research as a voluntary mutual support association among communities in Ethiopia. Here, an argument is also made that, *iddir* is *sefer*-tied—that it is an integral part of *sefer*, and *sefer* is a defining context for *iddir* as

228 Peter Kellett and A Graham Tipple, "The Home as Workplace: A Study of Income-Generating Activities within Domestic Setting," *Environment and Urbanization* 12, no. 1 (April 1, 2000): 205.

229 Agegnehu Bisrat, Karantininis Kostas, and Li Feng, "Are There Financial Benefits to Join RoSCAs? Empirical Evidence from Equb in Ethiopia," *Procedia Economics and Finance* 1 (2012): 229–38, https://doi.org/10.1016/S2212-5671(12)00027-5; Abbi M. Kedir and Gamal Ibrahim, "ROSCAs in Urban Ethiopia: Are the Characteristics of the Institutions More Important than Those of Members?," *Journal of Development Studies* 47, no. 7 (July 2011): 998–1016, https://doi.org/10.1080/00220388.2010.536219.

230 Dejene Aredo, "*Iddir*: A Look at a Form of Social Capital," in *Iddirs Participation and Development* (ACORD, Ethiopian National Conference, 20-21 December, 2001, Addis Ababa: ACORD Ethiopia, 2003), 43–61; Dejene Aredo, "The *Iddir*: An Informal Insurance Arrangement in Ethiopia," *SAVINGS AND DEVELOPMENT* 34, no. 1 (2010): 58.

a type of social network. And categorization of *iddir* into types needs to be based on an understanding of the function of *iddir*; access to steadfast support and its reliance on the social network structures within *sefer*. This section further introduces an understanding of *iddir* as social capital that was hinted by scholars such as Dejene Aredo and Alula Pankhurst.[231] A brief introduction to social capital theory thus becomes important at this juncture and is so presented in section 5.2. Via a general review of social capital theory and based on Julia Häuberer's formalized conception of it,[232] this section brings forth the conceptual areas where *iddir* can be epistemically located and elaborated as a viable form of social capital. These conceptual areas are used in section 5.3 to further elucidate *iddir*'s characteristics and to generate a new definition for it based on its social capital features.

Such description and definition of *iddir* as a social and economic phenomenon simultaneously, is an essential foundation to the spatial and storified illustration of *iddir* in *sefer* that follows in section 5.4. This section presents interviewees' stories, and a mapping of the spatiality of *iddir* in *sefer* and displays *iddir* and *sefer* as co-defining entities. Section 5.5 is a summary of findings and concludes this chapter.

5.1 *Iddir*: A funerary association and more

Beginning with a brief introduction, in 1958, by Richard Pankhurst and Endreas Eshete,[233] many scholars of sociology and social anthropology have discussed *Iddir* for more than 60 years. Among these discussants, Alemayehu Seifu, defined it as "a voluntary association established for the purpose of mutual aid in matters of burial and other community concerns."[234] Later, Alula Pankhurst affirmed the funerary function and the voluntary aspect as defining characteristics of *Iddir*, and furthered an understanding of *Iddir* as "sub-type of local organizations which are prevalent

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231 Aredo, "*Iddir*: A Look at a Form of Social Capital," 58; Alula Pankhurst, "The Emergence, Evolution and Transformations of *Iddir* Funeral Associations in Urban Ethiopia," *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, Special Thematic Issue on Contemporary Urban Dynamics, 41, no. 1/2 (December 2008): 145.

232 Julia Häuberer, "Social Capital Theory towards a Methodological Foundation," VS Research (Wiesbaden, VS Verl. für Sozialwissenschaften, 2011).

233 Dr. Richard Pankhurst and Endreas Eshete, "Self-Help in Ethiopia," *Ethiopia Observer*, 1958, 8.

234 Alemayehu Seifu, "Eder in Addis Ababa: A Sociological Study," *Ethiopia Observer*, 1968, 8.

form of social capital worldwide."[235] Furthermore, he distinctly highlighted the individuals' willingness for membership and deliberate voluntary choice as crucial characteristics of *Iddir*.[236] Scholars of economics, such as Arnaldo Mauri and Dejene Aredo, also offered definitions to *iddir*. Mauri depicts it as a "sort of insurance programme run by a community or a group to meet emergency situations."[237] A definition on which Aredo expands by defining it as an insurance institution that is utilized during risk phenomena such as "funeral ceremonies, death of major productive assets (such as draft oxen), medical expenses, food shortage, and so on."[238] Among community-based organizations in Ethiopia, Aredo finds *Iddir* to be "the most egalitarian, broad-based, transparent, and accountable."[239]

Many others, including the scholars aforementioned, have described *Iddir* via its ubiquity in, and indigeneity to Ethiopia. Even though there remains debate about the origin of *Iddir*; meaning, if it is a rural tradition that evolved into an urban practice, or if it is a result of urbanization that gradually expanded into rural areas, its ubiquitous presence across communities in Ethiopia is generally agreed upon. Both economists and anthropologists have also argued that it is an indigenous practice to Ethiopia. For example, Aredo said, *Iddir* is different from other similar associations in Africa in the performance of "regular and *ex-ante* payment of fixed amount of money to a common pool set up by a group."[240] And A. Pankhurst stated that "the particular way in which *iddir* emerged was particular to the Ethiopian context;" and that in comparison, the *Iddir* of Ethiopia have "much longer history, greater endurance and are larger groups with asset holdings."[241]

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235 Pankhurst, "The Emergence, Evolution and Transformations of *Iddir* Funeral Associations in Urban Ethiopia," 145.

236 Pankhurst, 148.

237 Arnaldo Mauri, "The Role of Financial Intermediation in the Mobilisation and Allocation of Household Savings in Ethiopia: Interlinks between Organized and Informal Circuits" (Giordano Dell'Amore Working Paper No. 2/1987, 1987), 7, https://ssrn.com/abstract=943426 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.943426.

238 Aredo, "The *Iddir*: An Informal Insurance Arrangement in Ethiopia," 57.

239 Aredo, 58.

240 Aredo, 58.

241 Pankhurst, "The Emergence, Evolution and Transformations of *Iddir* Funeral Associations in Urban Ethiopia," 145.

A. Pankhurst further examined the historic root of the term *Iddir* itself. [242] He laid out an evolution of the use and meaning of the word *Iddir* from "a general reference to custom, to one relating to decisions and sanctions, and then to refer specifically to funeral association," from the late 19th century through the 1920s and to the post-Italian occupation periods respectively.[243] Attesting to the communal bondage that is embedded in *iddir*, the word *iddirtegna (እድርተኛ)* is used to describe, in its basic sense, membership to a common *iddir*,[244] and in its affective sense, an expression of cherished relationship or sense of belongingness.[245]

In their publication in 1958, R. Pankhurst and Eshete, discussed *iddir* as having three distinct types—community *iddir*, tribal *iddir*, and institutional *iddir*.[246] A decade later, Seifu argued against such typology by stating that in the beginning *iddir* "was invariable based on vicinity; it was an association with almost all its members drawn from the same neighbourhood."[247] And that it is only gradually the other forms of association came about. Except for borrowing the name *iddir* briefly upon their arrival to the social scene, "almost all institutional and tribal associations" were rather referred to as "*meredaja maheber*," meaning mutual aid associations in its literal sense. Thus, explicitly stating that, in the context of his contribution, *iddir* referred to only those based on neighbourhood or community. Regardless, other scholars continued introducing typologies in their discourses. For instance, Aredo insisted that there are various types of *iddir*, of which he discussed four in his 1993 contribution, and later, a typology of ten (in Addis Ababa) in his 2001 contribution.[248]

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[242] Alula Pankhurst, "The Role and Space for *Iddir*s to Participate in the Development of Ethiopia," in *Iddirs Participation and Development: Proceedings of the Ethiopian National Conference: 20-21 December 2001* (Addis Ababa: ACORD Ethiopia, 2003), 16–17.

[243] Pankhurst, "The Emergence, Evolution and Transformations of *Iddir* Funeral Associations in Urban Ethiopia," 151.

[244] Thomas Leiper Kane, *Amharic-English Dictionary*, vol. I (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz Verlag, 1990), 1304.

[245] Seifu, "Eder in Addis Ababa: A Sociological Study," 14.

[246] Pankhurst and Eshete, "Self-Help in Ethiopia," 358.

[247] Seifu, "Eder in Addis Ababa: A Sociological Study," 8.

[248] Aredo, "*Iddir*: A Look at a Form of Social Capital," 44–45.

During the same period, Elias Yitbarek cautiously stated that, "out of the many types of *iddir*…the most dominant is community *iddir*, also called, *yesefer iddir* [*iddir* of the *sefer*] or *yekebele iddir* [*iddir* of the *kebele*, the smallest administrative district]. It is formed by households living in the same neighbourhood (*sefer* or *kebele*)."[249] Perhaps, the boldest presentation of typologies of *iddir* is A. Pankhurst's tabulation of ten types of *iddir* based on locality, ethnicity, institution, gender, age, friendship, kinship, religion, displacement and resettlement.[250]

The attempts to capture *iddir* in typologies, especially beyond the context of the *sefer*, have shown to be evolving and problematic. What almost all discussants agree on is that there is an innate function to *iddir*, which is the funerary function. Towards this function, members of an *iddir* pay dues, assemble for meetings, attend funerals by accompanying the coffin as it is carried to the place of burial, support the bereaved by availing their time, food, and drinks to mourners, in most cases, for a minimum of three days. These activities are supported by resources such as tents, temporary kitchens, cutlery, chairs, tables and mattresses that are administered by the *iddir*. The logistics of these activities is thus, tied to proximity to the residence of the bereaved. In addition, one of the most popular values of *iddir* is its promptness to respond to incidents of bereavement. Another point of agreement among scholars is that the proliferation of *iddir*; the growth in its popularity across Ethiopia right at the outset, has inspired its adoption, in one form or another, into other spheres of society, such as the place of work. Both the term *iddir*, and its organisational and operational mechanisms have been transposed into such relatively recent contexts.

The logistics and proximity aspects discussed above, and the understanding that the other forms of associations are transpositions of the *sefer*-tied *iddir*, are also used as arguments by informants to this research who assert that, it is primarily the -tied *iddir* that they assuredly consider to be *iddir*. In concurrence to Seifu's position stated earlier, the interviewees disclose that they consider the associations that are formed outside of the context of the *sefer* as *maheber* (association) or *meredaja maheber* (mutual aid association).

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249 Elias Yitbarek, "The Role of *Iddir* in Neighborhood Upgrading in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia," *Journal of Ethiopian Studies* 41, no. 1–2 (December 2008): 188.

250 Pankhurst, "The Emergence, Evolution and Transformations of *Iddir* Funeral Associations in Urban Ethiopia," 167.

I would call these Mahebers (Associations), may be the ethnic ones are structured more like *iddir* than the others. … You see there are different associations, but if you ask me, I would not call them *iddir*. It is maheber, but they are transforming it into *iddir*. … So, they support each other within those kinds of smaller circles, and those would not be referred to as *iddir*.[251]

I am also a member to another *iddir* called Gonderie *iddir* which is of those of us who are from Gondar. But it is not *iddir* per se, it is just to maintain social life and for that purpose you organize it in the shape of an *iddir*.… It is only when there is *sefer* that an *iddir* can exist. If *sefer* is there, then *iddir* is there.[252]

It is hence prudent to set out the distinction that, especially in an urban setting such as Addis Ababa, *iddir* is a voluntary association that is tied to the *sefer*. Be it in popular understanding as seen in the interviews, or in its innate function and operations as discussed earlier, this distinction is evident. Those associations of mutual aid that are not related to the *sefer*, regardless of their resemblance to the *iddir*, can be classified and studied as transpositions or replicas, rather than typologies, of *iddir* itself—or more conveniently as *maheber* or *meredaja maheber* as was suggested by Seifu. Since the term *sefer* may not apply to rural contexts, further enquiry into mutual aid associations in rural areas need to be conducted to determine whether *iddir* is location related or not. With the clarity though, that *iddir* in urban settings is *sefer*-tied, we can proceed to discuss the different types or "sub-groups"[253] of *iddir* that exist within the *sefer*.

Broadly, *iddir* are classified into two gender-based groups: *ye wendoch* (men's') *iddir* and *ye setoch* (women's) *iddir*. The men's *iddir* is further classified into two: those that are based on or affiliated to religion and those that are generic or open in character. Examples to these types of *iddir* are discussed in the interviewees' stories in section 5.4 below. In some implicit cases, *iddir* may be formed as an evolution of a network of people gathered around religious interests, sentiments, or figures. Though these *iddir* can technically be open to those that are not members of a certain religion, their names, customs, and religious symbols used on documents can keep the sentiments of that specific religion and be exclusive in character. In other explicit cases, *iddir* are formed specially to keep practices within the ethics and ethos of a

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251 For the context of this discussion with interviewee AbFe see section 5.4.

252 For the context of this discussion with interviewee M see section 5.4.

253 Aredo, "*Iddir*: A Look at a Form of Social Capital," 49.

certain religion. In this case, membership is specifically accessible to residents of a *sefer* that are from a specific religious identity. Even though both types of *iddir* are named as the males' *iddir*, they are not gender exclusive in membership. Women or matriarchal households are not excluded from membership.[254] These *iddir* are characteristically large (in membership size and capital) and functionally broad. Starting with the announcement of a funeral by the blowing of bugles through the alleys of the *sefer*; the setting up of tents, organizing the funeral procession in general, and mobilizing and keeping records of attendance, the organizational aspects of the funerary event are taken care, primarily, of by the males' *iddir*. The females' *iddir*, on the other hand, are small in size and specific in function. They are primarily responsible for the keeping up of the domestic space of the bereaved, and catering throughout the period of mourning. The women's *iddir* is a relatively gender exclusive *iddir*.

Overall, majority of households in *sefer* are members to almost all the three types of *iddir* discussed. Within a family, individuals are able to choose and become a member of any of the types of *iddir*. There are various reasons for a choice of membership, such as religious affiliation and gender as stated above, but also monthly contribution, financial status of individuals, financial benefits the *iddir* avails, and families' interest and projection of social status are some more reasons. The degree of structural and membership openness, and the advantages individuals and families seek to maximize through membership to *iddir* are further discussed in section 5.3.

A spatial documentation and/or discussion of *iddir* has not been done to date. There exist literature illustrating the role of *iddir* in urban development projects such as neighbourhood upgrading and services maintenance[255] and as grass roots mobilization in the campaign against HIV/AIDS[256], but a description of *iddir*'s spatiality has not been done so far. This may be because of the overbearing position to define s as slums, and their physical reality as nothing more than in need of redevelopment. Or it may be that *iddir*'s innate character of operating outside formal mechanisms that decrease its accessibility for research.

254 Pankhurst and Eshete, "Self-Help in Ethiopia," 360.

255 Yitbarek, "The Role of *Iddir* in Neighborhood Upgrading in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia"; Municipality of Addis Ababa, *The Kolfe Low-Cost Housing Project* (Addis Ababa: Municipality of Addis Ababa with the Cooperation of the other donors, 1968), 16; Seifu, "Eder in Addis Ababa: A Sociological Study," 13–14; Pankhurst, "The Role and Space for *Iddir*s to Participate in the Development of Ethiopia"; Pankhurst, "The Emergence, Evolution and Transformations of *Iddir* Funeral Associations in Urban Ethiopia."

256 Alula Pankhurst and Damen Haile Mariam, "The '*Iddir*' in Ethiopia: Historical Development, Social Function, and Potential Role in HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control," *Northeast African Studies* 7, no. 2 (2000): 35–57.

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                              IDDIR
                   ┌────────────┴──────────────────────┐
              Men's Iddir                              │
          ┌───────┴───────┐                            │
  ┌───────────────┐ ┌───────────────┐        ┌───────────────────┐
  │ Religion-based │ │ Generic/secular │      │   Women's Iddir   │
  │  Men's Iddir   │ │   Men's Iddir   │      └───────────────────┘
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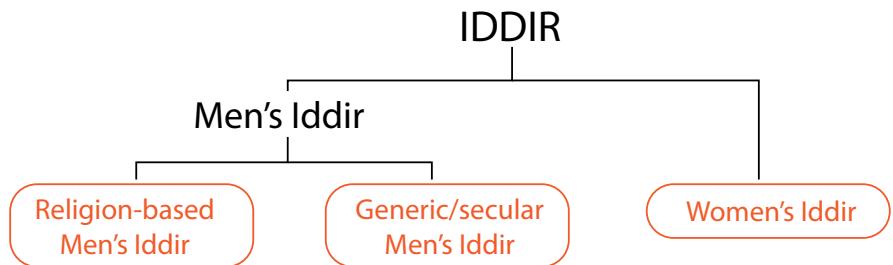
FIG. 5.1 A typology of *Iddir*.

Or it may be that the values of *iddir* in society have not been exposed enough to earn validation as spatial entities. Whichever of these or other reasons may be responsible for the lack of spatial documentation of *iddir*, the task of unearthing *iddir* as a spatial reality of *sefer* demands a framework that sets out its socioeconomic and spatial values.

A. Pankhurst remarked on the social capital aspect of *iddir*, as a feature it shares with other local organizations worldwide, but he did not expand on this notion. Neither was it clear if he intended to engage social capital theory in discussing *iddir* at all. But a much more obvious attempt was the contribution by Aredo entitled '*Iddir*: a look at a form of social capital' in which he said "[i]n a sense, *Iddir* can be considered as a social capital, because it is built upon the principles of collective action for mutual benefit, relations of trust, reciprocity, common rules (bylaws), social sanctions, and social networks"[257] Further, he presented a matrix that juxtaposed defining features of social capital and illustrations from *iddir* to demonstrate his consideration of *iddir* as a social capital.[258]

As it will become evident going forward, the leap from the sociological and economic expositions of *iddir* done so far, towards the spatial exposition this research intends to do, is well served with the introduction of social capital theory. Considering social capital theory was and still is evolving, and that there have been advancements in the field since Aredo's proposition in 2003, it is apparent that a renewed reading of social capital theory be introduced at this juncture. Thus, the following sections will affirm and further illustrate Aredo's position that *iddir* is a social network of social capital order and present, not a juxtaposition anymore, but an explanation of *iddir* through the conceptual framework of social capital theory. This will form the foundation as we bridge towards the illustration of *iddir*'s spatiality in *sefer*.

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[257] Aredo, "*Iddir*: A Look at a Form of Social Capital," 58.

[258] Aredo, 51–53.

5.2 Häuberer's formalized concept of social capital

A comprehensive enquiry into both the founders' and other scholars' arguments regarding social capital theory, to formalize and visualize the "current social capital theory"[259] is provided by Julia Häuberer, in a monograph that inspects their concepts, axioms and theorems. Before presenting the formalized concept of social capital that she forwarded, it is useful to review the main concepts and arguments discussed.

Pierre Bourdieu developed one of the foundational theories to social capital, that refers to the economic term of capital,[260] as it is read in his contribution *The Forms of Capital*.[261]

Social capital is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition—or in other words, to membership in a group—which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectively-owned capital, a "credential" which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word.[262]

In doing so, he establishes a distinction from the other forms of capital; economic and cultural. Both economic and cultural capital are individual properties, whereas, social capital emanates from relationships and "provides useful support when it is needed."[263] Some goods and services are readily exchangeable with economic capital; but "others can be obtained only by virtue of a social capital of relationships (or social obligations),"[264] which are built over a long period in the form of, for example gratitude—during which the exchange may not even be conceived or needed. The duplication of social capital assumes an unrelenting effort with

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259 Häuberer, "Social Capital Theory towards a Methodological Foundation," 147.

260 Häuberer, 35.

261 Pierre Bourdieu, "THE FORMS OF CAPITAL," in *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1986), 241–58.

262 Bourdieu.

263 Häuberer, "Social Capital Theory towards a Methodological Foundation," 38.

264 Bourdieu, "THE FORMS OF CAPITAL."

continuous exchanges, and sustained sociability, that should yield recognition and affirmation. And the amount of an individual's social capital depends on the amount of network of connections that individual can readily mobilize and the capital embedded in each member to these connections that the individual has claim to.

The other foundational introduction to social capital is by James S. Coleman, who theorized it within the context of rational choice theory;[265] in that, social interdependencies are a result of individual actors' rational choices based on their interest in "events and resources controlled by other actors."[266] He further argued for social relationships not to be seen as mere components of social structures that emerge when individuals come together to make the best use of their individual resources, rather as resources on their own, for the individuals.[267] It is this idea of social relationships as resources for individuals that Glenn Loury introduced as a concept of social capital into economics to argue against what Coleman referred to as the individualist bias of neoclassical economics.[268] Coleman also invokes the critique of Mark Granovetter[269] against the new institutional economics for failing "to recognize the importance of concrete personal relations and networks of relations—what [Granovetter] calls the embeddedness of economic transactions in social relations—in generating trust, in establishing expectations, and in creating and enforcing norms."[270] These social-structural resources are conceived by Coleman as "a capital asset for the individual, that is, as social capital."[271]

Social capital is defined by its function. It is not a single entity, but a variety of different entities having two characteristics in common: They all consist of some aspect of a social structure, and they facilitate certain actions of individuals who are within the structure. Like other forms of capital, social capital is productive, making possible the achievement of certain ends that would not be attainable in its absence.[272]

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265 Häuberer, "Social Capital Theory towards a Methodological Foundation," 35,39.

266 Häuberer, 39.

267 James S. Coleman, *Foundation of Social Theory* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1990), 300.

268 Coleman, 301.

269 Mark Granovetter, "Economic Action and Social Structure: The Problem of Embeddedness," *American Journal of Sociology* 91, no. 3 (1985): 481–510.

270 Coleman, *Foundation of Social Theory*, 302.

271 Coleman, 302.

272 Coleman, 302.

The function identified by the concept "social capital" is the value of those aspects of social structure to actors, as resources that can be used by the actors to realize their interests.[273]

For Coleman, social capital is not privately owned by any of the members of a social structure who benefit from it—rendering it uneasy to exchange.[274] It is a public good[275] that is only evident in relationships among persons.

Regarding the creation, maintenance and destruction of social capital Coleman highlights three main driving factors, one of which is stability.[276] Stability is an essential aspect of social capital. "Disruptions in social organization or social relations destroy social capital."[277] Furthermore, the maintenance of social capital demands the fulfilment of incurred obligations, but characteristically, there is underinvestment in its creation,[278] that it can only be improved through time and effort as expectations and obligations manifest only in due time and interaction.

Bourdieu and Coleman have structurally theorized social capital from two perspectives. Bourdieu's emphasis is on the individual's gained support from social relations; thus, social capital is seen primarily as an individual resource.[279] Whereas Coleman calls attention to the public goodness aspect of social capital, and that both individuals and the social structure they are embedded in reap benefits from various forms of social capital. A number of scholars have since, critically engaged with their contributions to further refine social capital theory.

For example, Häuberer discusses Robert D. Putnam's "civic perspective on social capital,"[280] that defines social capital as "connection among individuals—social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arises from them;"[281]

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273 Coleman, 305.

274 Coleman, 315.

275 Häuberer, "Social Capital Theory towards a Methodological Foundation," 40.

276 Coleman, *Foundation of Social Theory*, 318–21.

277 Häuberer, "Social Capital Theory towards a Methodological Foundation," 41.

278 Häuberer, 41.

279 Häuberer, 46.

280 Häuberer, 53.

281 Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, Revised and updated (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001), 16, http://ebook.3m.com/library/BCPL-document_id-anc9zz9.

and introduces the bonding (inward looking form of social capital) and bridging (outward looking form of social capital).[282] A bonding social capital is of social groups with individuals having similar background like gender, religion, class or ethnicity. It facilitates solidarity and reciprocity with relative ease and is most useful for "getting through."[283] A bridging social capital on the other hand, is embedded in networks across differences, characterised by diverse identities and reciprocity, and the capacity to tap into external advantages. And it "helps to get ahead."[284]

Ronald S. Burt's "network approach to social capital,"[285] emphasizes an actor's position in a network and how this impacts this actor's access to social capital. With the concept that he refers to as "structural holes,"[286]—"a relationship of non-redundancy between two contacts,"[287] he discusses efficiency and effectiveness aspects of social networks. For Burt, beneficial flow of information within a network is made possible when the network is optimized for structural holes, meaning when a good balance is set between network size and diversity of contacts—its contacts providing additive rather than redundant or overlapping benefits and bridging access to other clusters too—"the nonredundant ties are your bridges to other clusters."[288]

And Nan Lin's "resource perspective,"[289] brings forth resources' embeddedness, accessibility, and use into the discourse of social capital. He explains the success of social capital, in instrumental and expressive actions, is a result of four elements; information, influence, social credentials, and reinforcement.[290] Instrumental and expressive actions are two forms of purposive action an actor performs to either gain resources or retain them, respectively. According to Lin, the structural position in a hierarchical network (pyramidal hierarchy), location in a network (which defines strength of ties and bridging capabilities), and purpose of action (instrumental or expressive) build up social capital for actors. He defines; valued resources embedded

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282 Putnam, 20–22.

283 Häuberer, "Social Capital Theory towards a Methodological Foundation," 58.

284 Häuberer, 58.

285 Häuberer, 87.

286 Ronald S. Burt, *Structural Holes: The Social Structure of Competition* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard Univeristy Press, 1992), 18–30.

287 Burt, 18.

288 Burt, 28.

289 Häuberer, "Social Capital Theory towards a Methodological Foundation," 117.

290 For further discussion on these elements, see also Nan Lin and John Smith, *Social Capital: A Theory of Social Structure and Action* (Cambridge, UNITED KINGDOM: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 19–20, http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/delft/detail.action?docID=201839.

in social structures, similarity of resource characteristics, resources embedded in an actor's contacts or structural positions in a network that an actor has access to "are social capital for the actors in the networks."[291]

After methodically discussing the above concepts, Häuberer provides a preliminary, formalized concept of social capital. First, a refinement to the definition of social capital: "Social capital is a property of relationships among individuals that are a resource actors can use and benefit from."[292] It is thus, a means to access social resources and it appears only in networks among actors. The networks can be open (bridging), thus, more suitable for instrumental actions (actions aimed at gaining resources) or actions with competitive character; or they can be closed (bonding), thus, more suitable for expressive actions (actions aimed at retaining resources) or actions characterized by cooperation. Cultural societal aspects, such as norms of reciprocity, generalized trust and collective assets, are both preconditions and products of social capital.
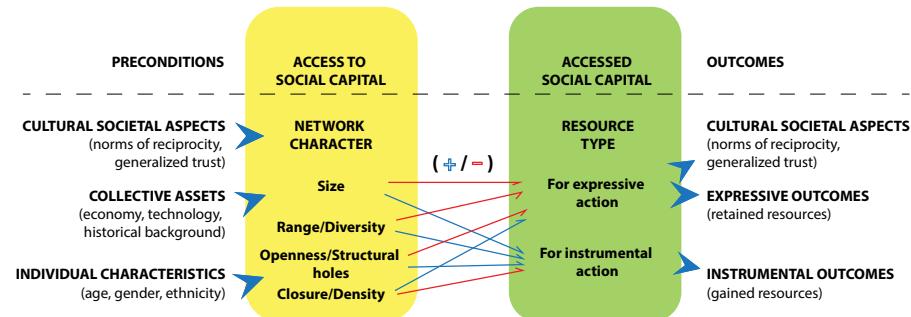
FIG. 5.2 Häuberer's visualized concept of social capital theory. (Redrawn by the author based on Häuberer's Refined Social Capital Model[293])

291 Lin and Smith, 75; Häuberer, "Social Capital Theory towards a Methodological Foundation," 123.

292 Häuberer, "Social Capital Theory towards a Methodological Foundation," 249.

293 Häuberer, 150.

5.3 *Iddir* as a social capital

"… the most succinct definition of reciprocity: 'If you don't go to somebody's funeral, they won't come to yours.'"[294]

Iddir is a result of the deep-rooted tradition in various Ethiopian communities that attendance to funerary processions is regarded as an essential event of expression of solidarity to the deceased and their relatives.[295] The processions are conceived, not only as consolation to the bereaved, but also as a display of the amount of social, economic, and cultural capital the deceased, and relatives of the deceased, as a collective, have to their credit. A common blessing among communities, as it refers to this tradition is *'qebari ayasatah/sh' (ቀባሪ አያሳጣህ/ሽ),* which can be translated as to say "'may God not deprive you of people to bury you.' Implied in this blessing is having a large number of people for the burial."[296] Hence, individuals spend considerable amount of resources and effort, through a long period of time, in building and maintaining these capital. *Iddir*, in this regard, is both a carrier of the social capital and a social capital on its own. The social and emotional benefits of *iddir* to individuals are best represented by Seifu as follows.

Undeniably the presence of people at the funeral and at the deceased's home during the few days after the funeral gives psychological support for the bereaved member and helps him to rehabilitate and repair the broken web of social relationships and prevents his isolation from meaningful participation in society. Gatherings in such cases also serve to reaffirm the social solidarity of the [*iddir*].[297]

Generally, *iddir* consists of both authority and trust relations among members. Elders, for instance, play significant role in the establishment and operation of *iddir*. This is mainly because they are trusted by the community as they have "more prestige, more influence and more say in common affairs."[298] Elders are trusted to make judgement and mediation to the benefit of the larger community. As can be

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294 Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, 18 The full quote credits Yogi Berra for this statement: "It was, however, neither a novelist not an economist, but Yogi Berra who offered the most succinct definition of reciprocity: 'If you don't go to somebody's funeral, they won't come to yours.'"

295 Pankhurst and Eshete, "Self-Help in Ethiopia," 359.

296 Seifu, "Eder in Addis Ababa: A Sociological Study," 12.

297 Seifu, 12.

298 Seifu, 9.

seen in section 5.4, interviewee AT exerts his credential as a respected member of the community to mobilize his community to form, not only one, but two *iddir* in his *sefer*. Such form of trust is gained mainly because of one's age, life experience, length of time they have been part of the community, and active participation in the interest of the community. For an *iddir* to be established, a sizable number of founding members are needed, which means, the elders will have to invest the social capital they possess to initiate interest among the community. Once an *iddir* is established, new membership is made possible through a process of vetting that fits the type of *iddir* that is established (generic, religion related, or women's *iddir*). In general, the more socially involved a person is, the more trust there is for them to be accepted as a new member. It is also possible to be accepted if a credible member can vouch for an applicant. The accumulation such trust comes handy during the daily operation of *iddir* that demands exchange of support and favours. In its structured format, *iddir* has regulations to balance expectations, obligations, and reciprocal exchange of favours. But informally, *iddir* instils a sense of comradery through social norms that encourage social relationships. Members are encouraged to visit each other and keep each other company in good times and bad.[299] All these formal and informal operations are governed by an executive body of elected officials to whom control is transferred periodically through elections and appointments. Hence, the executive group hold temporary authority, which they are trusted to employ towards common good. And within the executives there exists further hierarchy and relationship of authority based on the official positions. Considering *iddir*, regardless of successive efforts by the state,[300] has maintained an operation uncaptured by government, the trust among members is of high importance for it to survive and thrive. To this end, it is important that individual expectations, and obligations are reciprocally met. For the success of the *iddir* then, all its members should maintain active and productive engagement in a continuous manner, but the public good nature of *iddir* makes such continuous investment unrealistic. Which begs the question, what sustains *iddir* as a function of, primarily, reciprocity and secondarily, altruism?[301]

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[299] Seifu, 12–13.

[300] Pankhurst, "The Emergence, Evolution and Transformations of *Iddir* Funeral Associations in Urban Ethiopia."

[301] Aredo, "*Iddir*: A Look at a Form of Social Capital," 44. In addition, the altruistic character of *iddir* is not exhaustively documented. Yet, while *iddir*'s involvement in supporting non-members, availing membership possibilities to those that cannot afford the fees, and engagement in charitable operations and campaigns can be taken as examples, in more conceptual sense, the traditional root of *iddir* for mutual support retains a degree of the altruistic character to *iddir*.

Iddir is strictly governed.[302] There are bylaws that constitute the *iddir* and enable it to regulate itself through the maintenance of obligations and reciprocity. Elected group of executives hold authority for a term/s dictated by the bylaws, while reciprocity is maintained through trust relations among the community, including the executives. Contributions in the forms of fees, in-kind inputs, time, and labour are regulated as obligations to maintain the network at high function of reciprocity. Warnings are issued to those members who fail to fulfil their responsibilities. Monetary penalties, in the form of fines can be sanctioned against those who persist on underinvesting in the *iddir*'s function;[303] and over-persistence in such underinvestment leads to potential rejection of and ejection from membership which deprives the individual of, not only membership to the same *iddir*, but also the credibility that would otherwise be useful for them to join other *iddir* in the *sefer*.[304] If it was not for such strict governance, the maintenance of high level of investment and engagement into the *iddir* by individual members would have been difficult. Such strict governance contributes to the durability of *iddir* and nurtures trust among the community. The balance between trust and authority relations within *iddir* are different from *iddir* to *iddir*. But what is consistent among *iddir* is that their governance is "most egalitarian, broad-based, transparent, and accountable" and their bylaws embed the "principles of checks and balances."[305]

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302 Pankhurst and Eshete, "Self-Help in Ethiopia," 359.

303 As can be seen on the internal pages of an exemplary identification, and fees and fines registration document in FIG. 5.4 of st. Gabriel's *iddir* of *Serategna sefer*; fines of penalty are documented in two columns, third and fourth columns. The third columns are for fines regarding generic, unfulfilled duties of *iddir*, such as absence at monthly meetings. Whereas the fourth column is divided into three specific fines, translated from the Amharic texts as "mounting of tents,"" burial," and "evenings." These three activities of mounting tent/s at or near to the residence of the bereaved, the attendance of the burial process, and spending evenings with the mourning family are considered the standard of minimum expected obligations that need to be reciprocated among members. If a member of the *iddir* fails to attend or perform these activities as per the schedule the *iddir*'s officials set out for individual members, that member shall be indebted to the *iddir* a standardized amount as fine.

304 Pankhurst and Eshete, "Self-Help in Ethiopia," 359.

305 Aredo, "*Iddir*: A Look at a Form of Social Capital," 46.
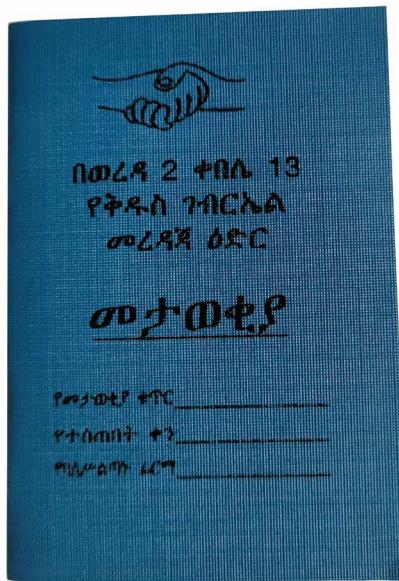
FIG. 5.3 Front cover of St. Gabriel *iddir*'s membership identification document. It is used for both identification and registering fees and fines. Text reads "Within Woreda 2, Kebele 13, St. Gabriel's mutual support *iddir*-identification document (ID)"

FIG. 5.4 Internal pages of *iddir* members identification and fee registration document. The four main column texts show date, monthly fees, monthly fines, various (specific) fines.

የቅዱስ ሚካኤል

ፎቶ

የቤተሰብ መመዝገቢያ ቅጽ

የዕድርተኛው(ዋ) መዝገብ ቁጥR _____ _____ ቀን _____ ዓ.ም.

የዕድሩ አባል ስም_____	የሚስት (የባል ስም) _____
የአባት ስም_____	የአባት ስም _____
የእናት ስም_____	የእናት ስም _____

ክፍተኛ_____ ቀበሌ _____ የቤት ቁጥR _____

ሃይማኖት _____   የልጆች ስም

፩ኛ _____	፱ኛ _____
፪ኛ _____	፲ኛ _____
፫ኛ _____	፲፩ኛ _____
፬ኛ _____	፲፪ኛ _____
፭ኛ _____	፲፫ኛ _____
፮ኛ _____	፲፬ኛ _____
፯ኛ _____	፲፭ኛ _____
፰ኛ _____	፲፮ኛ _____

የዕድሩ አባል ወንድሞችና እህቶች ስም	የሚስት (የባል) እህቶችና ወንድሞች ስም
፩ኛ _____	፩ኛ _____
፪ኛ _____	፪ኛ _____
፫ኛ _____	፫ኛ _____
፬ኛ _____	፬ኛ _____
፭ኛ _____	፭ኛ _____
፮ኛ _____	፮ኛ _____
፯ኛ _____	፯ኛ _____
፰ኛ _____	፰ኛ _____
፱ኛ _____	፱ኛ _____
፲ኛ _____	፲ኛ _____
፲፩ኛ _____	፲፩ኛ _____
፲፪ኛ _____	፲፪ኛ _____
፲፫ኛ _____	፲፫ኛ _____
፲፬ኛ _____	፲፬ኛ _____
፲፭ኛ _____	፲፭ኛ _____
፲፮ኛ _____	፲፮ኛ _____
፲፯ኛ _____	፲፯ኛ _____
፲፰ኛ _____	

እኔ _____ ከዚህ በላይ በተራ ቁጥR የሀዘርኩትን በተሰበዉ አሁን በሕይወት
ሰላሉ በዚህ ዕድR ቅጽ አስመዝግቤአለሁ። ቅጹ ከሚጠይቀው ውጭ የሆነ ዘመድ ወይም በሕይወት የሌለውን የሌስትን
አስመዝግቤ ብገኝ ዕድሩን ለማሟሟበርር በመሟከራ ተቀጥጪ ከዕድሩ እወጣዳለሁ ስለ በፈርማዬ አረጋግጣለሁ።

ማሳሰቢያ፡ ከዚህ ሌላ የዕድሩ የሥራ ይዘት ምቹ ይሆን ዘንድ ተጨማሪ ልጅ በወለዱ ጊዜ ወዲያውኑ
እንዲያስመዘግቡ እንዲሁም በአጋጣሚ ምክንያት ከባለቤትዎ ሲለያዩ ለዕድሩ ጽ/ቤት እንዲያስታውቁና
እንዲያስመዘግቡ በጥብቅ ታዘዋል፡፡

የዕድርተኛው ፊርማ _____   የጸሐፊ ፊርማ _____   የዕድሩ ዳኛ ፊርማ _____

FIG. 5.5 A standardized form to be filled by members for the purpose of documenting their family members into the *iddir*'s books. Header text reads "Family registration form."

TOC

FIG. 5.6 Front page of the bylaws of St. Mikael *iddir* in *Serategna sefer*. The text reads "St. Mikael funerary mutual support *iddir*: the bylaws as amended for the third time"

In addition to regulating obligations, the bylaws set out the rules that pertain to amount to be contributed at regular time intervals (mostly monthly) and amounts to be given out to members at the time of need, such as a funeral. As such, these amounts are fixed prior to the occurrence of risk that necessitates support. The amounts vary among *iddir* and this variation avails options for individuals to make choices that meet their desires and financial abilities. The deposition of minimal amounts at fixed intervals makes budgeting and planning possible. This in turn provides predictability of expenses for families most of whom operate with little means. At the most unpredictable occurrence of risk such as the death, illness, or loss of job, a larger sum of money is availed for the individual members. This makes *iddir* a profitable financial operation, similar to insurance, to the benefit of the individual in that "premiums are paid in a weak currency and that rewards are paid in a strong one."[306]

Following the brief discussion of social capital theory, in the previous section, a step-by-step evaluation of *iddir* and its characteristic features discussed above vis á vis social capital theory, emerges as a viable avenue to lead to an understanding of it that is an improvement to the mainly anthropological and economical descriptions provided so far. In line with Aredo's attempt to introduce *iddir* as a form of social capital, this section provides updated discussion elaborating the nexus between *iddir* and social capital and provides a new definition to *iddir* that derives from social capital theory. The main objectives of this segment of the research are thus; (1) to submit *iddir* as a viable case of social capital, (2) to contend that social capital theory provides a better avenue for the study and representation, especial for the purposes of spatial analysis, of complex social relations that exist in , and (3) to generate appropriate thematic; a focus area, for the urban, spatial analyses of complexities in *sefer*.

Iddir through Bourdieu- and Coleman's concepts of social capital

Bourdieu defined social capital as "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network or more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition."[307] As discussed above *iddir*, as a social network, requires acquaintance among members in the form of neighbourly relation, religious membership, or based on gender. These relationships

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[306] Häuberer, "Social Capital Theory towards a Methodological Foundation," 43.

[307] See section 5.3.1

are recognized through, in addition to individuals' daily engagements, the provision of membership identifying documents, as constituted in the bylaws of *iddir*. In addition, *iddir* is a highly regulated and structured institution. This contributes to its resilience, agility, and longevity. The relationships in *iddir* are thus institutionalized through membership and executive arrangements with both authority and trust-based relations among members. One of the prime qualities of *iddir* is the collection of monthly monetary contribution by individual members to the *iddir*. This continuous contribution is done regardless of funerary activities that may or may not happen at the time of contribution—in other words it is collected prior to any incident requiring support from the *iddir* as a collective. The amount of time needed to build and maintain relationships, to administer activities of shared interest, and to avail social, and emotional support needed by members constitutes the resource individuals deliberately avail through the *iddir*. Furthermore, members bring their cultural capital in the form of knowledge and skills, and cultural goods and practices into the *iddir* as potential resources accessible to members through the *iddir*. Bourdieu further qualifies the "aggregation of the actual or potential resources" as linked to "membership in a group—which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectively-owned capital, a 'credential' which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word."[308] Here, the resources of *iddir* stated above are the "collectively-owned capital" that individual members have access to when in need. The credit, in the context of the *iddir*, can be of social (such as information access), cultural, emotional, and/or financial nature.

Thus, looking at *iddir* through Bourdieu's definition of social capital which puts emphasis on the resources individuals can access in a social relationship, it can be said that *iddir* **is an institutionalized and durable form of social network of mutual, neighbourly acquaintance and recognition that is linked to an aggregate of social, emotional, and financial resources, that its members can benefit from in times of bereavement, illness, or loss of job.** Such a definition suggests that the aggregated resources make up the social capital whose exchange and transfer is harboured and facilitated by the *iddir* as an institution.

Coleman, on the other hand, defined social capital as multiple entities that characteristically consist of "some aspect of a social structure" and "facilitate certain actions of individuals who are within the structure." Furthermore, he highlights that social capital makes "the achievement of certain ends that would not be attainable in

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308 See section 5.3.1

its absence"[309] possible. As it has been elaborated earlier, *iddir* is made up of a social structure and it employs the resources it accumulates to facilitate, primarily funerary, but also other functions that individual members partake in. But for the social capital *iddir* avails, these activities, funerary or otherwise, will not happen as per the norms, and wishes of the community. The funerary tradition that *iddir* is rooted into, as stated earlier, in an urban context such as *sefer*, obliges that burial and mourning are not left just for the mourner. Even in the rare case of a loner among the community, the *iddir* is steadfast in making sure the dead receive a dignified burial. Of course, the state through its municipalities may be able to bury the deceased in this case, but the funerary function as a social and cultural display of dignity and social solidarity will not be possible. This notion is best described by an informant to this research who lives in *Serategna sefer* as follows.

… if someone who is not from here, someone who may be homeless, or if someone dies of accidents like heart attack, whatsoever the case may be, we never allowed the municipality to bury them, never! This is the value we have in *Serategna sefer*! We don't even wish for our own dead bodies to be taken anywhere else. So, some four or five women will come out and cover the body of the deceased with some cloth; we collect donations right away from everyone available, the *iddir* will quickly avail some support, and a dignified funeral will be performed by the community. We do not have the practice of allowing the municipality to bury the dead, it is unacceptable![310]

Befitting to the description of social capital by Coleman as a public good out of which both the individual members and the social structure they are embedded in rip benefits, in the case of the *iddir*, individual members benefit from the social, emotional, and financial support they gain and the *iddir* as a collective grows in size, complexity, solidarity, and financial capability. *Iddir* and the capital it accumulates are not private goods for any of its members individually, they are rather collectively owned. The understanding of social capital as a public good, and Coleman's definition of it as multiple entities that exhibit the two characteristics; social structure, and facilitation of actions by individuals within the structure, brings *iddir* to the centre, affording it the credence to be considered a social capital by itself rather than an institute for the exchange of social capital as a separate subject. It is the accumulation of resources of social, emotional, and financial quality that is referred to as *iddir* as a package, and it emerges within the relations that exist

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309 See section 5.3.1

310 For the context of this discussion with interviewee AT see section 5.4.

among residents in a *sefer*. Respondents express their membership to an *iddir* by saying 'I have *iddir*' rather than 'I am a member of an *iddir*.'[311] *Iddir*, among communities, is perceived as not just an institution but as a beneficial entity they possess and belong to at once.

On account to Coleman's definition of social capital, *iddir* **can thus be defined as a form of social capital linked, primarily but not exclusively, to funerary functions; within which mutual exchange of financial, emotional, and social support is made possible for individuals to cope with bereavement or risk.**

Furthermore, Coleman listed relation of mutual trust, authority relations, information potential, effective norms, and appropriable social organizations as "kinds of social capital."[312] This list is useful to further illustrate *iddir* as a social capital—that at varying degrees *iddir* displays all the listed kinds. As was discussed earlier, there exists a relationship of mutual trust among members of an *iddir*. This implies that a wilful participant member of an *iddir*, for instance, in the funerary procession of a deceased relative of another member, trusts the later to reciprocate and justify this trust at some point in the future. In such a way, expectations and obligations are established. While such relations clearly exist in *iddir*, their strength varies depending on the size of the *iddir*, physical proximity, and the type of relationship, other than membership, the individuals may or may not have. It also has been discussed that an authority relation exists in *iddir* as members transfer the administration of the *iddir*, to the elected few, who then temporarily possess "social capital in the form rights of control."[313] Although *iddir* are always established with specific purpose, they also make it possible for members to exchange information that can be useful to them. This possibility is thus an information potential *iddir* and its members can benefit from.

More evidently, *iddir* exhibit effective norms and appropriable social organization kinds of social capital. It, as a collective, benefits from the prescriptive nature of the bylaws and accepted norms that direct individual members to perform or behave in the interest of the group as a whole and prevent the same individuals from engaging self-servingly. The public good character of *iddir* is thus protected, as effective or prescriptive norms put individuals under considerable pressure to invest in the *iddir*, thus deterring against underinvestment.

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311 The Amharic expressions are 'እድር አለኝ/*iddir* alegn,' translated as 'I have *iddir*,' and 'የእድር አባል ነኝ/ye *iddir* abal negn,' translated as 'I am a member of an *iddir*,' respectively.

312 Häuberer, "Social Capital Theory towards a Methodological Foundation," 42–46.

313 Häuberer, 44.

Iddir's utility to advance other social and developmental objectives had been a matter of discussion among scholars for a while.[314] This utility of *iddir* makes it an appropriable social organization, in which case, it represents a social capital that produces results for the community at large—beyond its members. The appropriability of *iddir* as a social organization is an embedded social capital—a potential of *iddir* that it (as a collective) can employ.[315] This potential is of interest to the state as well, since it is apparent that appropriability is also *iddir*'s sociopolitical agency: as such, it dictates how governments engage with *iddir*.

The civic, network, and resource characteristics of *iddir*

Social trust, as discussed so far, is an essential aspect of social capital, and Putnam stated that it "can grow from two closely tied sources: norms of reciprocity and networks of civic engagement."[316] He inserted the 'networks of civic engagement' notion to the discourse of social capital, and likened it to political participation in that, local associations play an important role to reinforce democratic functioning of the state by developing "solidarity and participation among citizens."[317]

Iddir is neither territorially nor functionally related to or dependent on political or governance institutions, hence not a form of political participation. It is rather embedded in social relationships. This characteristic makes a 'network of civic engagement' as Putnam qualifies social capital as different from political participation. Different governments and political entities have for a long-time maintained interest in utilizing *iddir* for their benefit. Seifu pointed to the use of *iddir*, by the government, as channels of communication to pass "notices, information and orders" to the public.[318] He further stated that they were utilized by candidates of parliamentary elections, as forums for political campaigns. A. Pankhurst provided a detailed account on how different regimes in Ethiopia engaged with *iddir* legislatively,

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[314] Pankhurst, "The Role and Space for *Iddir*s to Participate in the Development of Ethiopia"; Pankhurst and Mariam, "The '*Iddir*' in Ethiopia"; Pankhurst, "The Emergence, Evolution and Transformations of *Iddir* Funeral Associations in Urban Ethiopia"; Seifu, "Eder in Addis Ababa: A Sociological Study," 13–14; Aredo, "The *Iddir*: An Informal Insurance Arrangement in Ethiopia"; Aredo, "*Iddir*: A Look at a Form of Social Capital," 53–56; Yitbarek, "The Role of *Iddir* in Neighborhood Upgrading in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia."

[315] This character of *iddir* has been a cause for the typological misrepresentations of *iddir* discussed in section 6.1. The application of this embedded potential for other objectives and contexts than what is innate to *iddir* should not be understood as an emergence of a new typology of *iddir*.

[316] Häuberer, "Social Capital Theory towards a Methodological Foundation," 54.

[317] Häuberer, 54.

[318] Seifu, "Eder in Addis Ababa: A Sociological Study," 13.

politically, and in development endeavors.[319] Despite continued meddling and cooptation by governments and political entities, *iddir* remained, by and large, in the realm of social relationships. Yet, much remains to be enquired into how much, the acts of political and governance institutions, have impacted the willful use, by *iddir* themselves, of their own potential and agency for sociopolitical outcomes.

Putnam further asserted that social capital can simultaneously be a "'private good' and a 'public good.'" The community as a whole, regardless of membership to a network, benefits from the investments in the social capital made by members in a group who, themselves, collect the benefits.[320] As discussed earlier, *iddir* is an appropriable social organization which members can employ for collective gains such as investing in the upgrading of local sanitary lines, or pavements of alleys. Such auxiliary works result in a collective advantage for the *sefer* residents regardless of membership to any or none of the *iddir*. Further, regular functions of *iddir* are also made available to those who can afford the monetary contributions, either in an altruistic manner or in exchange for in-kind or labor contribution. It also avails job opportunities for small-scale, and home-based businesses such as those who produce recipes for the food to be cooked at a funeral, and direct labor work for cooks, and daily laborers. Consequently, as an appropriable social organization, and in its altruistic and exchange-based involvements, *iddir* benefits non-members, thus displaying a public-goodness character.

According to Putnam, there are bonding (or exclusive) and bridging (or inclusive) forms of social capital.[321] Bonding forms of social capital are "inward looking and tend to reinforce exclusive identities and homogeneous groups,"[322] whereas bridging form of networks are 'outward looking' and comprise individuals from various social groups. The exclusiveness of bonding social capital is most useful for the maintenance of reciprocity and solidarity within the network. It allows for vital support and interdependent financing and located, small-scale market to flourish among those who are in such a relationship. It "constitutes a kind of sociological superglue,"[323] that strengthens narrower identities. However, such deep internal loyalty can harbor and display adversary posture against those outside of it. In

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[319] Pankhurst, "The Emergence, Evolution and Transformations of *Iddir* Funeral Associations in Urban Ethiopia," 154–59.

[320] Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, 17–18.

[321] Putnam, 20.

[322] Putnam, 20.

[323] Putnam, 21.

contrast, bridging social capital are beneficial for associating with external entities and gaining access to resources and information that are not embedded within one's tight-knit group: weak ties are useful for accessing assets outside the limits of one's strong ties.[324] External linkages are also capable of establishing broader identities and reciprocity. Many social groups though, exhibit both bonding and bridging properties.

Iddir are a case in point to illustrate both bonding and bridging social capital. The religion-based men's and the women's *iddir* are exclusive in character: membership is based on single form of identity, religion[325] and gender respectively. Informants, for instance, have indicated that, among different religions, there exists difference in the practice of burial ceremonies. Those who intend to maintain these traditions or be recognized among those who do choose to join these kinds of *iddir*.[326] The women's *iddir* is usually formed among women who live in a *sefer* at closer proximity than other types of *iddir* that tend to expand across the *sefer*. It is common practice among their members to gather, outside of the formal activity of their *iddir*, for coffee and engage in casual conversation—essential for strengthening bonds. Compared to these two types of *iddir*, in the generic or secular types of men's *iddir*, although there is a gender suggestion in its naming; and although there exists clear privilege in leadership and control of the whole *iddir* preserved primarily for the men in the network; membership is open to all residents in a .[327] Because of this open character, not only men or the religiously indifferent but also individuals who are members to the exclusive types of *iddir* join these 'secular' men's *iddir*.

Based on such understanding of the three types of *iddir* it can be said that religion-based men's *iddir* and women's *iddir* exhibit a bonding social capital characteristic, while the 'secular' men's *iddir* can exemplify a bridging form of social capital. It is important to note that all these types of *iddir* are ubiquitous in the s of Addis Ababa. And most residents are members to all these types, because of which a layer of bridging social capital that is above the individual *iddir* types discussed above is made possible. , in such a way, can be seen as a patchwork of multilevel exchange of social capital in the form of and facilitated by the different types of *iddir*.

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[324] Mark S Granovetter, "The Strength of Weak Ties," *American Journal of Sociology* 78, no. 6 (May 1973): 1360–80.

[325] Although religion-based men's *iddir* has a gender dynamic issue within it, similar to the 'secular' men's *iddir*, membership is open, with the only criteria being religion or religious affiliation.

[326] See also section 5.1

[327] The same is true for the religion-based men's *iddir*: the only exclusivity in membership is based on religion and not gender.

Granovetter, in 1973, uncovered the benefit of weak ties in social networks for bridging social capital.[328] In 1992, Burt argued that, though corelated, the weakness of the tie is not the cause of the bridging phenomenon of access to benefits.[329] Instead, he offers the structural hole argument which draws attention to the chasm between tight-knit network clusters, and away from the strength or weakness of the tie across them. "Whether a relationship is strong or weak, it generates information benefits when it is a bridge over a structural hole."[330] Thus, regardless of the strength of the relationship between two individuals; be it weak or strong, if they belong to two separate clusters of strongly interconnected actors, a structural hole manifests as the chasm between the two clusters and benefits are generated. If we take a family as an example, there is a redundant tie between its members. Resources such as beneficial information can redundantly circulate among members of this family. If we then take another similar family within which there exists a member who has ties with a member of the previous family, this tie is nonredundant as there is no other connection between the two families. Regardless of the strength of the relation between the two individuals from the two families, resource shared between them bridges the structural hole between the families. Burt defines a structural hole as follows:

A structural hole is a relationship of nonredundancy between two contacts. The hole is a buffer, like an insulator in an electric circuit. As a result of the hole between them, the two contacts provide network benefits that are in some degree additive rather than overlapping.[331]

As network size of a network increases, the number of structural holes increases. Burt proposes, to achieve balance between the size and diversity of a network, structural holes need to be optimized based on two design principles: efficiency and effectiveness.[332] Efficiency implies, the higher the number of nonredundant relations within a network, the greater the benefits from its structural holes. And effectiveness implies, "instead of maintaining relations with all contacts, the task of maintaining the total network is delegated to primary contacts."[333]

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[328] Granovetter, "The Strength of Weak Ties."

[329] Burt, *Structural Holes: The Social Structure of Competition*, 27–28.

[330] Burt, 28.

[331] Burt, 18.

[332] Burt, 20–23.

[333] Burt, 21.

As stated in the previous section, *iddir* is a voluntary association: individuals choose among *iddir* in the *sefer*. Usually, among adult members of a family, the choice is a strategic affair. It is customary, in ordinary circumstances, that the patriarch of the family joins the men's *iddir* and the matriarch joins women's *iddir*. Among the *iddir* available in the *sefer*, both can choose to join more than one *iddir*. This depends on factors such as financial ability, proximity to place of residence, familiarity and trust in other members and officials of the *iddir*. And it is motivated by their wish to maximize benefits as a family. If for example, the patriarch is a member of two men's *iddir* and the matriarch is a member of two women's *iddir*, they will have access to the social, emotional, and financial supports available in all the five *iddir*.

The registration of other adults in the family into an *iddir* is an even greater strategic decision. Informants have iterated the wisdom in joining an *iddir* that others in the family are not a member of so as to diversify their benefits. Some *iddir* have bylaws that limit the number of members of a family that can join them. Such rules are placed to protect the *iddir* from redundant expense as support during bereavement of a family will duplicate by the number of members within that family.

These intentional acts of moderation by individuals and families by their voluntary membership, and the *iddir* through their bylaws generate and regulate the structural holes in the network. Even though further network analysis is necessary to quantify the exchanges in social capital, and the level of optimization for structural holes, the patchwork of *iddir* equipped with articulate bylaws, and decisions on an individual and family level produce a number of bridged structural holes among *iddir* and households.

Individuals' act of joining an *iddir* immensely duplicates their access to resources. They are not only accessing the resources of the *iddir* as an organization but also the resources embedded in the networks of the *iddir* itself. Beyond the stated objectives of an *iddir*, be it funerary or otherwise, because of the social ties it is born out of and nurtures to flourish, multitude of benefits, that are not formally constituted in the bylaws, arise for individual members. Daily engagement of an individual with associates in an *iddir* make exchange of useful information possible. Influential contacts within the *sefer*, who, based on their personal resources, or social or political authority become easily accessible to a member through an *iddir*. Such social ties add social credibility to an individual which can be used both within and outside of the context of *iddir* and their operation.

Lin and John Smith offer four explanations as to why the outcomes of individuals' actions are boosted by the resources embedded in social networks: information, influence, credentials, and reinforcement.[334] Social networks expedite the flow of information. Information accessed in such fashion can thus be utilized by individual actors to take an informed choice, decision, or action. Secondly, an actor can utilize existing social ties that carry more valued resources (because of proximity to structural holes, or because of positions of authority) to influence agents who make decisions that involve the actor. Thirdly, the acknowledgement of relationship to an actor by a social tie may be conceive by organizations or agents as social credentials—a sort of certification to the benefit of the actor. The assurance given through acknowledgement to the credibility of an actor reflects the actor's social capital. And finally, social relations reinforce identity and recognition. The assurance and recognition of one's worthiness as member of a community that shares similar interests and resources provides to an actor emotional support and entitlement to shared resources.[335] The affective notion of *iddir*tegna (እድርተኛ) describes a valued relationship to a social group, an identity, and is also a declaration of claim to the resources that are embedded in the *iddir*, its members, and its affiliates, that are social capital for a member.

Commonly, *iddir*, their officials, and members perform actions that can be conceived as conservation of existing valued resources such as tradition and social ties, or those that aim to strengthen the social, emotional and financial wellbeing of both the *iddir* and its members. As a collective, *iddir* deliver on the objectives they are set up for. A funerary *iddir* for instance, provides support which can be considered as a gain for the bereaved family, and a maintenance of tradition at a societal level. Officials of the *iddir*, in addition to supervising these activities, administer the social, financial, and material resources. They also encourage members to keep up their social relationships, make occasional decisions to, for instance, expand membership, determine, or revise fees, purchase or renew the *iddir*'s material resources. Members, in addition to performing the minimum expectation of fulfilling their funerary obligations and contributions, they engage in activities that are deemed beneficial to their specific *iddir* and the community of the *sefer* at large. Lin and Smith explain these actions as purposive actions. Meaning, "it is assumed that actions are rational and are motivated to maintain or gain valued resources in order to survive or persist."[336] Purposive actions that aim "to maintain valued resources promote expressive action," whereas those

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334 Lin and Smith, *Social Capital*, 19–20.

335 Lin and Smith, 20.

336 Lin and Smith, 45.

that are aimed at seeking and gaining "additional valued resources primarily evoke instrumental action." These purposive actions allow individuals or groups to "access and use one another's resources for their own purposes."[337]

Lin states that acknowledging individuals' property right or sharing their sentiments are, for instance, considered expressive actions; whereas instrumental actions are "actions resulting in a greater allocation of resources to the actor."[338] Expressive elements are also embedded in instrumental action. The returns of instrumental actions are economic, political, and social gains. And the returns of expressive action are:

physical health in terms of body functioning and medical condition; mental health like the capacity to deal with stress representing cognitive and emotional balance; and life satisfaction or optimism and satisfaction with life domains (family, marriage, work, and community and neighborhood environments.)[339]

Iddir provide the ideal pool of individual members who have shared interests and control similar and shared resources that they can deploy for expressive returns. It is a well-structured social network into which members can bring their existing resources and preserve and protect them too. Expressive and instrumental returns in tandem contribute to the wellbeing, in many aspects of the person, or individuals in a social network.

Iddir through Häuberer's formalized concept of social capital

Based on detailed discussion of preceding concepts of social capital offered by various authors, Häuberer offers four critiques and calls for remedy. First, she warns that the conceptualization of social capital at both the micro- and macro-levels at the same time makes the danger of assuming conclusions drawn on one level apply on the other possible. Hence, she argues, the inclusion of a structural (networks) and a cultural (generalized trust, norms of reciprocity) aspects into the conceptualization of social capital separates it "both from its capital character and from the relations it emerges from."[340] In remedy she excludes the cultural elements, generalized trust and norms of reciprocity, from the social capital concepts and defines it as

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337 Lin and Smith, 46.

338 Häuberer, "Social Capital Theory towards a Methodological Foundation," 123.

339 Häuberer, 124.

340 Häuberer, 147.

solely a structural entity. Instead, considering cultural and societal aspects' role in the formation and preservation of relationships and that they are also facilitated by relationships themselves, she concludes that cultural societal aspects are both preconditions and outcomes of social capital.

Such distinction strengthens the conception of *iddir* as a social capital by itself. The cultural societal aspects are thus forming and maintaining agents that in turn are also fostered and bolstered by *iddir*. FIG. 5.2 displays the cultural societal aspects, norms of reciprocity and generalized trust, in both preconditions and outcomes columns. The cultural condition that makes funerary processions essential elements of individual and collective identity in various communities in Ethiopia provides the cultural basis for the formation of *iddir* in *sefer*. In complement with existing neighborly acquaintances and relations, this basis enables trust and norms of reciprocity to occur. Frequent interaction, such as those that happen daily among residents of *sefer*, tend to produce norms of generalized reciprocity.[341] In due process, the preconditions, cultural societal aspects, for the formation of *iddir* are thus established with the *sefer* as a host. *Iddir* eventually emerges out of the social relations and networks within *sefer* facilitated by elders[342] who possess the necessary social credentials. The elders are the initial investors of their personal social credential at the formation stage of *iddir*. The formational acts include (1) the narrowing down of items of reciprocity from general, as it existed within the neighborly relations, to relatively specific ones; emotional, financial and social types of reciprocity; (2) the drafting of bylaws, and preparation of membership registry, and documents (3) enlisting of members, out of the existent social networks, that can be persuaded to join, and (4) election and appointment of officials. This stage of an *iddir* is thus a concentration, specialization, and institutionalization of the social capital that existed within *sefer* into a focused group. It is an act of duplication of social capital for those who join the subgroup and not, in anyway, a reduction for those who do not.

Cultural societal aspects are then maintained through formal (administrative) structures and informal (communal) structures of the *iddir*. For example, officials of *iddir* utilize their authority and social credential to influence members to fulfill obligations as do elders and respected members of the community with only social rather than structural authority and influence. Generalized reciprocity entails the performance of a certain favor without the expectation of a return of the same favor

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341 Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, 18.

342 The term 'elders' implies not only age, but also life experience, educational status, economic status, and general social recognition. It is a private resource that the individual acquires and utilizes.

from the same person, rather, generally trusting that something will be done in return to a performed favor, by someone else and in due time.[343] Though the scope of items of reciprocity is reduced at its formation (social, emotional, and financial support), *Iddir* is not necessarily based on a specific reciprocity: a member does not necessarily expect a specific person to whom they provided support to return it themselves or in the same format. The *iddir* as an organization is trusted with the facilitation of the type, timing, and providers of the supports to be reciprocated. These norms of reciprocity are further maintained and reinforced by the provisions of the bylaws of *iddir*. Yet, it is common for members to informally track the overall engagement of individual members, and present individual experiences as case in points to, directly or indirectly, discourage underinvestment by a member or members. This can formally be entered as complaint in case there is significant underinvestment that invites formal attention by officials and elders in the community. As Putnam states, "dense social ties facilitate gossip and other valuable ways of cultivating reputation—an essential foundation for trust in a complex society."[344] These processes result in the refinement and growth of *iddir* as a social network, thus yielding both expressive and instrumental outcomes.

The number of *iddir* that can be born out of social relations in a certain *sefer* depends on population density, diversity among residents, and the overall age of the *sefer* (the time it took to consolidate). In general, the younger a *sefer* is, the more likely the existence of a small range of diversity among residents. Such condition allows for a few small-sized *iddir* with bonding type of relation and cooperative character to emerge. As population size and diversity increase the size and number of *iddir* also increases. This allows for bridging type of social networks and competitive characters to emerge. The differing types of *iddir* enable optimization for structural holes that arise from such competitive conditions.

Secondly, except for Lin, Häuberer explains, that authors of social capital theory overemphasized one or the other of two assumptions regarding other features of relations that form social capital. The first emphasis is of Bourdieu, Coleman, and Putnam's that "closed and dense social structures generate the highest benefit," and the second emphasis is by Burt's on weak ties. Häuberer highlights that Lin's concept includes both features. Hence, FIG. 5.2 contains a list illustrating both these aspects; size, range/diversity, openness/structural holes, and closure/density, as characteristics of the network.

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343 Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, 18.

344 Putnam, 19.

Following the discussions so far, it is evident that these are also characteristics of *iddir*. The different types of *iddir* exhibit these characters at varying degrees. And this variation is a decisive feature as to which *iddir* are more suitable or applicable for which purposive action: expressive or instrumental, thus for which outcome retaining or gaining resources respectively. For instance, the men's religion-based *iddir* is more useful for expressive actions and results than instrumental ones. But this does not exclude the possible applicability of such *iddir* for instrumental outcomes.

The third and fourth critiques by Häuberer of social capital theories are targeted at areas of future theoretical development. By recognizing that social capital theory is still under development, she highlighted two gaps: the persistent lack of discussion on how social capital can be used to tackle inequality, and the absence of concepts regarding negative social capital. *Iddir* is an informal organization in that, it remains on the fringes of formal economy discourse and planning. It is a collective act by residents of *sefer* to cope with adversities. It, at a symbolic level, represents recognition among residents of *sefer*, of shared history, identity, and resilience. Its role in mitigating inequality on a midi-level (citywide) and macro-level (nationwide) is a available area for further exploration. On a local level, it is categorized in types of gender and religion, thus prone to further scrutiny regarding social justice and equality. In addition, the potential negative effects of the use of *iddir* for expressive goals; that it can result in the exclusion of certain sects of the community presents an opportune area of study. More importantly, the advantages of recognizing the social capital identity of *iddir* to address social inequality; its agency to deploy its appropriability feature, to engage governance agencies for its own instrumental purposes (not for the state's "developmental" goals) needs to be studied. Notwithstanding the theoretic gaps highlighted by Häuberer, this much is of purview to this dissertation; the exploration and exposition of *iddir* as a viable form of social capital. Future studies are likely to unearth and discuss the inequality and negative social capital aspects of *iddir* in detail.

In summary, testing *iddir* with the different conceptual frames of social capital theory allows to locate and expand on the various aspect that constitute it. So far, working definitions of *iddir* as a social capital based on Bourdieu, and Coleman's conceptions of social capital theory have been presented separately. And Putnam, Burt, Lin, and Häuberer's concepts were used to further uncover *iddir* and its structural relation with *sefer*. Nevertheless, there exists an epistemological threshold this research is limited to. For instance, it is not in the purview of this dissertation to evaluate the different hypotheses of social capital in a statistical manner and opine on their applicability in the Ethiopian context. Neither is the objective to develop an appropriate measure; a network analysis, to quantify network strengths, and compute for instance, accessed social capital or resources.

Instead, there are three objectives stated at the beginning of this section. Out of these three, the acknowledgement of *iddir* as a viable case of social capital is explicitly argued for in this chapter. This would not be complete though, without a refined definition of *iddir* as a social capital. First, it has to be noted that *iddir* is conditioned on *sefer* and *sefer* is a hierarchically structured network of mutual, neighborly acquaintance and recognition among its residents. The hierarchy can, for example, be seen in the social network position elders claim among the community. **Iddir is thus, a form of social capital embedded in *sefer*; it appears in the structure of relations or networks among residents of a *sefer*.** Members of *iddir* are actors in pursuit of (1) emotional, and to a certain extent social, supports as expressive goals and (2) social and financial support as instrumental goals. Since, it remains embedded in *sefer*, and since its organization may result in new forms of social relations, *Iddir* has a potential to be a host structure for other forms of social capital that can result in other benefits.

The second and third objectives have implicitly been argued for so far. It will become even more apparent in the following section that, the reading of the spatial manifestation of social relations is enhanced when relations are identified through their socioeconomic value. The social capital-based understanding of *iddir*, better than purely economic (as a form of insurance) or social (only focused on relationships and practices), makes the nexus between social relations and spatial practices in *sefer*, vivid and comprehendible. The stories of residents, the spaces their practices create and appropriate, the located resources 's *iddir* benefit from, are better discovered, interpreted, and discussed once cognizance of embedded social capitals is established.

5.4 *Serategna sefer*'s *Iddir*: stories and spaces

Official, verifiable records regarding *iddir* remain scarce. This may partially be caused by the apprehensive nature of the relationship between *iddir* and the state; the fact that *iddir* remain a grass roots form of social organization despite repeated efforts by different regimes to record, regulate, and in some instances override or exploit them. In the 1940s and 1950s, the state did not have legal avenues for registering *iddir* as any form of association, and "people gathering for *iddir* could be viewed as having subversive motives."[345] Despite the Civil Code of 1960 and the Associations

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[345] Pankhurst, "The Emergence, Evolution and Transformations of *Iddir* Funeral Associations in Urban Ethiopia," 154.

Registration Regulation of 1966[346] that made it "an absolute prerequisite for the legal existence of any associations," to be registered and certified by the Office of Associations within the Ministry of Interior,[347] there remained some *iddir*, especially those that existed prior 1960, that evaded the government's regulatory interventions.[348] Following this regulation, A. Pankhurst accounts that, 27 associations were banned.[349] In November 1972, the Municipality of Addis Ababa organized a three-day seminar proposing for the confederation of 396 *iddir* into an overarching organization that would then be coordinated by a commission that the mayor would set up.[350] Post the 1974 revolution that resulted in the *Derg* regime's rule for 17 years, *iddir* were seen as "controlled by reactionary forces" and were "either bypassed and ignored, or were coopted and exploited for government purposes."[351] The government pushed on to organize communities through *kebele*, and housing cooperatives and viewed *iddir*, right from the beginning, as adverse to this ambition. Faced with the threat of HIV/AIDS health threat, in the late 1990s to 2000s, *iddir* in Addis Ababa were mobilized by the EPRDF led government and became instrumental in the awareness and prevention campaign that followed. This rapport between the *iddir* and the City Government also allowed for the later to revisit the idea of the formation of an overarching council of *iddir* from the 1970s. It conducted a survey of *iddir* and established contacts with *iddir* cascading sub-city regions, for gathering information and mobilization towards forming the overarching council. Eventually, the Addis Ababa *Iddir* Council was founded in 1997 E.C. (ca 2004/05 G.C.). However, A. Pankhurst points out that a degree of mistrust of the government persists among *iddir* and their members.[352]

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346 The enactment of this regulation came, according to Seifu, 9, as a result of the emergence of different types of associations; and, according to Pankhurst, "The Emergence, Evolution and Transformations of *Iddir* Funeral Associations in Urban Ethiopia," 155, in response to the failed attempt of a coup "against the Emperor in 1966 in which some leaders of the [Mecha Tulama] Association were allegedly involved."

347 The government inscribed that it "can dissolve any registered association and the association has no legal right to appeal against such dissolution to the court." Seifu, "Eder in Addis Ababa: A Sociological Study," 9–10.

348 Seifu, 10.

349 Pankhurst, "The Emergence, Evolution and Transformations of *Iddir* Funeral Associations in Urban Ethiopia," 155.

350 Pankhurst, 156. "These suggestions did not materialize and were taken over by the political turmoil at the time of the revolution. However, out of the 30 members of the committee most were government representatives from various ministries, and it would seem that the interest of controlling *iddir* was greater than a genuine concern with involving them."

351 Pankhurst, 156.

352 Pankhurst, 159.

Such changes in the dynamics between *iddir* and the state have made it possible for the Labor and Social Affairs Bureau of Addis Ababa City Administration to generate a certain statistic regarding the *iddir* in the city. A report by the Advocacy and Public Participation Directorate of the bureau states that there are 7,212 registered and 644 nonregistered active *iddir* as recent as the year 2021 with an estimated general capital of 4,350,803,965 ETB.[353] Furthermore, it reports that, out of 4.7 million residents of the city, 1,642,516 are active members of *iddir* with a gender composition of 1,282,064 male and 361,452 female members.

Serategna sefer is located in the *Arada* sub-city of Addis Ababa. The statistics from the Addis Ababa *Iddir* Council show that there are a total of 444 *iddir* in the sub-city, out of which 143 are registered and 301 are nonregistered active *iddir*. Compared to the 9 other sub-cities' recorded data, *Arada* is the only sub-city with the unregistered number of *iddir* higher than the registered ones. The total capital of the *iddir* in *Arada* sub-city is estimated at 64,370,000 ETB. It is a host for 65,712 male and 131,424 female; a total of 197,136, members of *iddir*, which makes it the only sub-city with a higher number of female than male members of *iddir*. In general, the data does not show the particular types of *iddir* it registered. Considering, for instance, the women's *iddir* are usually small in size and many in number, it is not clear if this documentation takes them into account. On the other hand, since the men's *iddir* are usually large in number and capital, the documentation runs the risk of having only accounted for them. In addition, except for the fact that it is the data that is promoted by both the Addis Ababa *Iddir* Council and the Labor and Social Affairs Bureau, it is difficult to ascertain its cogency.

As discussed in previous chapters, *Serategna sefer* is one of the oldest neighborhoods in the city. Within its bounds illustrated in Chapter 4 , there are seven men's *iddir* and a number of women's *iddir*. Distinguishing and recording the men's *iddir* is made easier with the fact that they are named differently, they are big in membership and financial size, they are territorially spread across the *sefer*, and they typically have strict documentation and regulation practices. In contrast, as interviewee DAz states in later in this section, women's *iddir* are not specifically

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353 "የአድቮኬሲና የማህበረሰብ ተሳትፎ ዳይሬክቶሬት የ2013 በጀት ዓመት የ9 ወር ሪፖርት: ለህዝብ ክንፍ አመራሮች፣ ማኔጅመንት አባላት፣ ክፍለ ከተማ ቡድን መሪዎችና ለማህበራዊ ዘርፍ ባለሙያዎች የቀረበ" (ግሎባል ሆቴል አዲስ አበባ: በአዲስ አበባ ከተማ አስተዳደር የሠራተኛና ማህበራዊ ጉዳይ ቢሮ, 2013) Translation: "Advocacy and public participation directorate, the 2013 E.C. budget year ninth month report; presented for public organizers, managers, sub-city team leaders and social affairs professionals" (Global Hotel Addis Ababa: Labor and social affairs bureau of Addis Ababa city administration, 2021).

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named. They are small in membership size; thus members distinguish among them based on notable names in membership such as the chairwoman, the founding woman, or by listing few names of members. Though small in size, in general, there are more women's *iddir* than men's. The identified seven men's *iddir* are *Serategna /Tallaqu iddir*, *Andinet iddir*, *Adwa Godana iddir*, *Nural Hidiya iddir*, *Mikael iddir*, *Gebriel Iddir*, and *Giorgis Iddir*.

In discussing *iddir*'s relations with the state and non-governmental organizations, A. Pankhurst depended on a story told by Ato Sahlä Maryam Dästa, a founding member of an *iddir* called *Tallaqu iddir* (the Great *iddir*) as a storified evidence of the first few encounters between *iddir* and state officials—in this case the Emperor Haile Selassie himself.

An elderly woman without relatives died. Our *iddir* decided to bury her. Being close to the palace Jan hoy [referring to Emperor Haile Selassie] was woken up early in the morning by the herald with his trumpet. When he enquired about what was happening and found out the reason he gave orders for Abba Hanna to have a tent made of *abujedid* cloth to be made for them and sent 100 birr.[354]

Informants to this research have also stated that one of the seven *iddir* that exist in *Serategna sefer* is called *Serategna sefer iddir* and *Tallaqu iddir* interchangeably. They specifically add that it is one of the oldest *iddir* in the city. Considering *Serategna*'s proximity and relation to the *Gebbi* (the Imperial palace) discussed in previous chapters, and the proximity implied by Ato Sahlä Maryam Dästa, in the awakening of the Emperor caused by the sound of the trumpet/bugle, it is reasonable to assume that the *Tallaqu iddir* in *Serategna sefer* is the same *iddir* that Ato Sahlä Maryam Dästa described.[355]

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[354] Pankhurst, "The Emergence, Evolution and Transformations of *Iddir* Funeral Associations in Urban Ethiopia," 154.

[355] Alula Pankhurst, "Research Update and Verification Request," October 11, 2022 The author of this dissertation has received an affirmation in favor of this assumption from A. Pankhurst as he responded to the question "…Since I read from this quote that Jan hoy was woken up by the trumpet, I gathered it is close to the *Gebbi*; and from the interviews I did with the residents of *Serategna sefer*, I learnt that there is an *iddir* called Tilliqu or Tallaqu *iddir*. I wanted to verify if these two were one and the same. Is it possible that Ato Sahlä is from *Serategna sefer*, or close by? Would you say my assumption that the tallaqu *iddir* mentioned by Ato Sahlä is the same as the one mentioned by my informants is a correct assumption?" Via an email, his response reads as "…I believe your assumption is right that these are indeed the same. At the time there were not many *iddir* and so most unlikely that there would be two called Tallaqu or Tilliqu and the link with the Emperor was the reason."

Serategna sefer, and *Andinet iddir*s are secular type of men's *iddir*. They have members that come from different religious, ethnic, gender, and income groups of the community. An informant from a religion-based type of men's *iddir* stated that he also is a member of *Andinet iddir* and that it offers him the possibility to associate with the rest of the community in the *sefer*; that, membership to the differing types of *iddir* gives balance to his social network.

As stated earlier, religion-based *iddir* can be implicit or explicit in the inclusion and exclusion of certain groups in the community. For instance, *Adwa Godana* (Avenue) *iddir*, presents a case wherein membership is not exclusive but by the presence of a cross, a religious symbol, as an emblem, on its documents, it is perceived as religion specific or affiliated. There exists a degree of preference exhibited in such implicit way. *Gebriel iddir*, in contrary, is explicit in its name that it is based on the Christian religion, while its emblem is a figure of two hands shaking, displaying a coming together or agreement of parties. The most explicitly religion-based *iddir* are *Nural Hidiya*, and *Mikael iddir*, an association of Muslim and Christian members of the community respectively. The earlier has statements in its bylaws that declare it to be of Muslim members of the community and for funerary and financial practices consistent to the religion. The later presents an exclusivity to members who follow the Christian religion both in name and emblem with a figure of St. Michael explicitly displayed on its documents. The seventh and youngest *iddir* is *Giorgis iddir* for which documents were not accessed by this research but since it is named after the Christian St. George it can be deducted that it is either based on or affiliated to the religion.

A membership identification and bookkeeping booklets are given by *iddir* to members upon registration. FIG. 5.7 shows such documents of five out of the seven *iddir* in *Serategna* . As discussed above these documents contain identifying names and emblems on their cover, and importantly, the internal pages show a tabulation of different fees reflecting the type, and function of the *iddir*. With a degree of variation, all the documents show monthly contributions and penalty fees for not fulfilling obligations. *Adwa Godana iddir*'s document is the most specific in what it penalizes; absence or nonfulfillment of the funerary activities, mounting of tent/s, burial of the deceased, and accompaniment of the bereaved in the evenings, usually three, that follow the burial.

COLLOQUIAL NAME OF IDDIR	FRONT COVER	SAMPLE PAGES	TRANSLATION OF TEXTS
A. Andinet Iddir			**Front Cover:** Woreda 2 Kebele 13's Andinet's Funerary Mutual Support Iddir Money collection book **Sample Page - column titles:** Monthly contribution Penalty fee Special fee
B. Mikael Iddir			**Front Cover:** Within Woreda 2 Kebele 13/10 St. Mikael's Funerary Mutual Support Iddir, Addis Ababa Money contribution book **Sample Page - column titles:** Monthly fee Accummulated fee Penalty fee
C. Nural Hidiya Iddir			**Front Cover:** Nural Hidiya Mutual Support Iddir Addis Ababa Money contribution book **Sample Page - column titles:** Monthly contribution Penalty fee Various
D. Gebriel Iddir			**Front Cover:** Within Woreda 2 Kebele 13 St. Gebriel's Mutual Support Iddir Identification Document **Sample Page - column titles:** Monthly collection Total penalty Total
E. Adwa Godana Iddir			**Front Cover:** Adwa Avenue, Central Serategna Sefer Iddir's Mutual Support Association Monthly, iddir's money collection book **Sample Page - column titles:** Monthly fee Monthly Penalty Various Penalties (for absence in): - Mounting of tents - Burial - Evenings
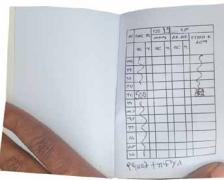
FIG. 5.7 Illustration of the cover and internal pages of membership identification and bookkeeping document of five *iddir* in *Serategna sefer*.

The most resourceful *iddir* have a meeting hall, a tent/s, cooking utensils and cutlery, furniture (portable benches or chairs), an office, and storage space. But most of them have either a sharing arrangement where a some *iddir* share a common space for gathering, or a storage that also is appropriated for an office. There are seven locations identified within *Serategna sefer* that are used as either storage or gathering spaces. These locations are considered as the main or central place of operation for each iddir. As illustrated in FIG. 5.8, *Andinet*, *Mikael*, *Gebriel* and *Giorgis iddir* share a common multi-functional space, in a triangular courtyard behind the *Musie Minas* heritage building, around which there are storage rooms. The other three *iddir* have storage rooms located sparsely. Residents of the *sefer*, when asked where an *iddir* is, point to these facilities as identifying locations.

Obtaining these spaces for gathering, storage, or office functions is a constant struggle for all *iddir*. According to informants, this is primarily because of lack of support from local and city administrators with whom they constantly negotiate. Considering most *iddir* are limited in financial means, and the city's relatively affordable *kebele* houses, are administered by the local and city administrators, and in the context of the relationship between *iddir* and the state discussed earlier; access to such facilities is usually conditioned on the *iddir*'s willingness to participate in what the state deems necessary.

As FIG. 5.9 - 5.13 illustrate, the small courtyard space shared among the four *iddir* for storage, gathering, and as their offices presents a case of mitigation of resource constraints by the *iddir*. In addition to the storage rooms, there is a community library and a community discount/subsidized shop (ሸማቾች ማኅበር/ consumers association) surrounding this courtyard. On a regular day it is used by children and youth who visit the library and elders playing cards and spending leisurely afternoons. In the situation of funerary processions, the courtyard is used to mobilize the stored materials in order to transport them to a place in the proximity of the residence of the bereaved. In a typically organized storage space, foldable chairs, portable benches, and tent canvases are placed in an open setting whereas the cutlery and cooking utensils are stored in a designated cupboard. Regularly, the customer's association's discount shop is visited by residents shopping for basic grocery items. In general, this courtyard is a functionally and socially charged space with high intensity of social and financial interaction.

**Iddir storage and gathering place
Serategna sefer
[Musie Minas compound]**

- Social gathering space

- 'Shemachoch mahber' (community discount shop) waiting area

- Shared toilet

- 'Shemachoch mahber'

- Iddir storage

- Local library

- Musie Minas residence: Heritage building, currently kebele housing

Note:

Mikael, Giorgis, Gebriel, and Andinet iddir are shared-users of this community space.

(A) Mikael Iddir Storage

(B) Giorgis Iddir Storage

(C) Gebriel Iddir Storage

(D) Andinet Iddir Storage

FIG. 5.8 An Illustration of the small triangular courtyard space behind the Musie Minas building that is considered a central base for four *iddir* in *Serategna sefer*.

FIG. 5.9 Elders in *Serategna sefer* leisurely enjoying an afternoon playing cards in the shared courtyard space behind Musie Minas building.

FIG. 5.10 *Serategna sefer*, *Kebele* 10, community library set up by an NGO called Christian Children's Fund (CCF)

FIG. 5.11 Members of Gebriel *iddir* of *Serategna sefer* taking furniture, cooking utensils, and cutlery out of the *iddir*'s storage room as they prepare for a funeral procession.

FIG. 5.12 Mikael *iddir*'s storage room. Foldable steel chairs racked (left), and tent canvas folded and stored (right).

FIG. 5.13 Mikael *iddir*'s storage room. Large cooking pots, ceramic coffee cups, steel and plastic cups, and cutlery stored in a steel-made closet inside the storage.

The *sefer*-wide locational mapping and documentation of membership to the different *iddir* is a complicated matter. Even though each iddir has clear membersship structure, households have individuals who are members to different *iddir*. Since choices are made either on a personal or household level, generating a precise map of membership distribution across a *sefer* is almost impossible. Yet, a partial mapping of the Southern and Western parts of *Serategna sefer*, shown in FIG. 5.14; a membership distribution map based on *gebbi* and households who identify affiliation or strong ties to one or few *iddir,* serves a purpose. While understanding the internal operations of an *iddir* helps to comprehend the social ties that are strengthened, such a visualization, on the other hand, is helpful to grasp the number of weak ties and bridged structural holes across both the metaphoric and real structure of the *sefer*.

Iddir distribution map Serategna sefer [partial]

- Andinet Iddir
- Mikael *Iddir*
- Gebriel *Iddir*
- Adwa Godana *Iddir*
- Giorgis *Iddir*
- Serategna sefer *Iddir*
- Yeset (women's) *Iddir*

Note:

1. The diameters of colored circles are proportional to the frequency of member households interviewed in a location (seldom a *gebbi*).

2. Households are usually members to multiple iddirs (see zoomed in diagrams A and B.)

FIG. 5.14 Map showing the membership distribution of *iddir* in *Serategna sefer*.

Funerary processions create temporary transformation of *sefer*'s spatial configuration and utility. Streets, compounds, and domestic spaces such as kitchens get adjusted during the mourning period to accommodate the cultural rituals and support needed to comfort the bereaved. The lack of planned and convenient spaces tailored for the funerary function results in the adaptation of existing infrastructure to the spatial demand of the occasion. The stories gathered through in-depth interviews, coupled with the mapping of activities performed during funerals are presented below. By responding to probing, and follow-up queries, interviewees provide personal accounts of *iddir* and funerary events as they appear in their immediate environs.
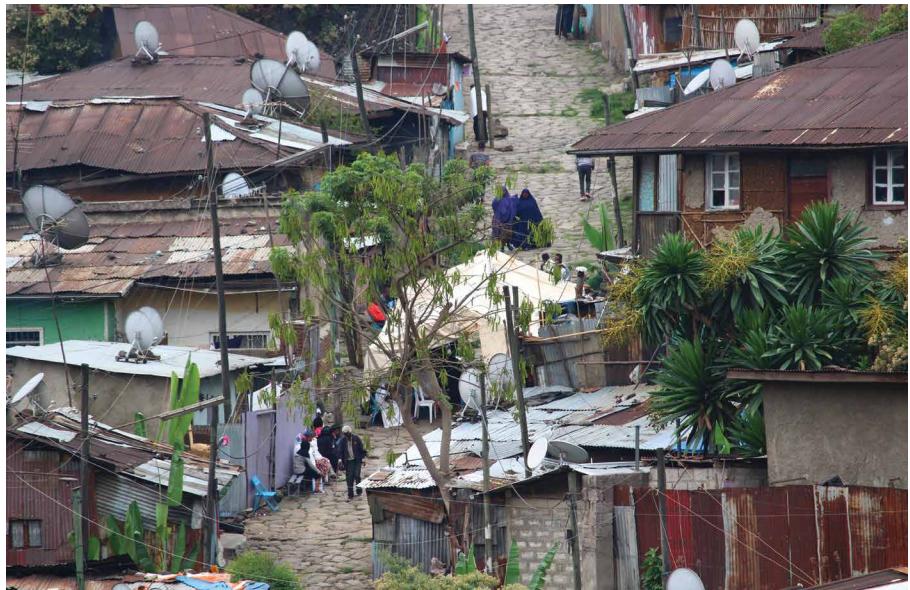
FIG. 5.15 An alley in *Serategna sefer* is temporarily blocked for funerary activities. *Iddir* mount a tent that usually stands for three days. The placement of benches against fences of a *gebbi* is an extension of the activities beyond the space created under the tent.

Interviewee AT is a well-regarded elder in the *Serategna sefer* community. As his story shall narrate, he is responsible for the foundation of two relatively young and successful *iddir* in the *sefer*. He has been dedicated in establishing, leading and seeing over multiple *iddir* for more than ten years. Currently, he engages in the administration of discount shops of the customer's association and provides advisory and oversight services to different *iddir* in the *sefer*. Two separate times of in-depth interviews were conducted to capture his story presented below.

Q: Are you a member of any *iddir***?**

Yes, I am a member to two *iddir* that I myself established. The oldest *iddir* though, the one that was established in the earlier times by people like Kegnazmach Gezahegn and Kelkile is the one called Ye *iddir*, a very old *iddir*. But recently, I have established two *iddir*, Gebriel and Mikael *iddir*. When I say, 'I established,' I mean going around and talking to people to come together and start it, that is what I did. We established the first one right after the EPRDF government came to power. Then we set up Mikael *iddir* some four or five years later.

Q: Why did you need to form two *iddir***?**

The main thing is that my social network gets wider. Getting to know the residents in the area, getting along, being there for people when there is time of sadness, mourning, things like that. So it has a wide range of use for social relations. For example I, within this *sefer*, with every part of the community and with every resident, I have great level of communication. Majority of the residents are members of both of the *iddir* that I established. You see, because of that everyone loves and respects me. That is because, first of all, it is my personal character, but secondly, the main importance of the *iddir* is that it widens my social life. That is the reason.

There is historic background in all the established *iddir*. When we established Gabriel *iddir*, it was at the time when the Derg regime lost the war against rebels in 1983 (1991 G.C) on Gimbot 20 (May 28). You see, on Gimbot 19 (May 27), the city was in such a chaos, you could not move outside of your *sefer*. There were gunshots at the *Gebbi* palace, there was shots at Jan Meda, there were shots at the Defence Ministry and military bases; it was not possible to move. So we, the residents of the *sefer*, within our *sefer*, sat down and; because it was St. Gabriel's day (according to Ethiopian Orthodox Church traditions), and the city was already surrounded, we prayed 'Gabriel, if we all make it out of this chaos, with no one missing among us …' so we said we shall commemorate him (St. Gabriel). We agreed on this. God was generous, on Sene 19 (June 26) without losing anyone among us, we feasted, we collected money contributions, we bought bread, and we celebrated that day. Then on that day, people said, this gathering should continue in Hamle (July), then in August too. By August, the idea of transforming this gathering into an *iddir* was proposed. We agreed and went to our immediate neighborhoods and told residents that we intend to form this *iddir* and informed them where to come

to register. Around the 10th of Meskerem (September 21), those of us who were already in agreement gathered, and then people flooded in for registration. That was how we founded it; thus, it became an *iddir*. Then after, we drafted a bylaw, regulations for the *iddir*, then it became formal.

And, regarding how I established Mikael *iddir*, we were part of the electoral board, a few years later, after the change of government, around 1986/87 (1994 G.C), we were registering voters, being considered as independent citizens, individuals who were not part of any political party. While on that duty, another member of the electoral board whom I was working with, said 'what are those who are not members of an *iddir* going to do?,' I said ' there are a lot of *iddir*, why don't you join any one of them?,' then he said, 'why don't we start a new one?,' 'but we have our own *iddir*!' I said, 'No, for those who were not able to join any yet, there needs to be a new one, and you are better at organizing than us, why don't you help us organize?' 'Well, go around the neighborhood and tell others, I will do the registration works for you.' He said 'ok.' Every individual who was a member of the electoral board in the area, went around and announced to the residents, and the community likes *iddir*, so they came right away. We registered around 300 people, we went on to elect committee members to lead the *iddir*, the members said, 'since you were registering us, you should be a chairperson.' I started with that role and served more than ten years. To both these *iddir*, I worked for more than ten years, and even now, I do advisory, and oversight works for them.

Q: How does the *iddir* look like in terms of organizational structure?
Basically, the structure of *iddir* can be arranged and rearranged by those who are leading it for a period that they are elected to lead it for. There are elections every two or three years, according to the bylaws of the specific *iddir*. And those elected organize as they wish, based on their knowledge and how they want to work. But, as it is a committee, it shall have a chairperson and a vice chairperson, a secretary, accountant, treasurer, members, one discipline control person, and then storekeeper, bugle blower (announcer), and security personnel for the *iddir* equipment are hired members of the structure. Those paid members of the organization may not be changed for a long time, but the committee is changed every two or three years unless they are re-elected, and they accept the role. This will then be notified to bureau of labor and social affairs (at Addis Ababa city administration), which then will write a letter to the bank, so that the new committee is authorized to access the capital of the *iddir*. But these are customary practices and not structurally bound roles within the bylaws.

Q: What forms of documentation do the *iddir* use?
We have internal income receipt, expenses receipt, every member has a membership card on which we also record monthly contributions. So, for instance, the first Sunday of every month is fees collection day, this is decided within the bylaw. So, when you go to pay, there is a records book, with rows of names, and columns of months. Your payment gets recorded on the collective book and also your personal membership card. There is petty cash at the hands of the treasurer and bank withdrawals, all these are recoded. Every year, finances are audited.

The statute also contains aspects of the activities, responsibilities, obligations and fines associated with its services. For instance, members have to be present at meetings, at burial ceremonies, night shifts of consoling mourners and the like. This is detailed in the bylaws then.

When someone dies, first the bugle of announcement will be blown, and all members are asked to come [to the mourner's residence]. To verify attendance, names will be registered. Immediately, members gather to erect the tents, bring out the necessary equipment such as cooking pots and chairs. All members take part in this task. Then, upon discussion with the mourning family, time for burial will be decided. Once that is known, based on the grouping list of members we have on our books, a certain number of members will be informed to attend the funeral on that time. On the third day, the same group that attended the burial will also collect and return all the equipment to the storage. So, there are three nights in between. If, for example, the first group was assigned from the bottom end of our list books, then another group, perhaps from the top of the list will be responsible for the first night. Another group then follows on the second night and another one for the third night. Members who were not present at these assigned times and activities are thus fined. Fines are not much, may be 10 or 20 ETB, basically as a gesture to punish bad practice. Because 'እድር ብድር ነው' (*iddir* is debt). If you provide for others, then you get to be provided for too. If the absentee provides a valid reason or explanation for the absence, then the fine will be waived.

But, if it is a case wherein the member has received news of death of a relative (መርዶ) whose burial need not happen here, the bugle will not be used for announcement. You will only hear of it via word of mouth. But there is a certain amount of money that is given to the family. When a main member dies there is a certain amount that is given to the family. And, when an offspring, parent, or sibling of a member is deceased, and the burial is expected to be based at the member's residence, there is another amount to be given. In our *iddir* for instance, when a main member dies, the payable amount is 6000 ETB. For close families at residence, the amount is 1500 ETB and for a news received from distance we pay 300 ETB. All such protocols are approved by all members in the form of the bylaws.

Q: What does *iddir* mean?
It is an Amharic word, similar to *equb*, but in relation to death and mourning. It is a social process that is used to console and support people who are in challenging life-circumstances such as the death of family members. In addition, it is based on monthly collection of membership fees.

Q: Where do you gather for the purposes of the *iddir*?

It is the place where you were a moment ago. In that specific place there is St. Mikael *iddir*, St. Gebriel *iddir*, and Andinet (unity) *iddir*. When you enter the [courtyard like] space there are walls on both sides made of corrugated iron sheets, and narrowing as you move forward to where there is a pile of items, right there the three rooms are the rooms for these three *iddir*. To acquire those places for the *iddir*, we had to struggle, gradually convincing people, it is a place we got hold of as leaders to the *iddir*. Otherwise, there is no place, on whose land can you place it.

Q: Where do you hold periodical meetings?

We gather in that same space. We bring out chairs [to the courtyard], some sit and some stand at the back; that is how we do it. Otherwise, we do not have a proper and convenient meeting place.

Q: How many members do these *iddir* **have?**

Well, of my two *iddir*, Gebriel has about one hundred eighty five members; the numbers have been decreasing recently, because some people died and some moved to the new condominium houses and left the *sefer*. And St. Mikael *iddir* had more than three hundred members when it was founded, but as some died and some left for the condominiums, currently it has about two hundred thirty members.

Q: Beyond the *iddir***'s' main, funerary purpose, are there any other functions to it?**

We have made a lot of efforts to extend the function beyond funerary activities. But the community didn't embrace them as we would have wished for. For example, during holiday times, most *iddir* around here give out money for families to be able to buy chicken. But other than that, our wish was, even before the occurrence of death, if there are members who desperately need medical treatment, we would be able to support them. What limits us is the capital of the *iddir*, since most of our members are poor. The monthly fees when we started the *iddir* are different from what we collect now. Say, when we started, when we didn't have any capital in reserve, while establishing both *iddir*, we called the community and asked about the means to manage that period. So, we started by stating 'if a person is deceased in the community, lets collect instant contributions of two birr per member; and if it is merdo (መርዶ/a member receives news of death of a relative who lives somewhere else and is mourning) then lets collect one birr per member.' [these are contributions other than the membership fees constituted]. As we proceeded with this arrangement; after a year or two, because the *iddir* were still young and weak in capital, we also started deducting from the collected funds for a funerary incident, just to save some money and build capital for the *iddir*. Through these steps, as we started to grow, we put out regulations for the *iddir* and the monthly contributions grew to ten birr per member. Gradually, after about ten years, we realized the cost of funerary services was becoming very expensive, something members could not afford anymore. Initially, we were giving out below a thousand birr for mourners and later grew above a thousand. But when that became insufficient, we raised the monthly fee from ten birr to fifteen birr; we managed somehow at the time. But it is still a challenge these days, we lacked the means to even buy some basic food items for the events. Therefore, we once more raised the fees

to twenty birr. We had to convince the community, it is basically because they lack the finances, but we managed to convince them anyway. At least now, on holidays we pay families a certain amount, and give out more than two thousand birr when there is a funeral, and a lesser amount for merdo. Oh, and there is also something called 'engida derash' (እንግዳ ደራሽ/funerary service for a person deceased while being hosted as a guest by a member of an *iddir*). We take care of costs and activities for such an event with a smaller amount. So, in this way, the community loves being part of the *iddir*. To tell you the truth, even when the government wants to order people, or inform people to do this and not do that; instead of doing it themselves and communicating to the community directly, they come and say to us 'please inform the community about this and that.' When a call comes from the *iddir*, the community quickly gets on board with it. So, the government also uses it for this kind of things. The community loves and takes care of the *iddir*.

Recently, in the past year or two, we were told the whole neighborhood will be demolished for development. Even I was chosen as a committee for this, it was a time we were in distress, thinking about our fates. Now came another argument saying 'this is an old part of the city, in cities of other countries abroad, old parts of cities are deemed heritage and retained for their historical significance. Rather by making such places centers of tourism activities, you can tell stories about the genesis of Addis Ababa through this neighborhood.' And thanks to be God, now we are told that we will be remaining in place, we are living in relief, as you can see.

Q: Are all members of the *iddir* from *Serategna* sefer or do you also …?
It is only people from *Serategna sefer* that use them.

Q: What is the source of income for most dwellers in the *sefer* today?
Well, most of the residents are petty traders like small shops and those who chase for any small work that earns them a living; some are civil servants, daily jobs, security guards, I mean when you go down and see, this is a very much impoverished community. Shall I tell you something amazing though, there was a song that was sang in the old days 'ሰራተኛ ሰፈር ወድቄ ብነሳ አካላቴ ሁሉ ወርቅ ይዞ ተነሳ' (loose translation: Once I fell down in *Serategna Sefer*, and when I got up, I was covered in gold). It was sung in many night clubs around here. So, the amazing thing is, if someone who is not from here, someone who may be homeless, or if someone dies of accidents like heart attack, whatsoever the case may be, we never allowed the city hall to bury them, never! This is the value we have in *Serategna Sefer*; we don't even wish for our own dead bodies to be taken anywhere else. So, some four or five women will come out and cover the body of the deceased with some cloth; we collect donations right away from everyone available, the *iddir* will quickly avail some support, and a dignified funeral will be performed by the community. We do not have the practice of allowing the city hall to bury the dead, it is unacceptable. We are not measured by the poverty of the community rather with the love we give to each other. Everyone knows each other; everyone respects each other; and everyone supports one another. And I have not seen a more beautiful *sefer* than *Serategna Sefer*. I have lived in different cities in Ethiopia, but there is no other that, I enjoyed life and loved my neighbors in. It is a very good *sefer*.

Q: Are you happy with how the *iddir* are now?

Yes, I am very happy ('let alone him, we are all happy.' said his wife in the background). After serving for more than ten years, both *iddir* awarded me and my wife, golden rings as a way of thanking us. Furthermore, both *iddir* have recently bought stakes, worth hundred thousand ETB each, of Amhara Bank; there are also plans to merge the two *iddir* now. That way, the capital of the *iddir* concentrates and the amount we give out for incidents of mourning will increase, especially since current circumstances should be considered; that things are more expensive now. The digging of burial grounds was about 80 ETB back in the days, but nowadays it cost around 500 or 600 ETB. So, the old amounts that we made part of the bylaws are not sufficient anymore. So, these are progresses that are going on.

Funerary Function mapping Interviewee AT

- Adwa Godana Iddir
- Andinet Iddir
- Gebriel Iddir
- Giorgis Iddir
- Mikael Iddir
- Nural Hidiya Iddir
- Serategna sefer Iddir
- Yesetoch (Women's) Iddir
- Funeral Tent Location
- Cooking Location (during funeral)
- Food serving area

Residence Gebbi
Tent Location 1 (Inside Gebbi)
Kitchen
Tent Location 2 (Outside Gebbi)
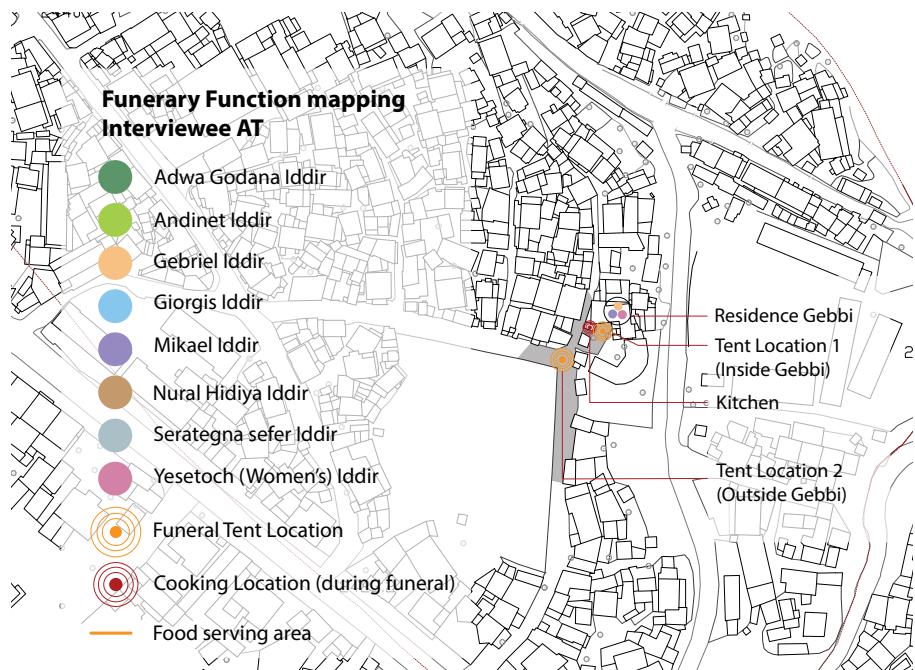
FIG. 5.16 A map showing the spaces previously used during circumstances of bereavement within AT's household.

The mapping of Interviewee AT's personal experience as he mourned the death of his two relatives is shown in FIG. 5.16. Within the *gebbi* he resides in, there are households that are members of three *iddir*; *Gebriel*, *Mikael*, and *Yesetoch* (women's) *iddir*. As the map shows, two locations had been appropriated for the mounting of tents; on within the *gebbi* he lives in, and another on wider space at the center of junction of three alleys in the middle of the *sefer*. Furthermore, since his *gebbi* is equipped with a kitchen sufficient for the preparation of food during his mourning period, additional or appropriated space for this function was not needed. Overall, because of the placement of the tents and the activities a portion of the streets shaded in grey, according to his estimation, was used as an extension for the funerary function.

While he expresses pride in his achievement to acquire the storage and gathering space at the courtyard behind the *Musie Minas* building for use by the *iddir* he is affiliated with, he complained at its insufficiency for the purpose of general assemblies of members of the *Gebriel* or *Mikael iddir*, with about 150 and 200 members each, clearly stating that the *iddir* do not have a convenient place for meetings of such sizes.

In two separate instances, he mentioned the insecurity and disadvantage of relocation through the condominium housing projects of the government. First, he made a direct link between the decrease in membership size of both *iddir* and the relocation of residents to the condominium housing projects at the fringes of the city. And secondly, he expressed the distress among the community that was caused when there were rumors that the entire *sefer* would be demolished for redevelopment and the relief they got once it was saved, credit to the heritage protection argument he had heard saved the *sefer*.

During the foundational stages of the two *iddir*, AT had invested his social capital— his credibility, to garner interest among the community in establishing them. He said it is his personal character to be invested in building social relations. And he cherished the benefits he gained in the form of love and respect from "everyone" in the *sefer*. He further explains that the main benefit of engaging in more than one *iddir* is that his social network gets wider, he gets to get along with members of his larger community—the *sefer*. Beginning with the saying in Amharic, እድር ብድር ነው/'*iddir biddir naw*' that can be translated as '*iddir* is debt,' he further illustrated the social capital nature of *iddir*. "If you provide for others, then you get to be provided for too," he said. And that 'bad practice;' lack of reciprocation, is punished with small penalty fees as gestures to discourage underinvestment.

AT is also a special case for this research not only for his role as an organizer but also because of his positional role as a negotiator with local administrators on matters of interest to the *iddir* and his community. He stated, the foundation of *Gebriel iddir* was inspired by the insecurity caused by the urban warfare in Addis Ababa at historical juncture of the country, and that the *Mikael iddir* was a result of those, including himself, who were involved in electoral works in 1994. He later explained that the government seldom utilizes the *iddir* as a channel to reach the community of the *sefer*. Regarding the storage and operation space of the *iddir* he was chairing, he mentioned that acquiring them for the use of the *iddir* took a lot of negotiation with local officials. This sequence of incidents implies the existence of largely cooperative, or at least a give-and-take sort of relationship between government entities and the *iddir* he is chairing.

Interviewee Ttn is a bugle blower in *Serategna sefer*. He is hired by four of the seven *iddir* in the *sefer*, earning a total of 500 ETB per month, to walk every alley in the *sefer*, make stops where his voice would be audible for as many households as possible and make announcements to the residents. Even though the most common announcements are of funerals for which the community has to mobilize, in some cases, announcements, such as a call for general assembly of all members of an *iddir*, are also within his responsibility. In addition, he is hired by *Andinet iddir* as a storekeeper.

… The first and oldest *iddir* in the *sefer* is called talaqu *iddir*. The second *iddir* is called Gabriel, the third *iddir* is Giorgis, the fourth *iddir* is called Andinet, and the fifth *iddir* is Mikael. Thus, their formation is basically, to live socially. When someone dies, the bugle is blown on time (announcement), members come out and erect tents, members whose turn it is to attend the burial are assigned, they do the burial and come back. I am a bugle blower (announcer), and also storekeeper to Andinet *iddir*. I am a member of Mikael and Andinet *iddir*. The other *iddir* were founded way before I came to this area after military service, since I knew *iddir* is important, I joined these ones when I arrived. I was born and grew up in Gojam, in an area called Mota kidus Giorgis, then I joined the military, and it is after that military life that I came here, joined the *iddir*, and became a servant to four *iddir*; Gebriel, *Serategna sefer*, Mikael, and Andinet *iddir*, as a bugle blower (announcer).

Q: What is the purpose of joining more than one *iddir* **for you?**
The purpose is basically to use it in times of despair, when someone in your family passes away, it doesn't produce much more than that to me.

Q: Do you have support among peers or neighbors?

In earlier times, the *iddir* used to give money out to members, for holidays, but now … that is not available … In my capacity I serve the *iddir* as it is.

Q: What benefit does it have to your family?

It is not much, about 150 ETB from every *iddir*, I earn about 500 ETB per month. I work closely with, the judges of the *iddir*, we discuss current items of attention almost every day. Now that there are condominium houses, many of those we had relations with, are now at the outskirts of the city.

Q: What else do you contribute to the *iddir*?

I pay my monthly dues like any other member. As I told you, I also work as storekeeper to one of the *iddir*. When there is a funerary even, I put the items out and when it is done, I get it all back in the storage room.

Q: What would you say should improve regarding the *iddir*?

For example, when there is a news of passing of a relative, the *iddir* gives you about 300 ETB, this is not enough to even buy beans. This needs to improve; thus the monthly contribution has to increase… What is the price of coffee today? You see it is too expensive these days. So that is the issue we are debating on these days, we even had a meeting yesterday. It is proposed now for the payable amount for when you receive news of a relative passing up to 1000 ETB, and when a member dies for that amount to be 10000 ETB. We have decided now on these amounts and the monthly contribution by members to become 50 ETB. We also asked, yesterday, to be relieved of our duties as a committee, but the assembly insisted we remain, and we accepted in the end. If the community says it then, you cannot do away the community, so you accept.

Q: How close are you with the leaders of the *iddir*? **And do you trust each other?**

I am close with them because I work with them. And trust is necessary, so we do trust each other. In addition, everything is done on account of receipts, income or expense, all is accounted for, thus we don't have much problem regarding that.

Q: What exactly do you do on your job as announcer?

Well, I go around the *sefer*, alley by alley, there is not much to it really. You go around the *sefer*, blow the bugle [inform the residents the identity of the deceased and what is to be done as a community], then you go with the community members to put up tents. The activities then are, to set up the tent [at or close to the house of mourners], second is conducting the burial procession, followed by accompanying the mourners in the evening, the *iddir* portions and assigns the tasks among members. Members who did not perform the assigned tasks get fined, and those who keep behaving against these norms for a continued period of time, may even be expelled from the *iddir*.

Ttn, has four types of relationships with six *iddir*: he is a bugle blower to four *iddir* (*Gebriel*, *Serategna sefer*, *Mikael*, and *Andinet iddir*s), a storekeeper to *Andinet iddir*, a regular member to *Mikael* and *Andinet iddir*, and tangentially related to *Giorgis* and a women's *iddir* through his wife's membership to the latter two. He explains, at an occurrence of a funeral in his household, all these relations were mobilized to support his family. This also meant the space needed for the mounting of a tent and the overall function of the funeral was expansive. Thus, the tent got erected at a junction of three roads where the layout allowed for a better space than anywhere close to the *gebbi* he resides in. The cooking activities were also performed at two different kitchens in other *gebbi*, and one make-shift kitchen along the alley between the erected tent and his residence.

From the clusters of social networks that Ttn is affiliated to, and his role, and activities being non-redundant within each network; it can be said that he has high level of positional social capital. He is well informed of happenings across many *iddir* in the *sefer*. He understands the *sefer* both in spatial and social aspects as he physically and socially navigates the larger *sefer* ensemble. His position at multiple structural holes makes him one of the wealthiest persons in personal and carried social capital.

Ttn also stressed the importance of trust and how it is maintained through cordial relationships among the officials of *iddir*, and highlighted the importance of the financial documentation, sanctions, fines, and the possibility of expulsion for repeated disregard for the setout norms, as essential tools to maintain trust through mechanisms of accountability.

Funerary Function mapping Interviewee Ttn

- Adwa Godana Iddir
- Andinet Iddir
- Gebriel Iddir
- Giorgis Iddir
- Mikael Iddir
- Nural Hidiya Iddir
- Serategna sefer Iddir
- Yesetoch (Women's) Iddir
- Funeral Tent Location
- Cooking Location (during funeral)
- Food serving area

Residence Gebbi
Shared Kitchen 1
Shared Kitchen 2
Shared Kitchen 3
Tent Location
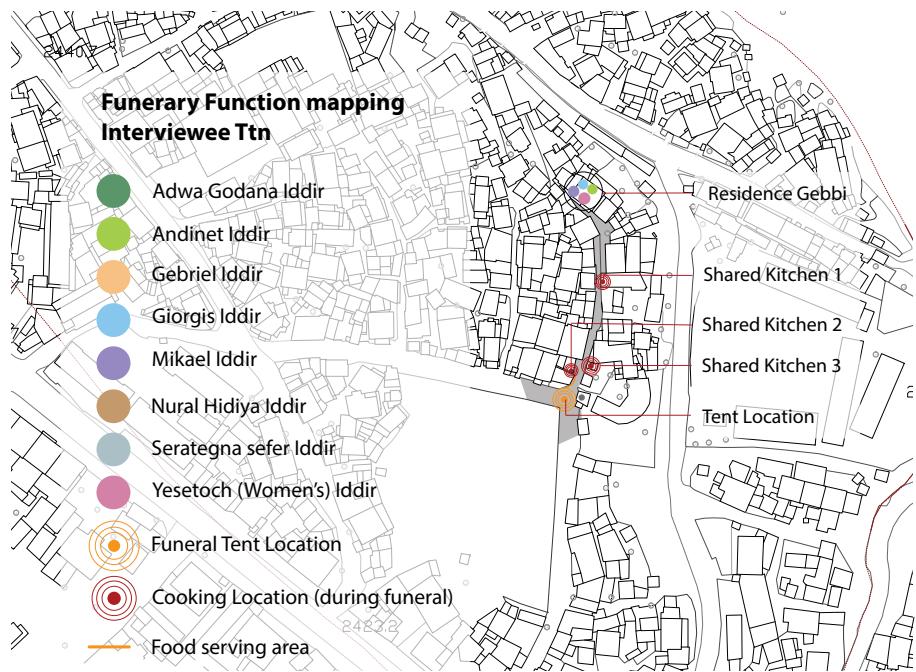
FIG. 5.17 A map showing the spaces previously used during circumstances of bereavement within Ttn's household.

Interviewee HT is born and raised in *Serategna* . She is currently living in a *kebele* house she has inherited from her parents. Being young and actively engaged in women's *iddir*, while being a member of Adwa Godana *iddir*, she presents a detailed accounts of the women's *iddir* operations as follows:

Q: How many *iddir* are there in setategna sefer?
Let's see, there is Adwa Godana *iddir*, *Serategna sefer iddir*, Gebar *iddir*[356], there is Mikael, Gabriel, Ato Taye *iddir*[357], let's say, I know at least six or seven *iddir* in *Serategna sefer*.

Q: Which *iddir* are you a member of?
I am a member at Adwa Godana *iddir*. It used to be called Ato Sihne *iddir* in earlier times, named after the man who founded it, but now it is called Adwa Godana. The elders of that time have passed now, there are children and grandchildren now a days. I also inherited my father's house and *iddir* too.

Q: Why did your father choose to join this specific *iddir*?
That is because the members then were his friends, they were of similar age, so he joined them. All of them have passed away now.

Q: Are you also a member of another *iddir*?
Yes, I have women's *iddir* membership too. Similarly, the members were our mothers, now they are all gone, and we the children and grandchildren have inherited what they left us. My neighbors … are also part of it, almost every one of us are members through our mothers. So, the two *iddir*; Adwa Godana and Yeset (women's) are the ones I am a member of.

Q: What is the benefit of being a member to more than one *iddir*?
You see, in times of sorrow, for example my brother died recently. When I left for work in the morning, he was quite healthy, when I returned, he was feeling low [and passed abruptly]. So, in that situation, I didn't know what to hold on to. But my *iddir*tegnas (people of the same *iddir* as one), bought everything that was necessary and took care of me during that mourning period. This is what *iddir* is useful for. You may have money in the bank, but the *iddir* swiftly come to your aid better, they clean and dust off your house, especially the women's *iddir* is quite useful in this regard, better than the Men's *iddir*.

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356 This *iddir* is from a neighboring *sefer* called Gebar *Sefer*, thus does not fall within the category of *iddir* in *Serategna sefer*. Yet, considering interviewee HT lives on the Eastern part of *Serategna sefer*, it is understandable for her to be aware of it being in the vicinity.

357 This name of an *iddir* needed a follow up clarification but based on HT consistent reference to old names of an *iddir*, especially in relation to their founders, as in the case of Adwa Godana *iddir*, it is possible that this is also a similar case for which a recent name needs to be found out.

Being a member to more than one *iddir* is helpful. Different *iddir* have different types of resources. For instance, one *iddir* may have its own tent, and the other has other things like cooking items. So, to make the most of this situation, you decide to be a member of both *iddir*. The other factor for being a member of multiple *iddir* is the money that is paid to individuals who are mourning. May be one *iddir* pays a certain amount and another one pays another amount, being a member to both offers the possibility to earn larger than what one would earn from just one membership. And the third reason is the accompaniment at nights, members of one *iddir* stay over for, maybe, one night and the others will come the next one. Thus, to have as many a number of people accompanying you on the first difficult days of a loss of a dear one is an advantage. Nowadays, this reason is not very prevalent because of inflation.

Q: What happens on these nights?
You basically accompany those that are grieving, console them. There may as well be some consolatory preaching from scripture. It is mainly to not let the grieving individual be alone and that they remain accompanied. But I oppose this practice nowadays, because it has become expensive to feed those who stay the nights. But the practice perseveres regardless.

Q: Is it also the same in women's *iddir*?
Yes, it is, there are some who join two or three. Because, if, for example, one *iddir* caters for the first three days, then the others will come the following day or two. Similar to the men's *iddir*, the money is also an incentive.

Q: What is the difference between men's *iddir* and women's *iddir*?
Women's *iddir* provides spices, lentils, shiro, berbere and such food items. It also prepares the food, cleaning the vicinity and the like. Men's *iddir*, it just provides the money, chairs and they are gone, whereas the women's *iddir* takes over your domestic work with sensitivity to your in-house privacy and stays close to the mourners. For example, when I was grieving, since the loss of my brother was quite sudden, I didn't have my house kept up to have people over—I was not ready. But the women's *iddir* came in, put me and my family to the side and took over all the domestic work. So, all that is covered by my *iddir*, my neighbors, my mother's *iddir*. They clean your house and everything. Even if you don't have money at the moment, or anything else, the *iddir* covers for you. The women's *iddir* thus, makes coffee, prepares lunches, wash dishes and so on. There is also something called yeélet (daily, implying a daily schedule), everyone appointed by the *iddir* to be there will be there to work and accompany the mourners. Even if there is a cook to prepare the main food, the rest of the task is taken care of by the hosting of the community at the location. After the first day, a list of names and hours of the day is posted. This is for members who are supposed to be at the mourner's residence at what time of the day. The day is divided by hours. The morning shift is from 7:00am till 2:00pm, the afternoon shift is from 2:00pm till 6:00pm, then the evening is from 6:00pm on. Thus, through these shifts members will be on duty.

Q: Which *iddir* is close to you, the men's or women's?

The women's one is closer. Indeed, the men's *iddir* pays more. Women's *iddir* pays a small amount. For example, for my brother's funeral, the women's *iddir* gave me 800 ETB, including the injera and all. The men's *iddir* gives out membership books for record keeping of individual members. My women's *iddir* does not have a membership book, but a friend living in another area has told me her women's *iddir* gives out membership book.

Q: With whom, among members to your *iddir*, do you have close connection with?

My neighbor over there, you see, we grew up together and we all inherited the *iddir* from our mothers. Both her parents died, as did mine, too. I was living somewhere else before they passed. But I moved back right after their passing. Since then, I was able to host weddings of my siblings in this exact house.

Q: What do you contribute to the *iddir*?

There is the regular monthly fee that I contribute. There is also something called special fees that we contribute, right on the day, when someone dies in the neighborhood. It used to be 25 ETB, but now that things are much expensive, the special fee contribution has also increased. In general, the *iddir* provides for the food items needed. In earlier times, it used to avail lentils, shiro, berbere, and even mattresses and blankets too. The *iddir* was well organized and equipped with all necessary items. But when the news of possible demolition of the *sefer* came to us, we decided to disband the items reserved for emergency among members and closed the storing functions. Now we only store large utensils for cooking. So now a days, we do the fees collection as I said, and provide what is necessary for three days of the mourning process.

Q: What other specific responsibilities do you have …?

We work in cooperation. The members are quite young nowadays, they are all good people. You would really like them, they have love. So, we gather and share the works together, there are also machines that help reduce the burden of large-scale cooking, such as the onion grinder. We also have a cooking lady. The cook gets the benefit of the *iddir* like any member, but she is relieved of contributions in money because she contributes through the labor of cooking at all funerals. She has moved out of the *sefer* to a condominium in the outskirts. She cooks for other events like weddings too, and since we like her work, we like keeping her in the *iddir*.

Q: Are there any things you would like to see improve in the *iddir*?

For example, there is a bit of lack of urgency in picking up responsibilities. It is not a major problem, and we do not see it as a challenge. But we discuss about it. Just recently, an elderly woman passed away. After the funerary process was done, the daughter of this elderly woman raised complaints about the service the *iddir* provided. We had a gathering and discussed it. Sometimes there is carelessness among members, this raises dissatisfaction for members and becomes an issue of discussion like this one. Well, it is a process.

The other issue is money capital. We usually gather money impromptu because we do not have a capital to rely on. Our treasurer makes phone calls and asks for the special fees to be collected from everyone. This is tedious process. If we, at least for one year, make larger monthly contributions, to strengthen the capital, then it will even give us the ability to store some items so that we avoid the inflationary cost of goods. This was all how it was in earlier times, but once they told us the *sefer* was planned for demolition that all went down. So, we need to build that capacity again. For example, just recently, we had a funeral, but there was no wheat! What you buy for 25 ETB today will be 30 tomorrow. Had we had a reserve capital, then we can purchase some of these items in bulk and store them for such situations. Our mothers used to do it like that, they used to gather all together and prepare all the spices, purchase what might be needed and have them stored. In my sister's *sefer*, they do it just like our parents used to do it. They rent a storage and store all that is needed. They don't go to the market on the day of the incidents. Of course, this is part of the fact that we are poor. But there is a practice in the men's *iddir* called Diggoma; when too many funerals happen the *iddir*'s capital gets weakened and to replenish this capital we do diggoma. The regular monthly fee for the men's *iddir* is 50 ETB and it is 20 ETB for the women's *iddir*. But for diggoma, the amount is raised to, may be 100 ETB for six months that follow. Now, if we do the same to the women's *iddir* and make the fees, for example 50 ETB, for a certain period of time, that will really improve the *iddir*. We are discussing these ideas nowadays.

The *gebbi* HT resides in is elevated from the main street by over two meters; and it is accessed through a sloped and stepped ground. It has a relatively bigger courtyard space than other neighboring *gebbi*. This courtyard space, according to HT, was utilized by her family funerary functions. In a rather recent incident of the funeral for her brother, she stated that the tent was mounted rather on the main street (outside her *gebbi*) as indicated in FIG. 5.18. The kitchen that she shares, on a daily basis, with other residents of the *gebbi*, was sufficient for the cooking activities during this funeral.

HT stated that she has inherited membership to the *iddir* from her parents. This highlights the quality of *iddir* that social credit can be transferred; but within the condition that the beneficiary is related to the owner but also exhibits the necessary individual characteristics to be accepted as a legitimate member. Some *iddir* place a condition in their bylaws that membership is only limited to a certain number of individuals per family, may even be just one. This is done in order to conserve resources that may otherwise be expendable to multiple members of a family that mourn a loss simultaneously. HT's cherished inheritance of her parent's social credits lays such a condition.

HT also succinctly stated three main advantages to being a member of more than one *iddir* in a *sefer*. The first is access to material resources that different *iddir* may possess, such as tents and mattresses. The second is the financial benefits that are increased with membership to multiple *iddir*. And thirdly, she discussed the emotional support, especially in the first few days of loss of a loved one, she described based on her own experience. She said all these three advantages also apply when choosing to join more than one women's *iddir*. She further provided that the women's *iddir*, in comparison to the men's *iddir*, is a more intimate and helpful *iddir* in both emotional and labor aspects. According to her, while the men's *iddir* provides larger sum for funerary functions, the women's *iddir* is more privacy compatible and invests more time to care for the vulnerable mourners.

Similar to interviewee AT, HT is concerned about the instability caused by the plan by city administrators to demolish her *sefer*, as it resulted in social and financial precarity of *iddir*. Based on her experience in the women's *iddir*, she explained that prior the rumor of such plans, the *iddir* had organized storage of grocery items that are needed for cooking functions of the *iddir*. And that, once they became aware of the relocation, they disbanded this storage and opted for impromptu contributions at the moment of bereavement. This has caused vulnerability and unwanted expenses that the women's *iddir* otherwise would have been able to avoid through prediction, planning, and storage.

Funerary Function mapping Interviewee HT

- Adwa Godana Iddir
- Andinet Iddir
- Gebriel Iddir
- Giorgis Iddir
- Mikael Iddir
- Nural Hidiya Iddir
- Serategna sefer Iddir
- Yesetoch (Women's) Iddir
- Funeral Tent Location
- Cooking Location (during funeral)
- Food serving area

Shared Kitchen

Tent Location (Outside Gebbi)

Tent Location (Inside Gebbi)

Residence
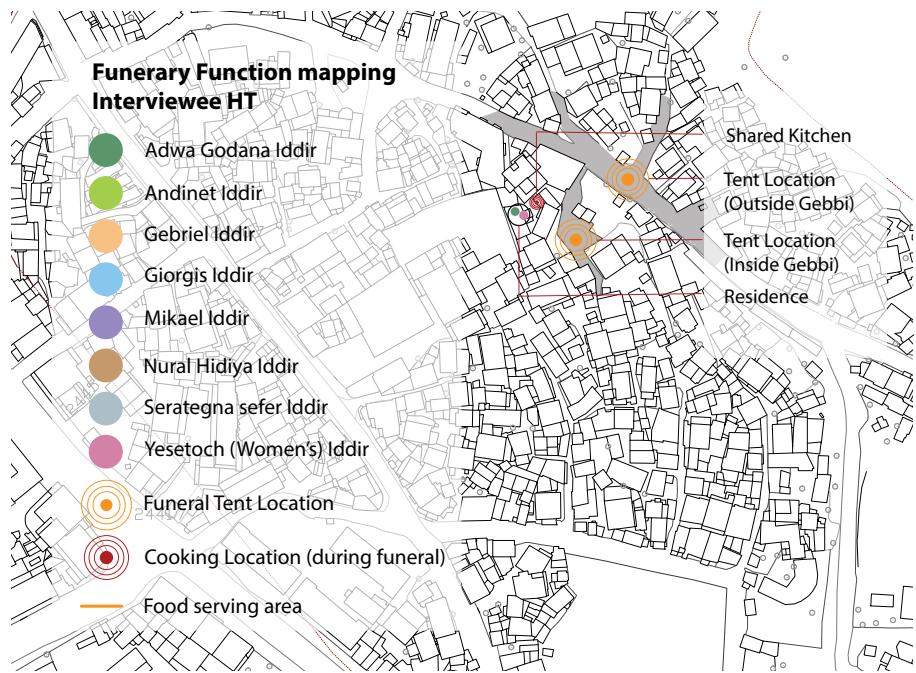
FIG. 5.18 A map showing the spaces previously used during circumstances of bereavement within HT's household.

Interviewee DAz is an elderly, community leader in *Serategna sefer*. She is well regarded among *Serategna sefer* community as a founding member of a few women's *iddir*. Currently, she is a chairwoman to one of these *iddir* she helped establish. As her story below reveals, at the time of this interview, she carries sorrow from the death of her daughter and feels uneasy about changing demography within the *iddir* she is leading. Her experience and leadership position among women in the neighborhood makes her an important informant to this research.

Q: Which *iddir* are you a member to?
I am a member of several *iddir*; Gabriel *iddir*, Tallaqu *iddir*, also called *iddir*, an *iddir* at Atkilt *Tera* (vegetable market), and a women's *iddir* here.

Q: Why did you become a member to all of these *iddir*?
Just one *iddir* is not enough. The money I get from just one *iddir* is not enough, but if I have more then I will have access to more money and that is important. In earlier times, what you get from one *iddir* was quite small, these days you can collect about 2000 or 3000 ETB from just one *iddir*. Earlier it was about 400 or 300. So, the *iddir* at *Atikilt Tera* gives out more that 5000 ETB even in earlier times, it gives out good money. The ones in our *sefer*, they used to pay small amounts but these days they give out even 3000 or 4000. This helps cover expenses during mourning times. Every month we gather at the St George church to pay our monthly contributions. When something bad happens, the Chairman and Secretary of the *iddir* come with the money to the residence of those mourning.

Q: What kind of role do you play in *iddir*?
I have a women's *iddir* and I am a judge/chairwoman of it.

Q: What is the name of this women's *iddir*?
There is no name for women's *iddir*, it is just called yeset (women's) *iddir*. It has a small membership size, may be 20 or 30 women is optimal membership size. My role as judge (chairwoman) of our *iddir* is thus, to allocate resources on funeral events, and general monthly expenses, follow up on treasurers and storekeepers' duties on collection, deposition, withdrawal, and expenditure of money from the *iddir*'s account. I also assign members' to be of service to mourners in shifts. For example, I will ask five women for today, and another five for tomorrow to be at the service. Based on the relationship of the deceased to the member, if it is a child, a spouse, a sibling, or members themselves, I decide on the amount to be given to the mourning member or family. All the funerary service is taken care of by this amount.

Q: What is the difference between women's and men's *iddir***?**

Men's *iddir*, early in the morning announces, meaning blows the bugle, the news of death and the family of attention. It deliberates on the time of burial with the family, usually at 12:00 or 3:00 pm. It also allocates and brings out the necessary amount of cooking tools, erects tents, and arrange the chairs. It plans and coordinates the funerary journey to church, either Giorgis (St. George) or Qechene Medhanealem church, and back to the *sefer*. All men and women members of the men's *iddir*, except for women who are on domestic work duty assigned to them by the women's *iddir*, attend the funeral. And after three days, it takes down the tent.

Women's *iddir*, is informed, early in the morning, of details of the occurrence of death. Right away, it heads to the kitchen, purchases food items and groceries, and the cooking starts immediately. Thus, lunch will be served on time. This catering continues the next day. Women's *iddir* supports both with money and domestic work. In the old days, women's *iddir* used to store cooking recipes such as grains and spices but now a days it has stopped.

Overall, the men's *iddir* contributes with the larger money and the funerary process. But the women *iddir* is more laborious. The domestic work must start at the earliest possible time, and it continues until the end of the mourning period. It has less capital than the men's *iddir* but it invests higher labor towards the mourning process.

Q: Who among *iddir* **members do you have strong relationship with?**

Well, among the women in this area, if anything worrisome happens, we come together … but I do not have dependable people around me as I used to in the old days. Some got the housing lottery and left the *sefer*, those who were dependable and well to do, have died. I, now, do not have strong relations with whom I confide with, as I used to, but I still manage as it is.

Back then, I had such fine women who were my friends. There was a lady just in front of here, her name was Asegedech; she has passed away now. And below here, over there was a woman called Kittenesh, gentle like a mother to me and my children, she practically raised them. She has also died. All these, three or four, friends of mine had properties. If I had important guests visiting at my house, I had everything around me to host them properly. If I got ill, they would take care of my family, bathing my children, feeding the family, all of that is gone now. On top of that, my daughter, on whom I deeply rely on, has recently passed away and I still suffer from that loss. I do not have people that I rely on these days; people who can speak on my behalf, those who can be my support in the *sefer*.

Q: Since when have you been a chairwoman of the *iddir***?**
When the *iddir* got established, there were important women such as Asegedech and an elder woman W/ro (Ms.) Mulu, who were leading it. As they get older and some eventually died, about seven years ago, the members said we should have a surviving elder woman as a chairperson, and they elected me. There are some who have recently moved into the *sefer* and have become members. I have appointed a couple of them, like Seble, to be store and bookkeepers now. [Compared to] the capital we had, and the members from as far as Arsho area, we are weaker now. We have some members from faraway places too: those who were living here but eventually moved out. For example, a woman called Birke, who lived at the library area, has moved to an area called Lege Dhadi. Even from as far place they are living at, they come here for the *iddir* gatherings. For those members, labor work is not provided. The monthly contributed money is portioned to them when they are in need.

DAz is a member of *Tallaqu/Serategna sefer iddir* and *Gebriel iddir* from within *Serategna sefer*. She also mentioned membership to another *iddir* at *Atikilt Tera*. *Atikilt Tera* is a vegetable marketplace in close proximity to *Serategna sefer*. It is not clear if this is an *iddir* with members who live in and around the market or if she is referring to a transposition of *iddir*; a form of association among traders that work at the market. It is even more unclear if she chose it for its proximity to *Serategna sefer* or because she owns a shop at the market. But it is clear that it is a funerary association much similar to the other *iddir* in *Serategna sefer*, with better financial standing than the *iddir* she is a member of.

The residence DAz lives in is accompanied by a small compound which makes it insufficient to host large gatherings in such cases as a funeral. Hence, the tent for the funeral of her daughter was set up in a distant location where four streets converge. She neither had sufficient cooking facility within her *gebbi* that fits the demand of the funerary service. Hence, a temporary kitchen that was setup on an alley that provides access to her residence, and a shared kitchen in another *gebbi* in the *sefer* were used for the service.

In discussing the operations of the men's *iddir*, she states that *Serategna sefer iddir* members gather, monthly, on the grounds of St. George church; 0.7 kilometers away from *Serategna sefer*. And that burials are customarily done at the cemeteries of either the same church or *Qechene Medhanealem* church which is 3.2 kilometers away. It is common for Christian members of the *iddir* in *Serategna sefer* to perform burials at these two locations. Similar to what HT stated earlier, DAz mentions that the women *iddir* used to own or rent storage spaces for the storage of cooking ingredients and cereals, but that, this is no more the custom.

At the foundational stage of the women's *iddir* that DAz is a chairperson of, her neighbors and friends, with whom, she reminisces, to have had a tight relationship with, were the designated leaders. They brought their individual social capital to establish the *iddir*. Even though, she is the chairwoman of this *iddir*, she has complaints regarding trust and affective relations in the changing demography of the *iddir*. It is apparent that she is experiencing shrinkage of her social capital due to natural phenomena, such as in death of contacts, evolutionary phenomena, in the case of the emergence of new age and social groups in the network, and governance related phenomena, in the case of those who got relocated out of the *sefer* through government housing programs. It is also apparent from testimonies of her current contacts, and the fact that they elected her to chair the *iddir*, that she is trusted by members of the *iddir*. Within a network, individuals may experience increase and decrease of their social, positional capital. With the phrase "I still manage as it is," and the detailed accounts of her role and actions based on her position in the social network, she expresses, despite of the vulnerability she feels, associating with her neighbors through the *iddir* remains valuable to her.

FIG. 5.19 A map showing the spaces previously used during circumstances of bereavement within DAz's household.

Interviewee AbFe is the chairperson of a Muslim-religion-based men's *iddir* in *Serategna sefer* called *Nural Hidiya iddir*. He is also an active member of the community as his involvements at various social and spatial developments suggest. Both in name and practice, the *iddir* he chairs is exclusively based on a religion. As seen in his story below, he makes distinction between the exclusive character and the expressive or bonding purposes of the *iddir*; and explains the bridging opportunity other secular forms of *iddir* provide.

Q: When was your *iddir* established?
In 1996 E.C (2003/04 G.C.)

Q: How many members does it have?
About a hundred and ninety-six

Q: How is the *iddir* set up, is it exclusive to the Muslim …?
Well, basically the *iddir* is not just for the sake of specifying it on religion and to separate from the community. Sheria law has its communal guides, we just wanted to abide by those. Otherwise, there is no intention to separate. For example, there is an *Iddir* called Andinet which we are a member of too, together with our Christian neighbors. But [this *iddir*] differs in that, for burial, there is a Sheria law that we need to follow, that's basically why. So, I have the Andinet *iddir* as well us this (Nural Hidiya *iddir*) memberships. Be it for burial or support we need the social life, Andinet *iddir* is thus our choice for relationship with our community.

Q: Where do you store your items, and hold gatherings?
For our items, we asked for cooperation from wereda 10, and they gave us a storage place just above Arsho clinic.

Q: Can you say more about your *iddir*?
Our *iddir* collects the highest amount from individual families than other *iddir* in the *sefer*, we have recently increased the amount as well. Because the price of food items such as grains and legumes has increased. Now members pay fifty birr per month. Since our previous amounts are not anymore sufficient help, we all agreed to increase the individual contributions as well as the payable amount to grieving members.

Q: Among members of the *iddir* who do you have a strong relationship with?
I socialize with everyone. I am the chairperson of this *iddir*. For example, even outside of *Serategna Sefer* , I am the chairperson of a council of *iddir* in the locality that includes *iddir* such as Afework Menged, Adwa Godana, Asir Dereja, Genete Tsigie, Yeshufer *iddir*, and also another *iddir* called Andinet, across the street but a namesake to the one within our *sefer*. We all work in collaboration, and I thus have a range of connections across the area.

Q: What is your specific role in the idder then?
I am the chairperson, it used to be called 'Dagna' (Judge), but nowadays it is called chairperson.

Q: What kind of services are provided by your *iddir*?
Firstly, and beyond burial functions, we contribute a lot, in many ways, to the development of the country. Secondly, before even death, while alive, we support members. We support them when they are in dire situations of health, so that the ill person gets treatment in time. Of course, if it is the Creator's will, death is inevitable, but till then, we deliver the support needed. And also, we enlist people who cannot afford a membership, or are in too precarious circumstances, for free. Since they have the will but not the means to join the *iddir*, even if not many in number, we allow some to join for free. Whenever, the government requests for support from the community, we deliver all the time; in-kind or money, be it in security issues, development issues, infrastructure works like the GERD dam project, HIV alleviation campaigns, caring for orphans; in a number of ways, we deliver our support continuously.

Q: How can your *iddir* improve?
It needs to be supported; you see. Way before the government came with the Consumers Association (ሸማቾች ማህበር) structure, our *iddir* were already contemplating on expanding their services into such ventures. So that our members could afford daily consumables, we intended to set up affordable markets. We thought of is quite early but had no access to a place to set it up on.

Q: How about the storage spaces that was provided to you?
Yes, that was given to us recently. It was built by an NGO named CCF that supports children in feeding programs and providing clothing and school items, all for children. But when they suspended their function, the building became vacant, thus we begged for the government to give it to us. Now it is our storage space.

Q: How would you define *iddir*?
From the beginning, it was mainly about burial services, but nowadays there is a wider perspective to it. Beyond that specific service, *iddir* participates in other useful activities. By focusing on the benefit of the majority than the individual, like they say 'ከአንድ ብርቱ ሁለት መድሓኒቱ' (Amharic saying that can be loosely translated as: Two [average persons] are better than a single strong [person]). And now the cooperation and unity are particularly good.

Q: Would you say an *iddir* is strictly associated with sefer?

We cannot say it is completely tied with *sefer*. When we establish *iddir*, it is of course true, because you want to have your support close in your *sefer*. But the *sefer* also gets demolished for redevelopment. If a person that gets relocated to another area wants to keep his membership, he can. And many are still paying fees from a distance. But we could not provide steadfast support and companionship when they needed it. We cannot also apply sanctions to this type of members because of the distance. If that member wants some of our stored items during mourning, they can take them, the payable amount during time of mourning is also provided.

They are relocated to and live in really far places such as Jemo, where the condominiums are. So, because of this distance, we cannot fine them for not attending a funeral of a member that lives in the *sefer*. We cannot fine them for not being present to provide solace for mourners. Thus, they are free of those obligations, and they also do not blame us for not being there during times of bereavement. They pay the monthly fee, we provide them with the items they want to use, and they take them covering the transportation cost themselves. Based on understanding and free will, as long as they want to keep the membership and the services, we keep them as members. They can deregister whenever they want to.

Q: Are there any other forms of *iddir* that you know of?

There are different associations, old schoolmates, friends, or ethnically inclined and so on. There is also those who establish tribal, or national ones. I would call these Mahebers (Associations), may be the ethnic ones are structured more like *iddir* than others. They perform funerary activities, support each other with money and the like. Nevertheless, they have narrowed it to one specific set of relationship; for instance, those who speak the same language. You see, there are different associations, but if you ask me, I would not call them *iddir*. It is maheber, but they are transforming it into *iddir*.

Q: What is the difference, in your opinion …?

Well, it is an exclusive form of association. As I told you, maybe they have graduated from the same school, or they are friends, or they are working in a smaller unit of a big institution/office. So, they support each other with that kind of smaller circles, and it would not be referred to as *iddir*. They set out regulations, that fit their needs, such as in case a member goes into prison, how can we visit them; if there is an offspring of a member that is graduating from school, how to organize a celebration; including in the case of death and funerals.

Q: According to your *iddir*, how is the placement of the tent decided during funerals?

That depends on the immediate environment where the mourning member resides. In some areas they have wider space that is fit for mounting the tents. Other may not. For example, here in my compound, we have, as you can see, a wider space over there where we previously erected tents at. But there are houses with narrow spaces and alleys. In that scenario, we choose the closest possible space, may be on streets too.

For cooking too, it all depends on what the living situation is like in the specific areas. If there is a shared kitchen; or if there is a larger kitchen used by an individual family that is seldom willing to share for such social events, it all depends on the exact conditions. Here in my *gebbi* for example, there is a shared kitchen right there. There is also another one over there. And we set up the tents in the space in the front. If, for example, there are two incidents in our *gebbi*, then we also use the cobble-stone street outside. Whenever such sad occasion happens, no questions are asked, it will be dedicated for that service. Over here, if we set up for men's coffee ceremony, then we set up that other side for the women. However narrow the kitchen be, everyone accommodates the needs of a family in distress. Overall, we make do with the limited spaces available when it comes to cooking or erecting tents.
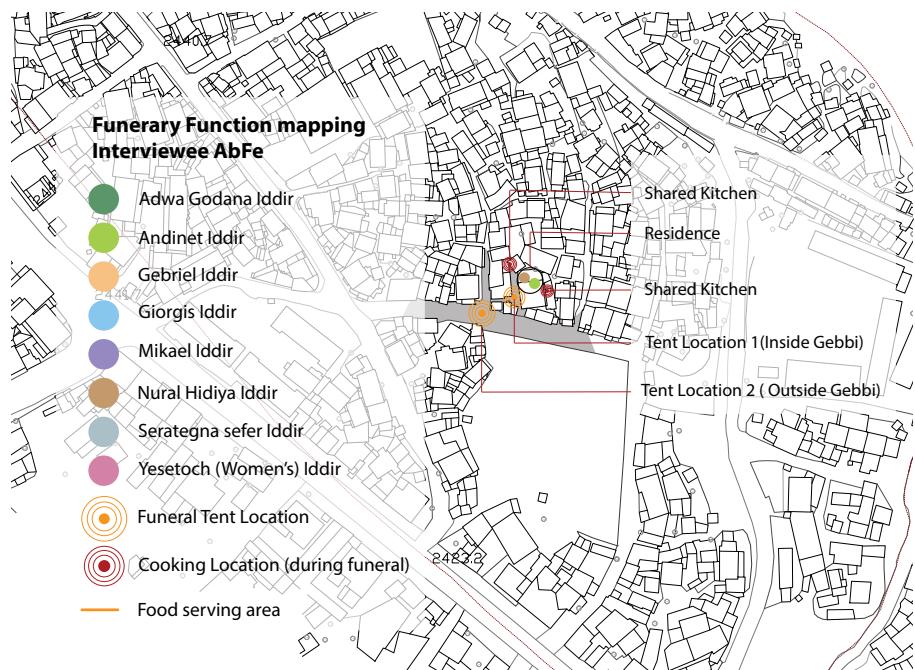
FIG. 5.20 A map showing the spaces previously used during circumstances of bereavement within AbFe's household.

In this example, AbFe is a member of two *iddir* that can exemplify bonding and bridging type of social relations; *Nural Hidiya* and *Andinet iddir* respectively. As he explains, the *Nural Hidiya iddir* is useful to reinforce his religious identity and create association with others who have similar interest. Such an association that is rich in bonding networks has allowed for expressive outcomes wherein higher contribution and disbursement fees, pre-risk support, and enlistment of those who cannot afford the fees of the *iddir* but are Muslims in religion, are made possible. Such outcomes enhance solidarity as inward-looking forms of association, but also make instrumental outcomes possible for sub-groups within the *iddir*. Through *Andinet iddir*, AbFe explains, he maintains a *sefer*-wide bonding type association; a larger identity, and attains instrumental benefits that complement the expressive outcomes of the previous *iddir*.

In addition to his position as the chairman of *Nural Hidiya iddir*, AbFe is also the chairman of the local council of *iddir*. Local councils of *iddir* are subdivisions of the Addis Ababa *iddir* council that is established under the Labor and Social Affairs Bureau of the city administration. This positional nexus is a structural hole advantage for AbFe personally. It allows him increase credentials, for instance, within *Nural Hidiya iddir* as a person who is able to acquire a storage space for the *iddir* through his contacts to the *Wereda* 10 local administration. As he mentioned, the *iddir* continuously delivers for the government's developmental requests through in-kind and monetary support. Similar to interviewee AT, AbFe is thus, in a position with multiple levers of negotiation with the state and among *iddir* within the *sefer*. As he stated, he has a "range of connections across the area." He further attests that *iddir* is instrumental in establishing cooperation and unity among residents in the *sefer*. In stating that, by definition *iddir* focuses on the benefit of the majority than the individual, he highlighted the public goodness of *iddir* as a social network.

Based on recent developments and experiences in reference to the relocation of a portion of the community through the condominium housing program of the government that resulted in membership from distant locations, AbFe says that *iddir* is not necessarily tied to *sefer*. Yet, he explains, the bylaws and norms that sustain reciprocity are challenged because of such long-distance membership as fines cannot be sanctioned and expectations of emotional support cannot be fulfilled to the standard practice of the *iddir* and the wish of its members. The continuation of contact based on the will of those who relocated out of the *sefer* to sustain membership and the resulting adaptation of *iddir* to sustain this relationship, he reasons, means *iddir* can function without *sefer*. Nevertheless, he clarifies that mutual support associations that are established in other spheres of life, such as among classmates, workmates, and friends, would be considered as associations but not *iddir*. Even though they imitate *iddir*, he insists, that they remain as associations differing in size and range from *iddir*.

The funerary processions are accommodated through appropriation of streets in the case where there is not enough space within a *gebbi*. Custom provides that the community adapts to the situation as all regular functions are altered to accommodate a family in distress. The erection of the tent and the cooking activities, as AbFe explains, are customarily decided taking the size and type of space in the vicinity of the mourning members of the community.

AbFe also believes in the exploitation of the appropriability capacity of *iddir* for other benefits such as for the establishment of affordable community-based markets. He highlights the lack of access to a place (land or property) as a constraint for *iddir* to venture into such activities. Beyond the storage space that his *iddir* was granted by the local administration, he aspires for more spatial provision for instrumental purposes.

5.5   Re/defining *iddir*

In summary, the concepts of social capital theory make possible the exposition of incongruities in complex urban contexts, such as *sefer*, in both the theoretical and spatial/physical sense. The existence of financial exchange in the operations of *iddir* clearly invites an economic interrogation, and the traditions and social practices surrounding it invite social and anthropological enquiry, but social capital theory captures both these realms sufficiently and provides a productive avenue to register and illustrate the spatiality of *iddir* in *sefer*. Accordingly, this chapter has introduced *iddir* as social capital, and within the case of *Serategna sefer*'s *iddir*; it has brought forth spatial and functional components that make up *iddir*. To this end, the following are found:

Iddir can be defined as an indigenous voluntary association in Ethiopia to which members subscribe upon deliberate, voluntary choice to gain emotional, social, cultural, and financial benefits during times of risk such as bereavement. Members of *iddir* pursue these benefits to achieve expressive and instrumental goals; to retain resources they already possess or to gain new ones respectively. *Iddir* emerges out of the social networks that exist within *sefer*. In urban contexts such as Addis Ababa, *iddir* is a *sefer*-tied social network that is fundamental to the creation of shared sense of belongingness among its members. *Iddir* **is thus, a form of social capital embedded in** *sefer* **and it appears in the structure of relations or networks among residents of a** *sefer***.** The three types of *iddir,* religion-based men's *iddir,* secular

men's *iddir,* and women's *iddir,* avail choices of network types that individuals can utilize to their benefit. They are also clusters of networks among which weak social ties emerge as structural holes. The emergence of structural holes establishes a bridging type of social network structure across the bonding type of networks that exist within the clusters.

Rhetorical questions such as "who lives without *iddir*?"[358] are seldom forwarded by residents who were asked if they are a member to an *iddir*, and the "I have an *iddir*" instead of "I am a member of an *iddir*" response that informants use to indicate membership or relationship to an *iddir*; makes the term 'association' insufficient to capture what *iddir* means in everyday use, while at the same time it adds credence to the notion that *iddir* can be both a social structure and social resource/social capital at the same time. This understanding requires further investigation to reach a refined understanding of *iddir* as a concept. Is *iddir* a network structure within which social resources; both symbolic and concrete supports that help members 'get by and get through,' are accumulated?[359] Or is it a social capital, on its own, defined as an aggregation of resources? Or is it both?

As the base structure out of which *iddir* grows, *sefer* is also defined by the *iddir* within. *Sefer* **is thus an assembly of intricate, multi-layer social relationships, of which** *iddir* **is one, that are social capital for both individual residents and the community at large.** At different scales and stages both *sefer* and *iddir* can simultaneously be the social structures out of which other forms of social capital emerge. *Iddir*'s character of appropriability is a potential for it to be used for instrumental purposes that benefit individuals, *iddir*, a cluster of *iddir*, and non-*iddir*-members in a *sefer* concurrently.

There is a prevailing lack of predictability in the fate of communities in *sefer* that is caused by development-induced displacement and resettlement. Informants repeatedly express the distress such unpredictability causes to them and their relations in the *sefer*. *Iddir* in *serategna sefer* are forced to disband, downsize, or adapt to uncertainties caused by public housing programs that do not consider their social capital value and embeddedness in the *sefer*. Women's *iddir* that used

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[358] Different versions to this rhetoric question in Amharic are: 'ማን ያለ እድር ይኖራል? / Man yale *iddir* yenoral?' translated as 'Who lives without *iddir*?,' 'ያለ እድር ይኖራል እንዴ? / yale *iddir* yenoral endie?' translated as 'Is it possible to live without *iddir*?,' 'እድር የሌለው ሰው አለ? / *iddir* yelelew sew alle?' translated as 'is there anyone without *iddir*?,' and 'ሰው እንዴት ያለ እድር ይኖራል? / sew endet yale *iddir* yenoral?' translated as 'how can a person live without *iddir*?'

[359] Julia Häuberer, "Social Capital in Voluntary Associations: Localizing Social Resources," *European Societies* 16, no. 4 (August 8, 2014): 570–93, https://doi.org/10.1080/14616696.2014.880497.

to save money, purchase, and store cooking items and ingredients in a planned and structured manner have resorted to discarding this practice based on news and gossip that their *sefer* is prone to redevelopment that, they believe, would ultimately disband their *iddir*. Members of *Serategna sefer* community that have relocated to other areas of the city through the said development projects are exposed to larger expenses and social and emotional costs; the *iddir* they associate and wish to maintain relationship with are forced to adapt their bylaws and procedures and as a result become poorer in social capital. Involvement in bridging and apolitical bonding associations, such as *iddir*, increases social capital access.[360] But the instability of *iddir*, and disruptions in the social organization and relations (caused by development-induced resettlement programs) destroy social capital of communities in *sefer*.[361]

The spatial mapping of *iddir* performed in this research is based on partial sampling. As FIG. 5.14 shows, the residents in the Western and South-Western areas of *Serategna sefer* were accessed for one-stop query to generate a representative map of distribution of *sefer*. It remains possible, to perform this task in a more detailed manner so that nuances regarding territorial networks and overlaps can be identified. Such mapping can help further an understanding of the structural and spatial relationship between *iddir* and *sefer*. On the other hand, the stories and storified maps generated through the in-depth interview of individual residents has exposed the essential functional components of *iddir*: **the tent** (a portable mourning hall), **the storage space**, **the kitchen**, **gathering space** (for general assemblies of *iddir*), and **an administrative office**. These are the minimum spatial requirements for an *iddir* which most *iddir* are not sufficiently equipped with. The socially dynamic character of *iddir*, the difference in size among them, the *sefer* context they are embedded in, and their appropriability for purposes other than their foundational goals, make precise quantification in size and number of these functions unattainable. But site analysis and further prescriptions can be left for those involved in design and planning.

There exist conceptual and spatial overlaps among the notions of *iddir*, *equb*, and the home-based businesses, when are a palimpsest of intricacies that form an understanding of *sefer*. *Equb*, the Rotating Savings and Credit Association (RoSCA) is introduced at the beginning of this chapter as a form of social relation that

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360 Häuberer, 586.

361 "Every kind of social capital depends on the stability of the social structure or the relations. Disruptions in social organization or social relations destroy social capital." Häuberer, "Social Capital Theory towards a Methodological Foundation," 41–42.

generates social capital among communities in Ethiopia. Unlike *iddir*, *equb* is not *sefer*-tied and can be found in other social relations such as the workplace. It is much more dynamic than *iddir* as it can be initiated and liquidated for a short period of time, and for targeted, seldom instrumental purposes. Coleman states that it is unimaginable for such a "rotating credit association operating successfully in urban areas marked by a high degree of social disorganization—or, in other words, by a lack of social capital."[362] Thus, social capital is a precondition for associations like *equb* since they rely heavily on trustworthiness to maintain reciprocity. In partial similarity to *iddir*, it seems social capital is both a precondition and a product of *equb* interactions. An exploration of *equb* vis à vis social capital is thus necessary as it is a form of social network that *sefer* residents indicate of being helpful to them to 'get by and get through.' For instance, it is conceivable for *equb* to not only be preconditioned on social capital but also to enhance it because of the existence of purposeful social interaction.

Home-based businesses, such as the production of malt in multiple *gebbi* in *Geja sefer*, is reliant on non-structured but sustained social relations on which business and resource exchange is made possible. The communities benefit from being located at the central areas of the city, especially close to the big market of *Merkato* and the active business areas in *Piassa*. An informant from *Geja sefer* stated that it is because of the long-standing, trust-based relationship that she has with persons that delivers grains (wheat and barley) to her house, that she remains able to operate the home-based malt production business from within her *gebbi.* The malt that is produced is then sold to small-scale, artisanal brewers of traditional, alcoholic beverages located in different parts within Addis Ababa and *Sululta* town (20km North of Addis Ababa). Price negotiations and payment scheme compromises that are made possible because of the social capital exchange that interjects the seemingly purely commercial exchange, make such small-scale, non-formal businesses, possible. The central location of *Geja sefer* is advantageous to the residents in both logistical and market access senses. Social capital in this case is thus utilized to mitigate against market values that are set by the formal economy that would otherwise exclude all involved parties in this trade.

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[362] James S. Coleman, "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital," *American Journal of Sociology* 94 (1988): S103.

6 *Gebbi*: an urban-spatial typology

The *gebbi*, the defining entities of *sefer*, in literal sense can be conceived as compounds within which multiple households reside, and that as a collective they make up the *sefer*. Yet, the social, economic, and spatial complexities that it embodies require us to deviate from such literal conception and pursue a more delicate reading. So far, the *gebbi* has been discussed as a physical border condition and as an enclave of social relations in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 respectively. These two qualities of the *gebbi* remain the focus of this dissertation; meaning, the domestic configuration and functions within the households are not within the view of this research. Instead, the main question that this chapter intends to respond to is: What constitutes the complexity of the *gebbi*? Further, by elucidating on this complexity, this chapter submits the *gebbi* as a spatial typology of particular scale: somewhere in between the urban and the dwelling scale.[363] Based on this understanding, together with the social and spatial insights presented in the two preceding chapters, the current chapter argues that the *gebbi* is a typology in its spatial sense, and a building block of the morphology of the *sefer*.

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[363] Michael Pike, "Scale and Identity in the Housing Projects of Coderch," in *Scale: Imagination, Perception and Practice in Architecture* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 194–205, In discussing José Antonio Coderch's "preoccupation with scale and his critique of the post-war approach to housing" through his projects, the author structured this section in four parts: house and city, urban scale, dwelling scale, and detail scale.

FIG. 6.1 Illustration shows the three elements that comprise the *gebbi*: the domestic spaces in white fills, the boundaries in black lines, and the spaces in between in orange fill based on *Geja sefer*'s morphology.

FIG. 6.1 above shows the three basic elements that comprise the *gebbi*, and the focus of study here is the orange-colored fields and their edges as defined by either the residences within a *gebbi* or fences that limit it. This chapter is divided into two graphically illustrated sections. In section 6.1, the defined space within the bounds of a *gebbi* is discussed through seven separate features that define it beyond the basic elements stated above: communality, scarcity and sharing practices, claiming norms, organicity, negotiation of space, caducity in material, and evolution and adaptation. In the metaphoric sense, the *gebbi* in this section is thus taken apart for in-depth inspection. In section 6.2, all these characteristic features are illustrated as coincident phenomena—manifestations of the complexity in a *gebbi*. The elements discussed separately in the preceding section are thus juxtaposed and illustrated by means of in-depth interviews and observational documentation ergo visual ethnography.

Characteristic features of the *gebbi*

Sefer are introduced in Chapter 2 as places founded as garrison towns in the late 19th century based on military consideration of existing topography and physical delineated by natural features such as rivers and hills. And that the growth of Addis Ababa since has been organic, especially since the *sefer* have been neglected by planning efforts in the 20th century. Consequently, it is common to observe indistinct geometric patterns and sequences when morphologically studying *sefer*. *Gebbi*, as a result, are variant in size, shape, slope, and the number of households in their bounds. There are similar activities that take place within *gebbi* in different *sefer*, such as the funerary use of open spaces. But there also exist peculiarities such as the predominance of the malt production home-based businesses in *Geja sefer*, which identity them from *gebbi* in other *sefer*.

By taking four case *gebbi* from each of the three case *sefer* under study, meaning *Dejach Wube sefer*, *Serategna sefer*, and *Geja sefer*, the sections that follow shall illustrate the seven characteristics of the *gebbi* as mentioned. The choice of *gebbi* is random and the method of mapping is based on in-depth interviews, walk-along and visual evidencing that were performed on site, followed by analytic mapping performed off site.

Communality

The elaboration of the *gebbi* as a space of communal activity is leveraged on the idea that human beings are social beings with relational capacities; in other words, communality.[364] Communality and privacy are corollary concepts[365] but since the distinction of the space within the *gebbi* as shared among households has already been set, the focus primarily is thus on exposing the spaces of communality. The *gebbi* organizes social behavior of variant degrees into space. Especially, heightened communal engagements for either mitigation or celebration of personal or shared risk or gain respectively, are represented henceforth as social function (for instance, weddings and funerals). And the daily interactions observed by the researcher, and illustrated in FIG. 6.2 and FIG. 6.3, are represented by the dominant activity, children playing, but is inclusive of events such as friends chatting or gossiping.

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[364] Charles Chu and Ashley E. Martin, "The Primacy of Communality in Humanization," *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 97 (November 1, 2021): 1, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2021.104224.

[365] Aristide H. Esser and Barrie B. Greenbie, eds., *Design for Communality and Privacy* (New York: Plenum Press, 1978), 2,10.

As can be seen in FIG. 6.2, an illustration of the social function spaces of Tasa *Gebbi* of *Dejach Wube sefer*, there are two main locations of intensive social activity. The gentle slope within the *gebbi* allows smooth transition of activities of various characters across the *gebbi* but it is these two spaces identified by informants and observation as spaces of intensive social activity. Topography plays important role in dictating the size and activity that takes place in such spaces. For instance, *Serategna sefer*'s steep slope towards *Bantyiketu* river, which in turn dictates the configuration of the spaces within *gebbi* resulting in small pockets of spaces for social activity. As illustrated in FIG. 6.3, in such contexts, communal activities that demand larger space are performed outside of the *gebbi* premise; either by blocking streets, as in the case of *Balambaras gebbi*, or using interstitial spaces among *gebbi* in the *sefer*, as in the case of *Basha Mulat gebbi*. In compact situations, such as in the case of *Gash Tadesse gebbi* of *Geja sefer*, spaces for communal activity are fragmented and insufficient. Parents and elders communicate to the children playing in these areas by giving restrictive instructions or commands intended to protect other activities that take place in the *gebbi*, such as the drying of clothes or spices spread over plastic mats on the *gebbi* floor. Otherwise, the play areas are conceived and perceived as left-over spaces from other activities and not intended for play.

CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA   SOCIAL FUNCTION SPACE

FIG. 6.2 Map showing social function spaces of *Tasa gebbi* in Dejach Wube *sefer*.

DEJACH WUBE SEFER	Korea Gebbi	Meqdela Gebbi
SERATEGNA SEFER	50 Beteseb Gebbi	Balambaras Gebbi
GEJA SEFER	Beqel Gebbi	Gash Semmu Gebbi

CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA   SOCIAL FUNCTION SPACE
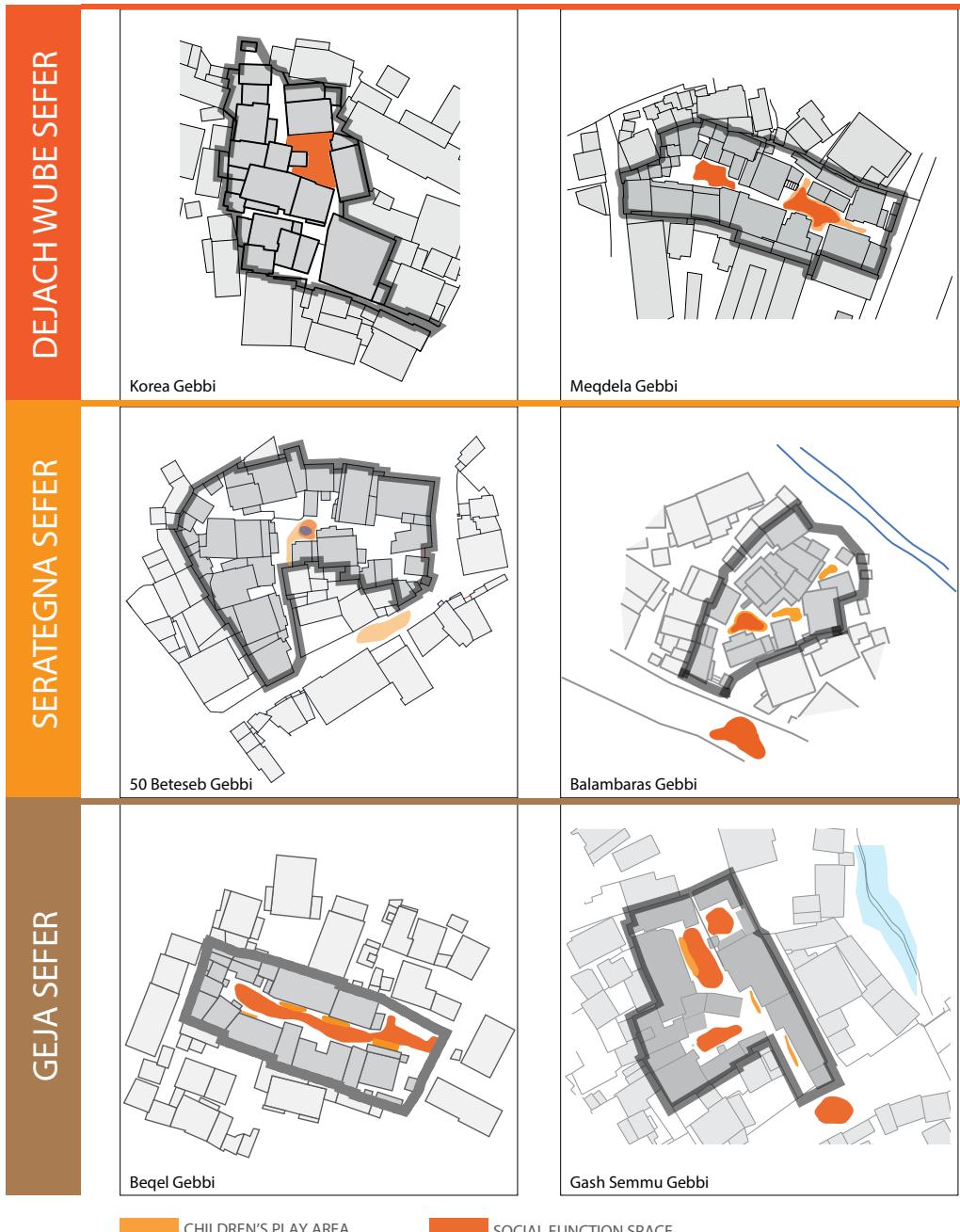
FIG. 6.3 Illustration of social function spaces in twelve *gebbi* studied: four examples from each case *sefer*.

Saris Gebbi
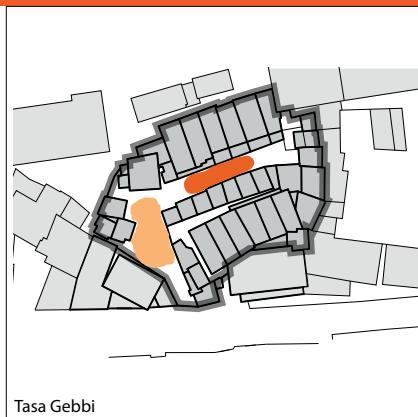
Tasa Gebbi
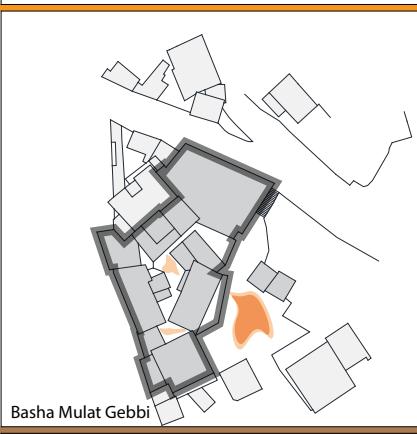
Basha Mulat Gebbi
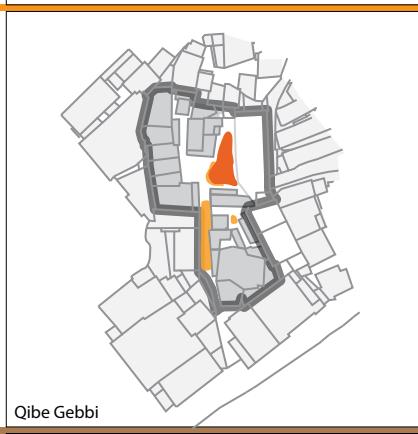
Qibe Gebbi

Memher Tesemma Gebbi
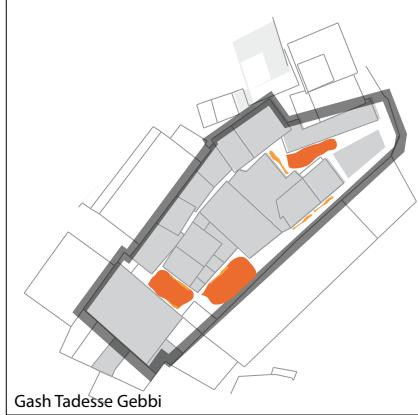
Gash Tadesse Gebbi

Scarcity and Sharing practices

Insufficient provision of utilities such as, electricity, water, and sewage disposal, and domestic use spaces such as kitchens, toilets and storage spaces are evident in all *sefer*. Electric poles are positioned in a spontaneous manner pursuant to the morphology of *gebbi*. Cables stretching among poles create a web across *gebbi* and *sefer*. Lack of consistent access to electricity is one of the complaints informants raise frequently. Similarly, water supply is neither consistent nor sufficient. In most cases a common supply point is seen per *gebbi* with multiple households. In some cases, this provision is supplemented by individual access to tap water for which households pay individually. An informant from *Meqdela gebbi* of *Dejach Wube sefer* stated that these provisions are billed in the name of the owners of a cluster of houses before the 1974 nationalization of properties. Such is the bureaucratic and provisional neglect in terms of access to such necessities. Sewage disposal in *Serategna sefer* is particularly concerning as the waste matter is channeled into Bantyiketu river as municipal provision is absent.

Most households perform daily cooking activities in close to, seldom in front of, the entrances to their residences. In occasions such as holidays or gatherings, when large scale cooking is needed, or when preparing injera or baking traditional bread, they use shared kitchens that are apportioned among residents of a *gebbi*. Most concerningly, toilets are in dire shortage and when available, they are poorly provided with water or proper maintenance. In some cases, kitchens are also storage places and in other cases storage places are appropriated for large scale cooking purposes. FIG. 6.4 illustrates the supply points of services at Gash Semmu *gebbi* of *Geja sefer*. There are five tap water supply points shared among nineteen families. There exists an electric pole within the *gebbi* that connects multiple *gebbi* in the area. In FIG. 6.5, the facilities shared among residents of Balambaras *gebbi* in *Serategna sefer* are illustrated. There are four kitchens, two store/kitchens, two storages, and two toilets shared among fifteen households that reside in it. The allotment of usage of space is partially decided by the local administration as part of rent agreement, and partially negotiated among *gebbi* neighbors.

Sharing the available utilities and facilities is helps to cope with the lack otherwise would have been unbearable to residents. While these remain concerns that residents wish to be resolved by any means, informants express their pride and solidarity in being able to collectively deal with such circumstances.
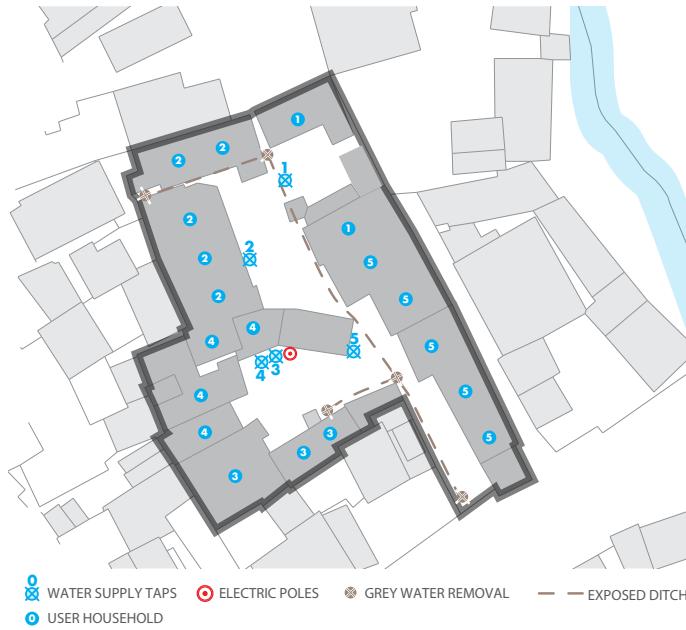
FIG. 6.4 Illustration of utility supply and use in Gash Semmu *gebbi* in *Geja sefer*.

Legend:
- 0 / ⊠ WATER SUPPLY TAPS
- ◉ ELECTRIC POLES
- ⊛ GREY WATER REMOVAL
- — — EXPOSED DITCH
- ⓪ USER HOUSEHOLD

Legend:
- ■ SHARED KITCHEN
- ■ SHARED TOILET
- ■ SHARED STORAGE
- ■ SHARED STORAGE / OCCASIONAL KITCHEN
- ■ SHARED KITCHEN / OCCASIONAL STORAGE

FIG. 6.5 Illustration showing shared facilities and their usage among dwellers in *Balambaras gebbi* in *Serategna sefer*.

DEJACH WUBE SEFER
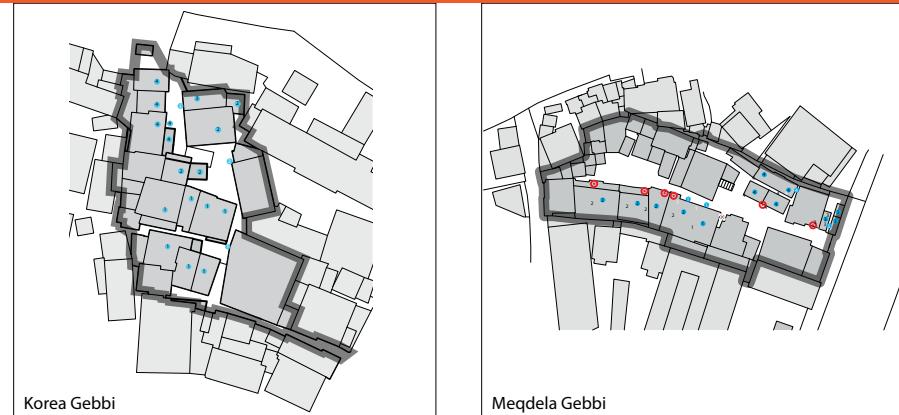
Korea Gebbi

Meqdela Gebbi

SERATEGNA SEFER

50 Beteseb Gebbi

Balambaras Gebbi

GEJA SEFER

Beqel Gebbi

Gash Semmu Gebbi
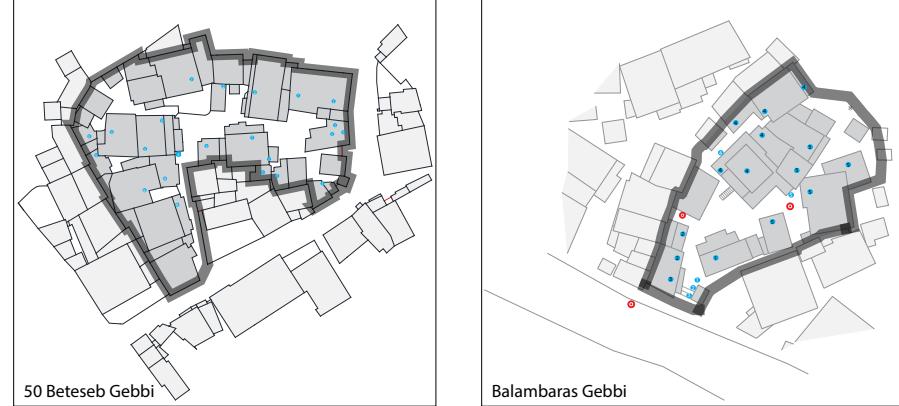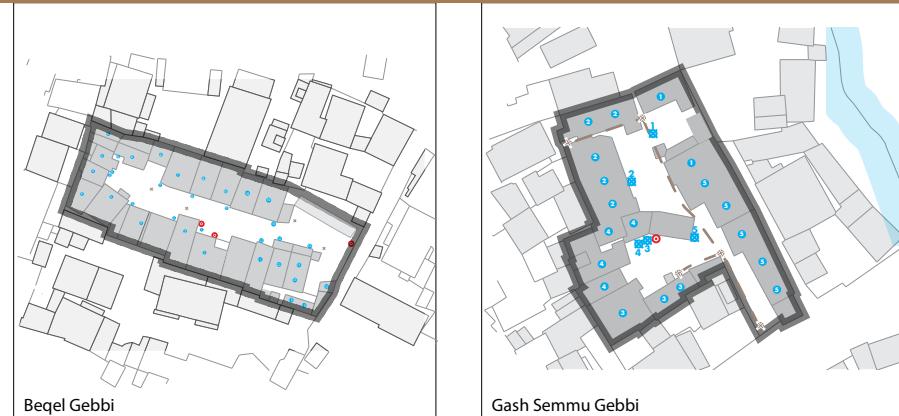
⊠ WATER SUPPLY TAPS   ◉ ELECTRIC POLES   ⊗ GREY WATER REMOVAL   — EXPOSED DITCH

FIG. 6.6 Illustration of service supply points in twelve *gebbi* studied: four examples from each case *sefer*.
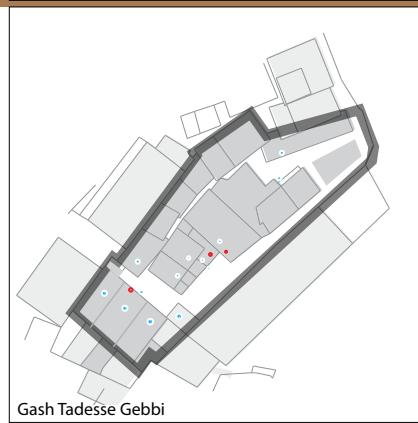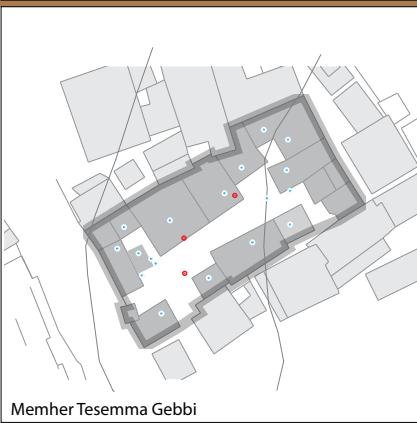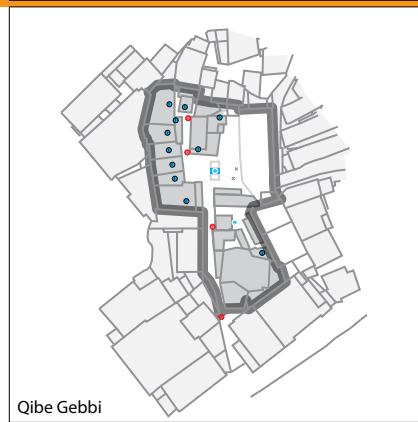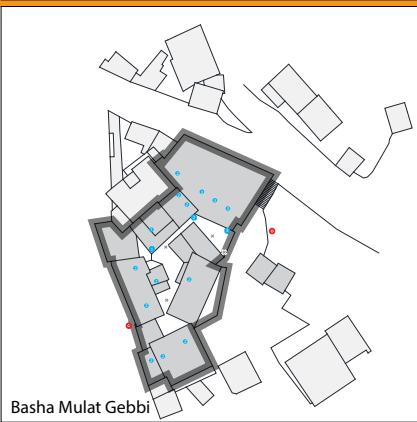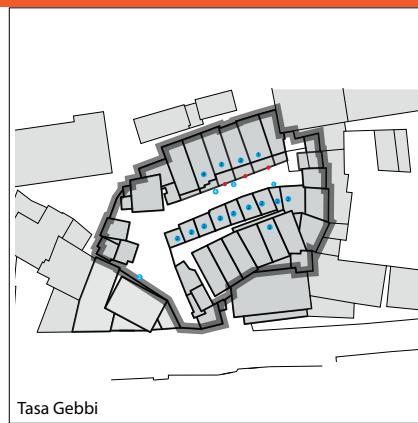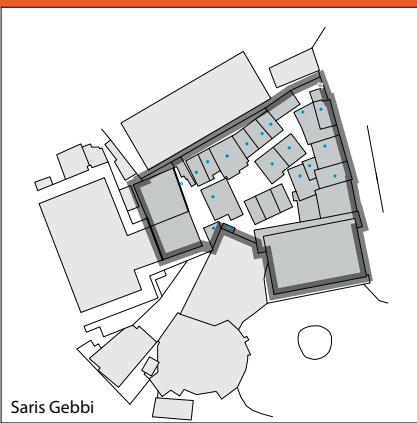
Saris Gebbi

Tasa Gebbi

Basha Mulat Gebbi

Qibe Gebbi

Memher Tesemma Gebbi

Gash Tadesse Gebbi

DEJACH WUBE SEFER

Korea Gebbi

Meqdela Gebbi

SERATEGNA SEFER

50 Beteseb Gebbi

Balambaras Gebbi

GEJA SEFER

PARTITIONED STORAGE, SHARED BY HOUSEHOLDS

Beqel Gebbi

Gash Semmu Gebbi
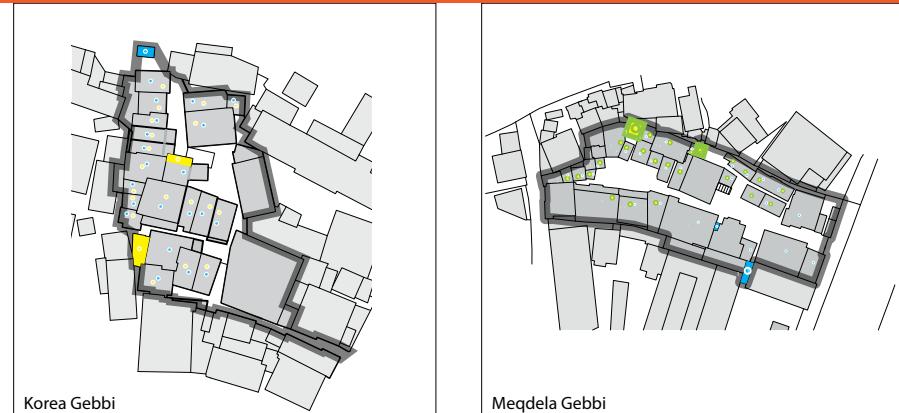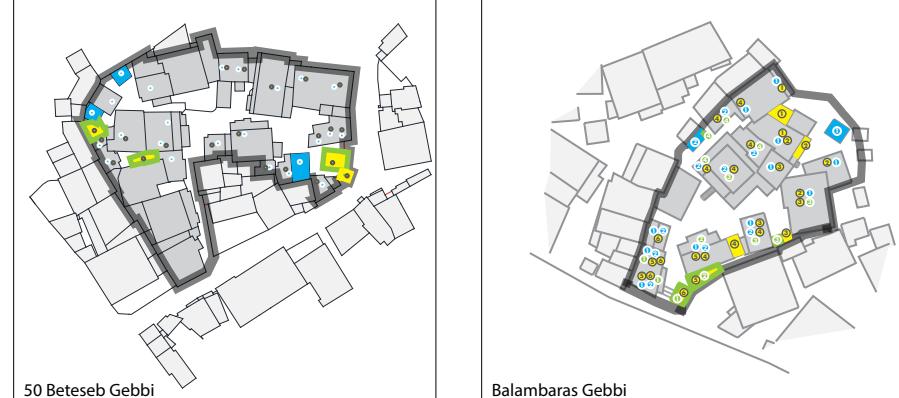
■ SHARED KITCHEN   ■ SHARED TOILET   ■ SHARED STORAGE   ■ SHARED STORAGE MAINLY, OCCASIONALLY KITCHEN

FIG. 6.7 Illustration of shared facilities in twelve *gebbi* studied: four examples from each case *sefer*.
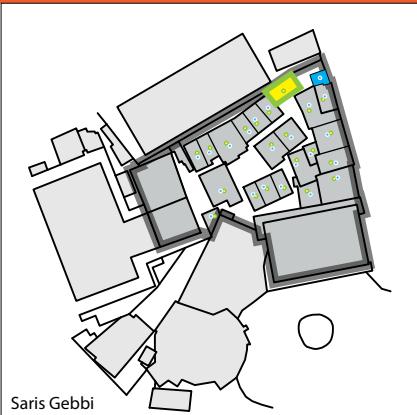
Saris Gebbi

Tasa Gebbi
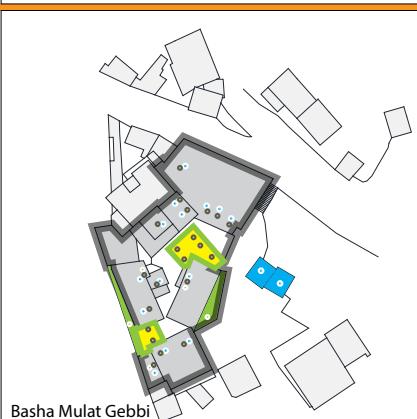
Basha Mulat Gebbi
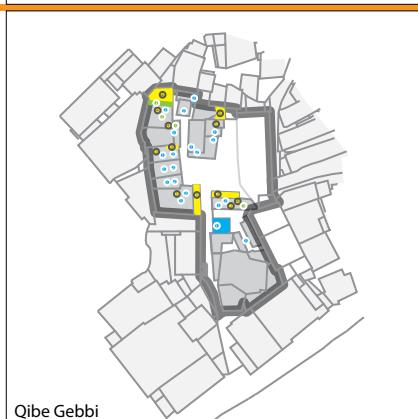
Qibe Gebbi
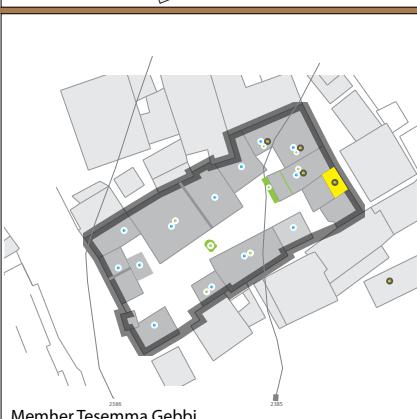
Memher Tesemma Gebbi
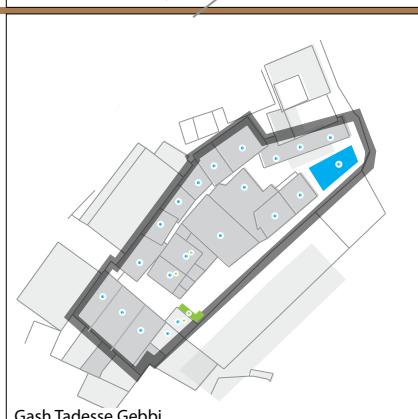
Gash Tadesse Gebbi

■ SHARED KITCHEN MAINLY, OCCASIONALLY STORAGE

TOC

Claiming norms

Individual houses in *sefer* are typically of narrow and multipurpose rooms. Thus, it is usual for domestic activities to flow out into the shared space within the *gebbi* premises. Local administrators either forbid or pace stringent regulations against maintenance, expansion, or modification of houses in *gebbi*. Thus, residents opt to use temporary space defining methods to claim a portion of space found immediately in front of their residences for private use. Impermanency leads to the investment to be minimal and demolition, in case administrators demand it, relatively easy. The spaces are delineated in different ways. A change flooring material that differentiates between the shared open space and the claimed space may suffice in some cases. In other cases, plants, planted in pots or on the ground, are deliberately put to define spaces. Level differences, either an elevated platform, or a recessed and tiled space can be appropriated for cooking activities. FIG. 6.8 below shows *Qibe gebbi* in *Serategna sefer* and the spaces claimed by residents for various domestic functions: washing/laundry, cooking, storages, and easy seating areas, by applying the different technics of space definition mentioned. These spaces are not a complete encroachment into the common space but only conceived as extensions at the edge or as a threshold between the private and public areas. In some cases, the social capital an individual possesses among *gebbi* residents can be employed to gain space. In *Qibe gebbi*, a space that resulted from the demolition of houses after a fire accident is currently used as a garden appropriated by a woman who uses parts of it as a private storage space too. This woman is well regarded among the *gebbi* community, and she shares the produce of the garden with her neighbors while, at the same time, claims important space for private storage use.
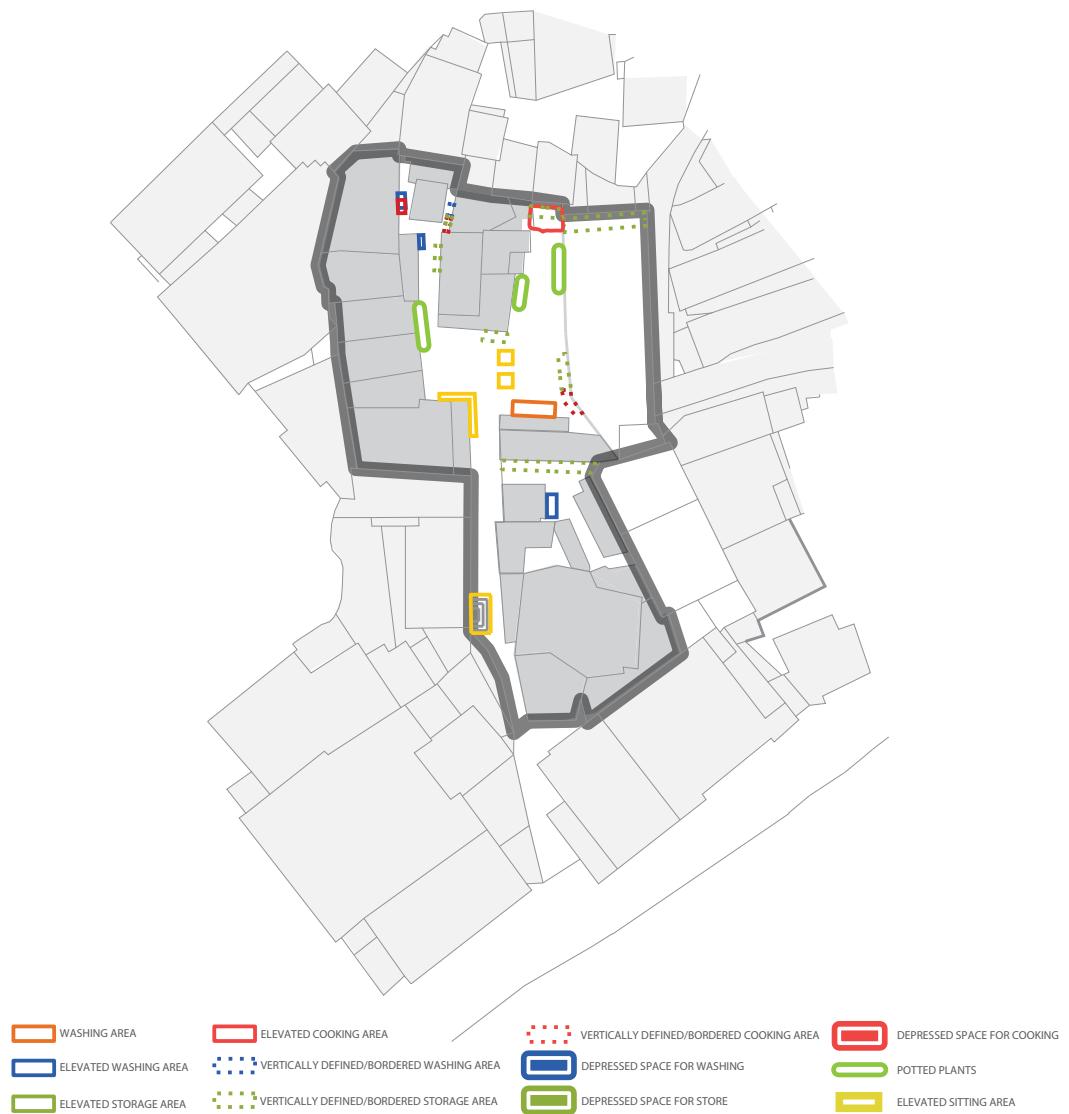
FIG. 6.8 Illustration shows claimed and appropriated spaces in Qibe *gebbi* of *Serategna sefer*.
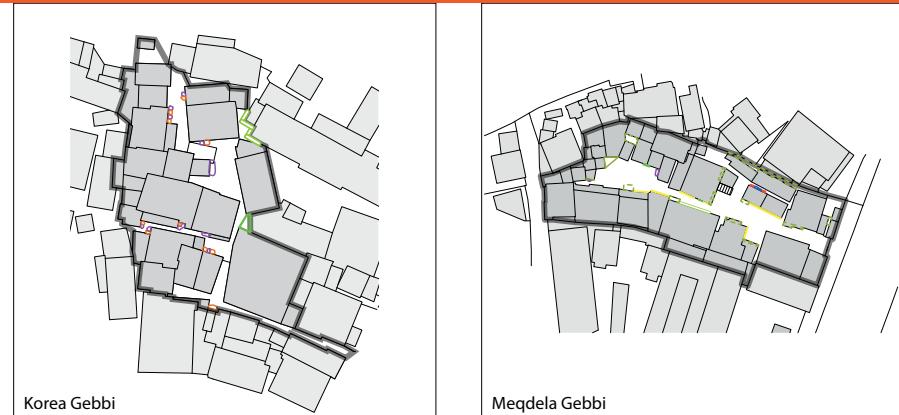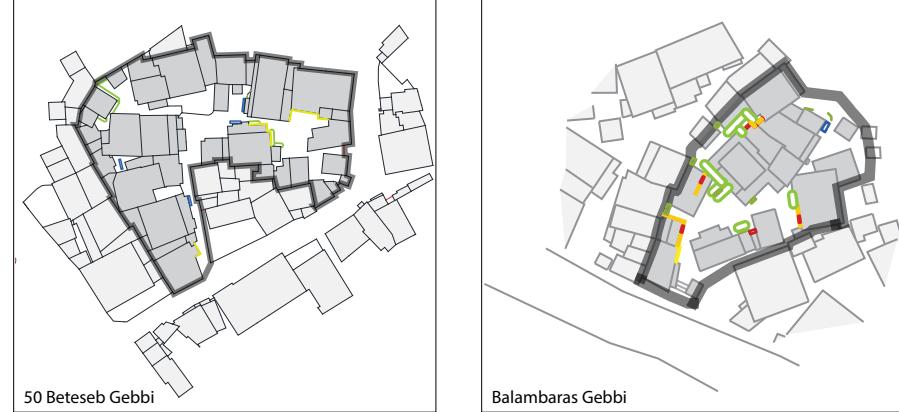
WASHING AREA	ELEVATED COOKING AREA	VERTICALLY DEFINED/BORDERED COOKING AREA · DEPRESSED SPACE FOR COOKING
ELEVATED WASHING AREA	VERTICALLY DEFINED/BORDERED WASHING AREA	DEPRESSED SPACE FOR WASHING · POTTED PLANTS
ELEVATED STORAGE AREA	VERTICALLY DEFINED/BORDERED STORAGE AREA	DEPRESSED SPACE FOR STORE · ELEVATED SITTING AREA

TOC

Korea Gebbi

Meqdela Gebbi

50 Beteseb Gebbi

Balambaras Gebbi

Beqel Gebbi

Gash Semmu Gebbi
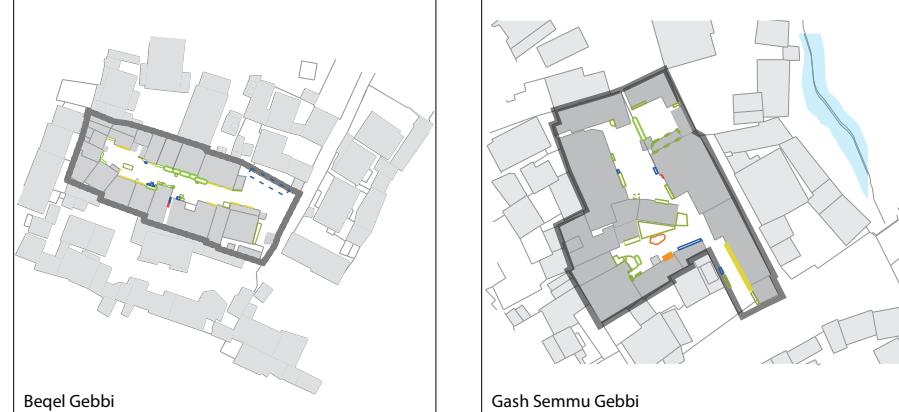
WASHING AREA
ELEVATED WASHING AREA
ELEVATED STORAGE AREA
ELEVATED COOKING AREA
VERTICALLY DEFINED/BORDERED WASHING AREA
VERTICALLY DEFINED/BORDERED STORAGE AREA

FIG. 6.9 Illustration of claimed and privatized spaces in twelve *gebbi* studied: four examples from each case *sefer*.
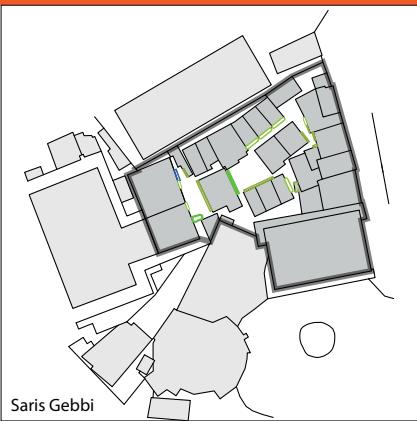
Saris Gebbi

Tasa Gebbi
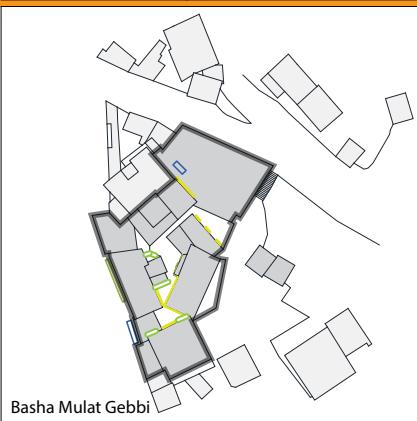
Basha Mulat Gebbi
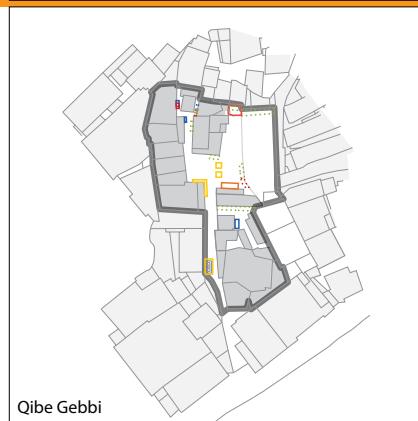
Qibe Gebbi

Memher Tesemma Gebbi

Gash Tadesse Gebbi

VERTICALLY DEFINED/BORDERED COOKING AREA
DEPRESSED SPACE FOR WASHING
DEPRESSED SPACE FOR STORE

DEPRESSED SPACE FOR COOKING
POTTED PLANTS
ELEVATED SITTING AREA

Organicity

The gradual emergence of *sefer* as urban clusters is discussed in Chapter 2 of this dissertation. Their spontaneous formation as spatial assemblies is an organic process. Natural features have played a foundational role and remain to be characteristic features of *gebbi*. Topographic conditions command the spaces within *gebbi* while transitional spaces such as gentle ramps, stairs, and cascading floors placed by dwellers enable navigation across them. The placement and type of this transitions may not be dictated by planning and design standards and are characterized by irregularities. Such irregular process also resulted in irregular tenancy arrangements, for instance, renting of adjacent rooms that are individually accessed from the *gebbi* common space, or rooms that are accessed through other tenants' private spaces. Considering the large number of households residing in a *gebbi* and their individual wishes on what to plant in their immediate environs, the vegetation of *gebbi* is also a spontaneous process. Trees, shrubs, vegetable and herb gardens, and flowers planted either on the ground or in pots of different size embellish the common space in *gebbi*. In addition to the edibility and space-claiming purpose such plants serve for families, they are also expressions that render *gebbi* with identity.

Thus, the foundational process, the resulting topographic condition and its manipulation, and the vegetation and landscaping of *gebbi* are not standardized, or repeating patterns or sequences—each *gebbi* is different in its organicity. As shown in FIG. 6.10, *Meqdela gebbi* of *Dejach Wube sefer* has forty-five doors that are fully or partially accessible from the common space, but the number of residing households is only thirty-six. The topography gradually increases as one navigates from the main access gate on the East side towards the Western end.

PLANTED TREES   CONTOUR LINES   POTTED PLANTS   0000 ALTITUDE ABOVE SEA LEVEL   CIRCULATION

FIG. 6.10 Illustration shows vegetation, circulation, and topography in Meqdela *gebbi* of Dejach Wube *sefer*.

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FIG. 6.11 Illustration of vegetation, circulation, and topography of twelve *gebbi* studied: four examples from each case *sefer*.

Saris Gebbi

Tasa Gebbi

Basha Mulat Gebbi

Qibe Gebbi

Memher Tesemma Gebbi

Gash Tadesse Gebbi

0000   ALTITUDE ABOVE SEA LEVEL

TOC
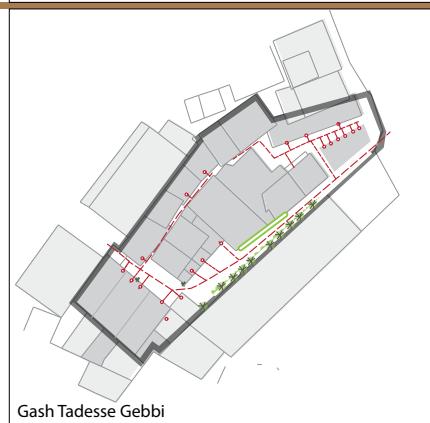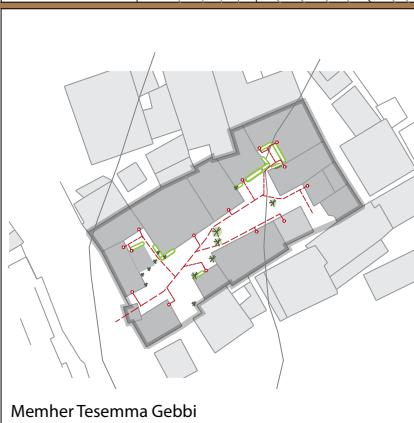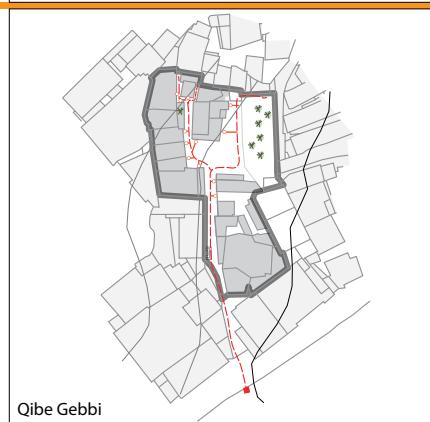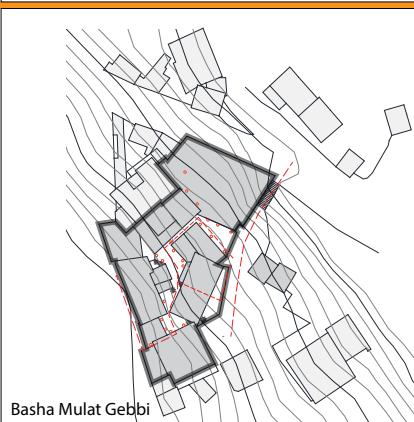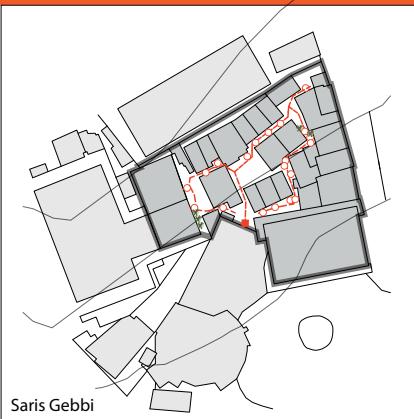
Negotiation of space

Major laundry and cloth drying, income generation activities, and spices and grains drying activities are the most common activities that tend to take up the largest portion of the common spaces within *gibbi*. In almost all cases, this space, when compared to the number of households arranged around it, is not sufficient to provide every household with spaces needed for these activities. The use of this space is thus subject to constant negotiation among residents. There are no fixed schedules as to who uses the cloth drying cables in a *gebbi* when. But usage pattern develops through time based on repeated communication-based use of the space.

FIG. 6.12 shows *Beqel gebbi* of *Geja sefer* and the spaces that are used by the residents through continued negotiation and consideration of the needs of each household. This *gebbi* is part of an area in *Geja sefer* that is known to engage in the home-based, income generation activity of producing malt used for brewing artisanal alcoholic beverages. In addition to the basic needs for laundry and drying area, this function requires the dwellers to develop an informal arrangement of space usage. Informant state that this has not been a source of contestation but required daily, weekly, and seasonal negotiations based on domestic needs, production demands, and weather conditions. Though the common space usually appears insufficient to meet the demands of all residents, it is the most efficiently utilized space of *sefer*.

| RECIPE/SPICES PREPARATION AREA | CLOTH DRYING HANGERS | CLOTH WASHING TYRES |

FIG. 6.12 Illustration shows spaces used through continued negotiation among residents in Beqel *gebbi* of *Geja sefer*.

DEJACH WUBE SEFER
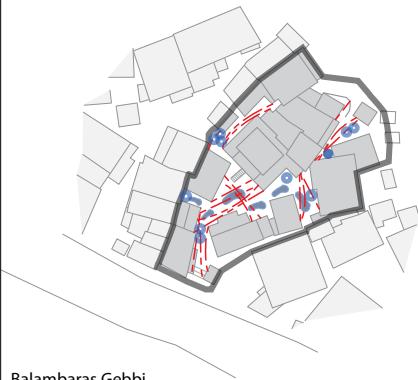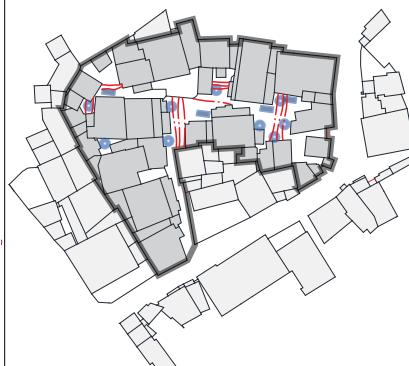
Korea Gebbi

Meqdela Gebbi

SERATEGNA SEFER

50 Beteseb Gebbi

Balambaras Gebbi

GEJA SEFER

Beqel Gebbi

Gash Semmu Gebbi
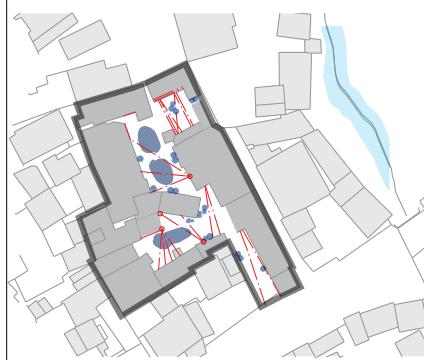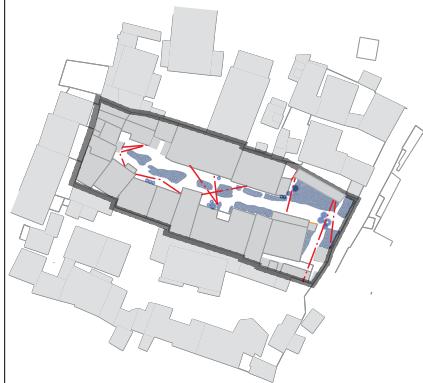
RECIPE/SPICES PREPARATION AREA   CLOTH DRYING HANGERS   CLOTH WASHING TYRES

FIG. 6.13 Illustration of negotiated spaces in twelve *gebbi* studied: four examples from each case *sefer.*

TOC

Saris Gebbi

Tasa Gebbi

Basha Mulat Gebbi

Qibe Gebbi

Memher Tesemma Gebbi

Gash Tadesse Gebbi
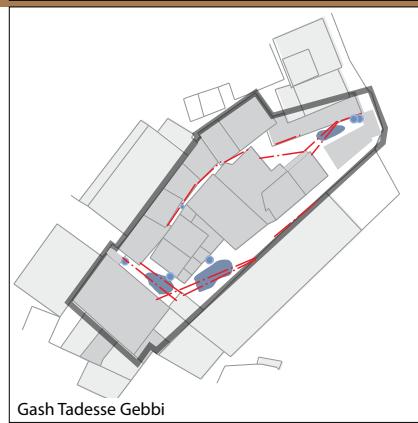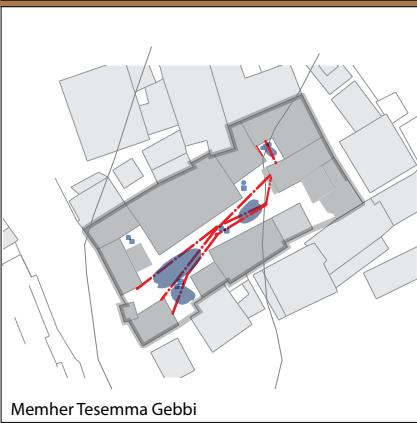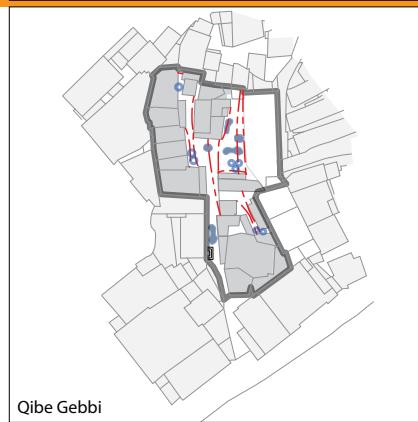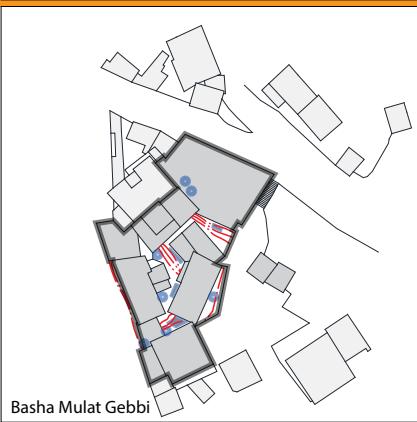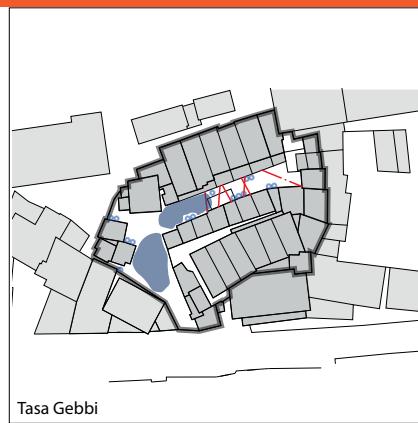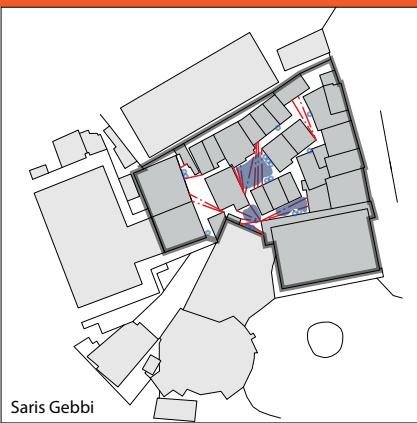
Caducity in material

The majority of the structures in *sefer* are administered and rented out to tenants by the local administrative units known as *kebele*. While remaining the landlord of these properties, they rarely engage in the improvement of the buildings in *sefer* and this task is tacitly left to the dwellers. However, the rental arrangement as a tenure system itself—without responsible upkeeping—reduces the sense of ownership for dwellers, which leads to diminished interest in investing in the built forms in *sefer*. Further, the little upkeeping performed by residents is limited to the use of temporary and affordable/cheap materials. Among dwellers thus, material choices are dictated by (a) regulations at local administration level, (b) affordability, and (c) sense of impermanence caused by development trends as it regards to *sefer*. The stringent regulations at the local administrative level restrict the possibility to maintain or change parts of the buildings. A family needs to file for a permit to engage in any form of maintenance work and make the case that their residence is in an unlivable condition to be allowed to do so. The evaluation of livability is thus left to the discretion of the officials at the local offices and a lot of room is left for subjectivity. Occasionally, these offices set up demolition task forces that go door-to-door among the community to enforce the setout regulations. Such bureaucratic processes and administrative mechanisms discourage residents from engaging in significant improvement of the building structures. Secondly, in the event a household is able to maintain or make changes to the structures, they prefer to use materials that are affordable. Most informants indicate that since the threat of demolition by the local administrators remains a concern, they do not wish to invest too much in the material quality of the buildings. And thirdly, the development trend that demolishes large areas of *sefer* instils tenure insecurity within the community, and thus keeping residents in a sense of precarity that discourages them from maintenance or improvement works.

Built structures in *gebbi* have walls with a patchwork of various building materials—a sort of visual clutter. Roofs are predominantly made of corrugated iron sheets (CIS) except for few incidents where shared spaces are covered with plastic sheets. The open spaces within *sefer* are mostly paved with large stonework and in few cases are left as exposed earth. FIG. 6.14 below shows a catalog of building components and materials documented from *Basha Mulat gebbi* in *Serategna sefer*. It demonstrates the individual elements that together form the visual clutter and state of caducity discussed above.
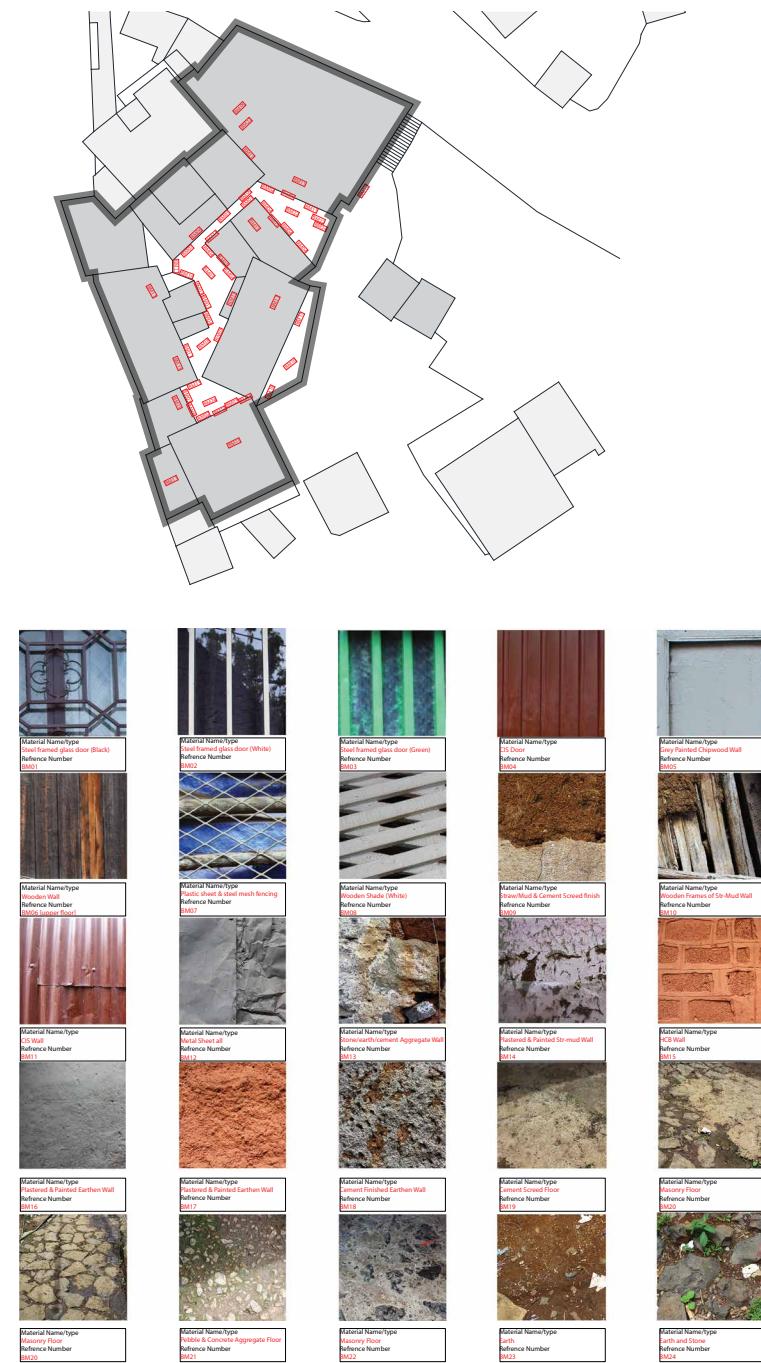
FIG. 6.14 Illustration shows building components and materials used in *Basha Mulat gebbi* of *Serategna sefer*.

Korea Gebbi

Meqdela Gebbi
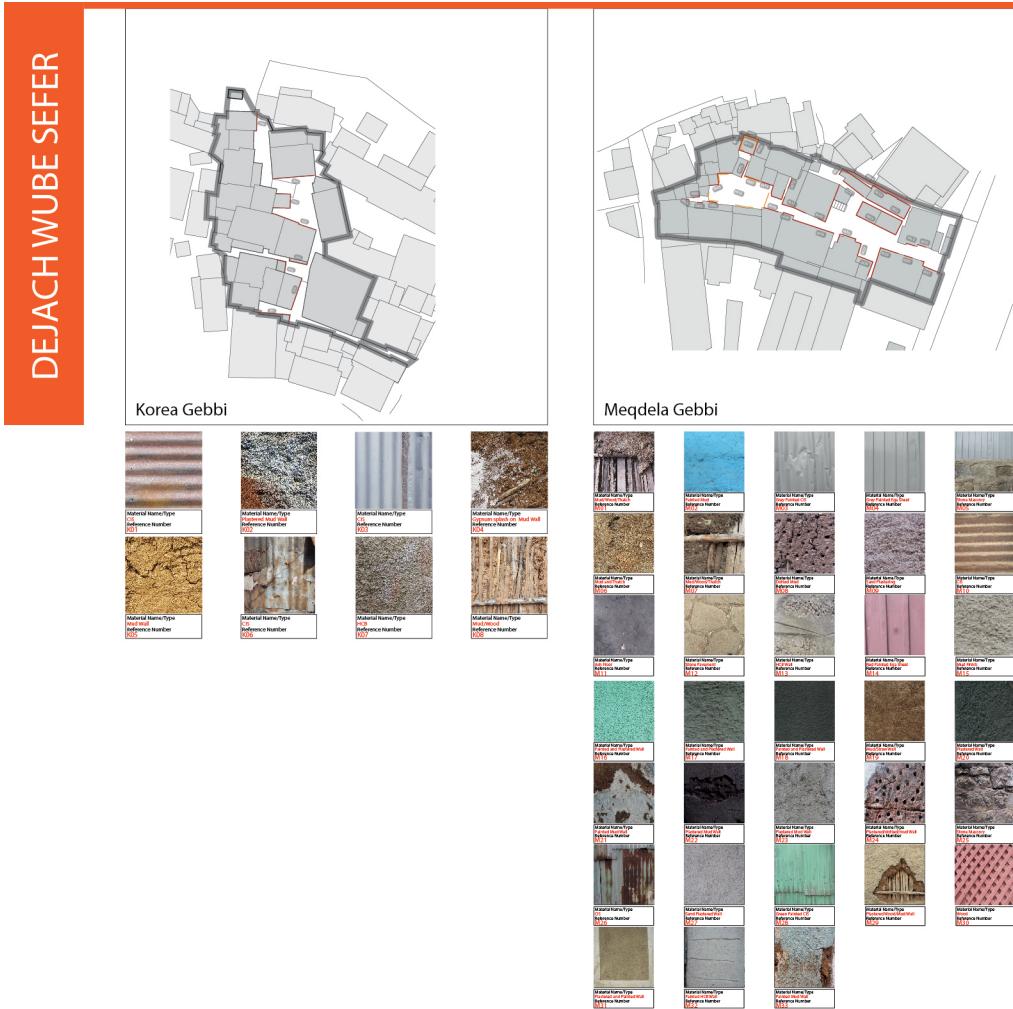
FIG. 6.15 Illustration of building components and materials in four *gebbi* studied in *Dejach Wube sefer*.

Saris Gebbi

Tasa Gebbi

Material Name/Type CIS Reference Number S01	Material Name/Type Painted and Plastered Wall Reference Number S02	Material Name/Type Plastered Wall Reference Number S03	Material Name/Type Mud/Thatch Reference Number S04
Material Name/Type Plastered Mud Wall Reference Number S05	Material Name/Type Painted CIS Reference Number S06	Material Name/Type Painted and Plastered Wall Reference Number S07	Material Name/Type HCB Wall Reference Number S08

Material Name/Type Plastered Wall Reference Number T01	Material Name/Type Mud/Wood Reference Number T02	Material Name/Type Stone Pavement Reference Number T03	Material Name/Type CIS Reference Number T04
Material Name/Type Lorem Ipsum Reference Number T05	Material Name/Type CIS Reference Number T06	Material Name/Type Concrete Reference Number T07	Material Name/Type Mud/Thatch Reference Number T08
Material Name/Type HCB Wall Reference Number T09			

50 Beteseb Gebbi

Balambaras Gebbi

FIG. 6.16 Illustration of building components and materials in four *gebbi* studied in *Serategna sefer*.

Bacha Mulat Gebbi

Qibe Gebbi

Beqel Gebbi

Gash Semmu Gebbi
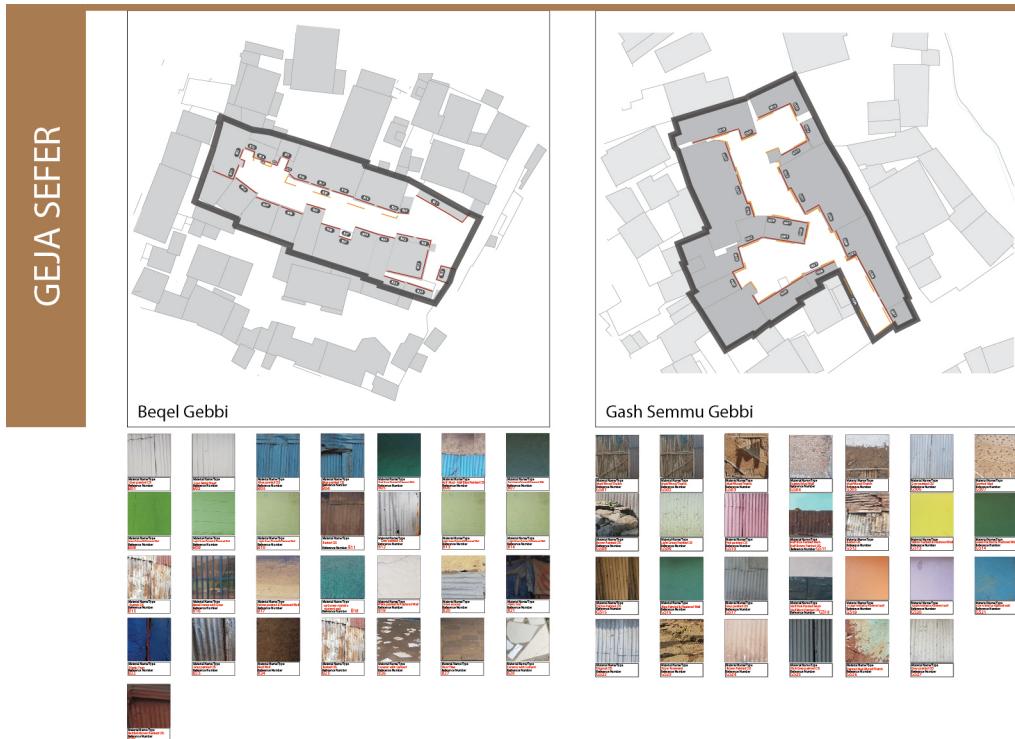
FIG. 6.17 Illustration of building components and materials in four *gebbi* studied in *Geja sefer*.

Memher Tesemma Gebbi

Gash Tadesse Gebbi
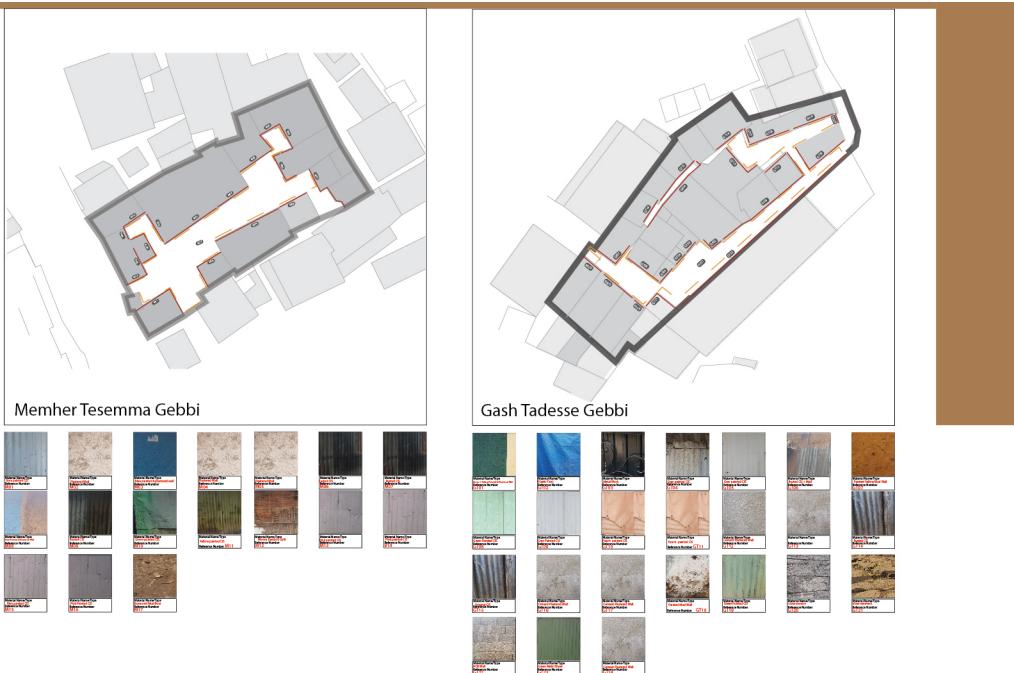
Evolution and adaptation

As the history of *sefer* informs, the *gebbi* with multiple households is a result of regulatory, spatial, and demographic evolution Addis Ababa city underwent. Generally stating, at the beginning they were compounds with single-family owners. In the late 1940s and 1950s the rise in housing demand led such owners to develop and avail housing through rent. And the 1974 nationalization of extra land and properties transferred ownership of significant portion of the city to the state that consequently rented it to those who do not own houses at subsidized prices. The evolution since, has been mostly densification and consolidation within the confines of the *gebbi*.

It is a tasking effort to trace these changes back to the first structure of the *gebbi*. Instead, current residents, especially elders, can only trace major changes that occurred within two to four decades. Modifications are not necessarily regulated, planned, or sanctioned by the state but they do happen at various times. As discussed in section 7.1.6, these adaptations are done with temporary and affordable materials by encroaching on existing open spaces within the *gebbi* in an incremental manner. Since little amount of space is available and any significant additions are closely monitors by the state, increments are done in small sized forms. It is thus possible to visually identify such additions based on their size and materiality as they appear distinct from the older, bigger, and more permanent structures. Therefore, with the limitation in tracing the additions or adaptations done to *gebbi* at all the case *sefer* documented, both

FIG. 6.18 to FIG. 6.20 could only represent changes as testified to by current residents of the *gebbi* and based on what the built size, structure, and building materials suggest.

As the case of *Meqdela gebbi* of *Dejach Wube sefer* illustrated below shows, two structures; one to the left of the entrance of the *gebbi* and another at the center of the *gebbi* that is accessed by approach stairs, are the primary structures built in the *gebbi*. This is confirmed by residents who started living in the *gebbi* before the nationalization of the *gebbi*, and during its ownership by an individual called Ashebir Gebrehiwot. Available open spaces are thus adapted to accommodate the temporal needs of dwellers at different times. As density increases and the need for additional spaces presses, residents add structures in temporary manner. This gradual process of evolution leads, in most circumstances, to the spatial clutter that is visible in *gebbi*.

Korea Gebbi

Meqdela Gebbi

FIG. 6.18 Illustration of evolution through addition and adaptation of building spaces in *Dejach Wube sefer*.

Saris Gebbi

Tasa Gebbi

50 Beteseb Gebbi

Balambaras Gebbi
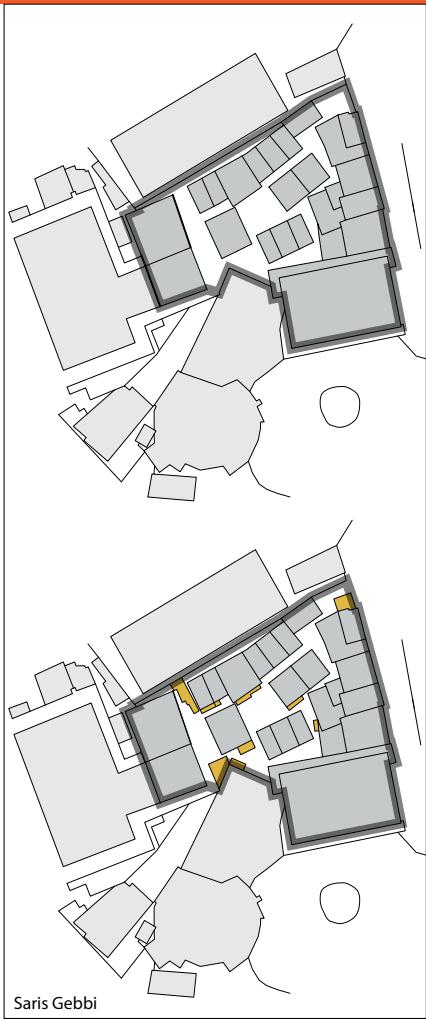
FIG. 6.19 Illustration of evolution through addition and adaptation of building spaces in *Serategna sefer*.

Basha Mulat Gebbi

Qibe Gebbi

Beqel Gebbi

Gash Semmu Gebbi
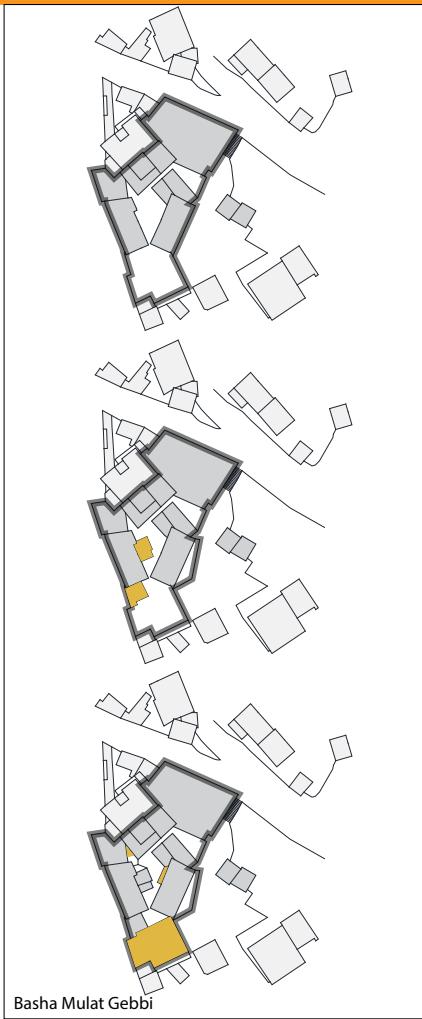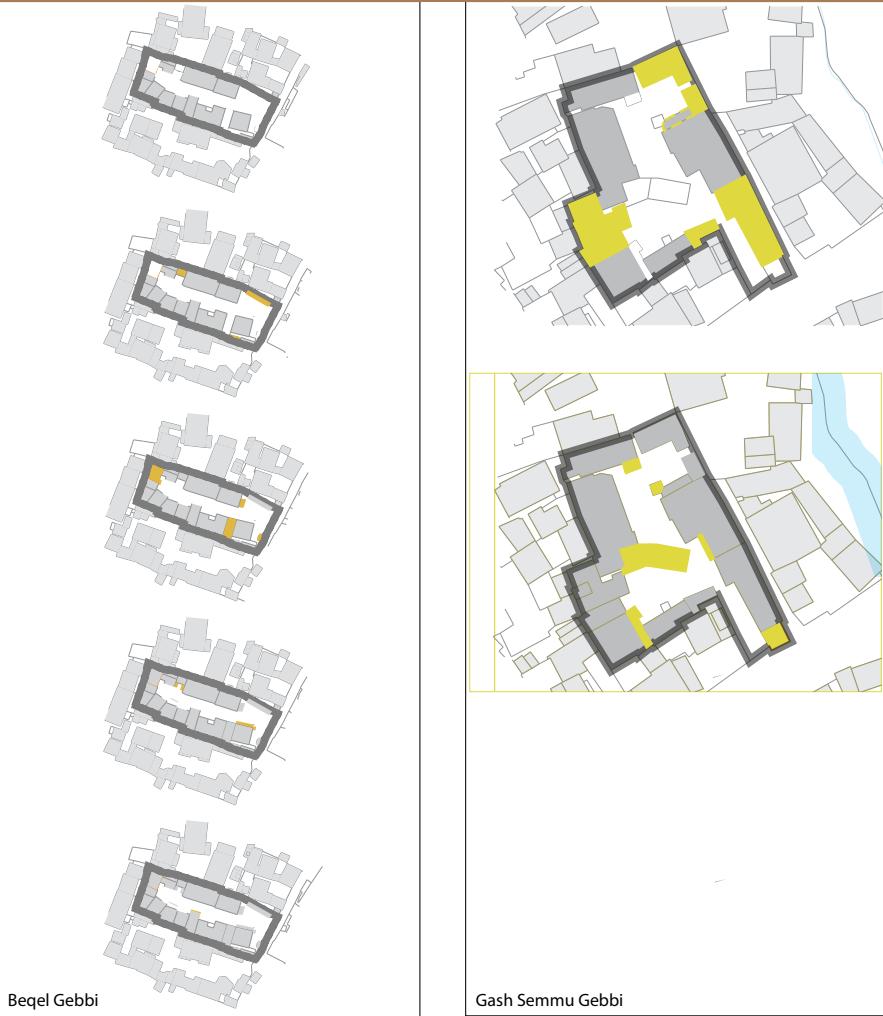
FIG. 6.20 Illustration of evolution through addition and adaptation of building spaces in *Geja sefer*.

Memher Tesemma Gebbi

Gash Tadesse Gebbi
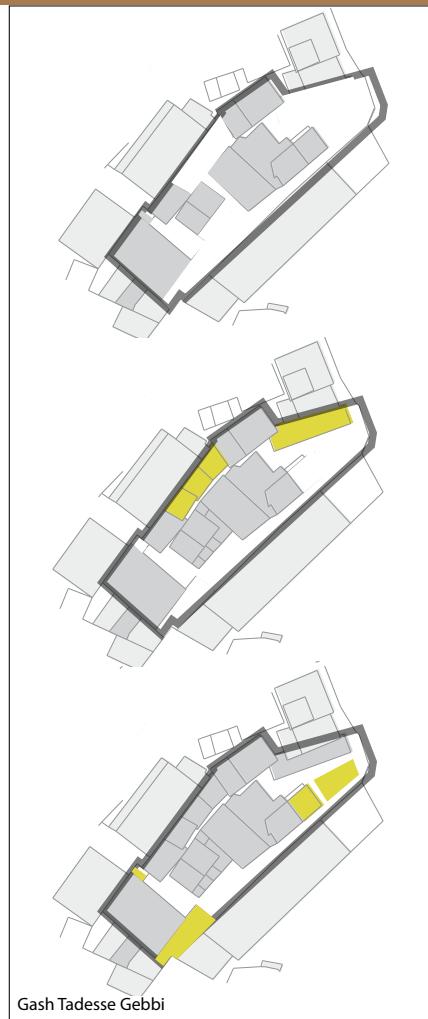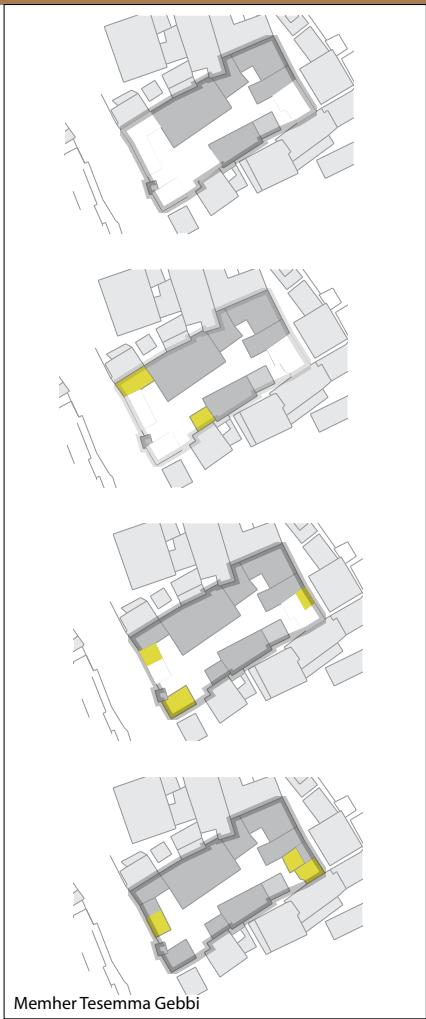
6.2 Manifestations of complexity in *gebbi*

This section is a visual illustration that exposes the typological attributes of the *gebbi* as urban components in Addis Ababa. The features of *gebbi* discussed separately in the previous section are composed and presented in two parts as visual summaries. The first part presents three *gebbi* from each of the three case *sefer* to illustrate their spatial and functional features. Using axonometric drawings it elaborates the courtyard-like spaces within *gebbi* as typifying platforms where complexity manifests. The second part of this section is a visual-ethnographic presentation of complexity as a composite of stories told by dwellers and the site observations documented by the researcher. Three example *gebbi*; *Meqdela*, *Qibe*, and *Beqel gebbi* are selected from *Dejach Wube*, *Serategna*, and *Geja sefer* respectively for such an exposition.

Typological features of *gebbi*

The survey of the *gebbi* is done by making use of a cadaster map that is referred to, among local professional communities, as Nortec map that is updated in 2010.[366] The following typological presentation contains five types of information (area, perimeter, number of households embedded, number of social spaces within, and number of households at the social spaces) and further description of spatial qualities. Area and perimeter information offer a scalar understanding of the *gebbi*; added to which the number of households embedded provide a density conception. What is described as the 'social space' in such mapping is the shared space within *gebbi* where sharing, negotiation, social interaction, and home-based production activities are observed to be intense. These spaces are defined by the households that circumscribe them and have direct access and use for them. Such households are thus quantified as 'households at the social spaces.' Some households within *gebbi* may not have direct access to such spaces but the sharing, claiming, and negotiation practices grant them indirect access and utility.

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[366] The absence or inaccessibility of up to date and appropriate cadaster or GIS data is a prevailing restraint to spatial research in Ethiopia. Spatial practices and research on Addis Ababa are thus limited in precision information.

TOC
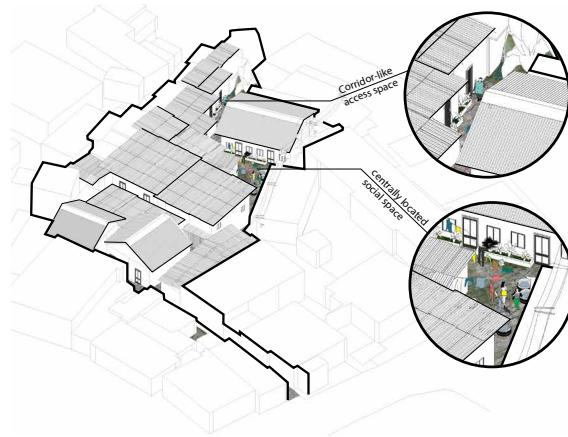
KOREA GEBBI

Area: ~700m²
Perimeter: ~160m
No. of Households: 15
No. of Socia Spaces: 1
No. Households at social space: 4
Description:
Korea gebbi is a compact compound with a continuous circulatory route through the built forms and a central social space midway to accommodate shared needs of the gebbi community.
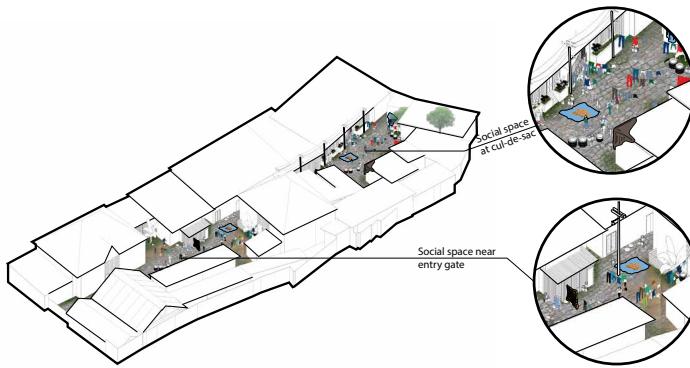
MEQDELA GEBBI

Area: ~1800m²
Perimeter: ~205m
No. of Households: 36
No. of Socia Spaces: 2
No. Households at social space: 9 & 9
Description:
Meqdela gebbi is a compound with two wide social spaces connected with an access route. One of these spaces is close to entry gate whereas the other is a sort of cul-de-sac. Nine households have direct access to each space.
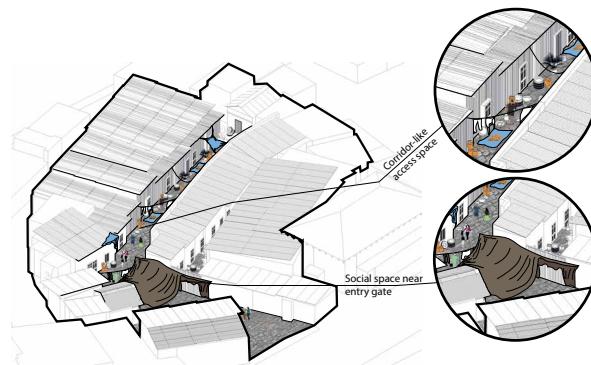
TASA GEBBI

Area: ~900m²
Perimeter: ~125m
No. of Households: ~21
No. of Socia Spaces: 1
No. Households at social space: 2
Description:
Tasa gebbi is a dense compound that has two corridor-like access spaces that connect to a wider social space close to an access gate. One of the corridors is separated by an internal gate creating a gebbi-within-gebbi situation.

FIG. 6.21 Illustration of typological features of three selected *gebbi* from *Dejach Wube sefer.*
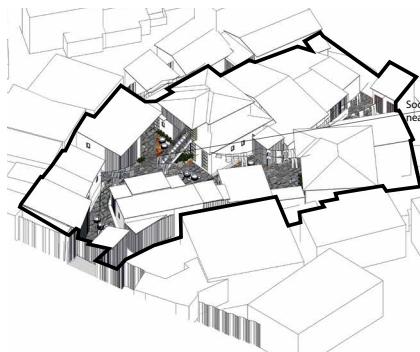
BALAMBARAS GEBBI

Area: ~1000m²
Perimeter: ~140m
No. of Households: 15
No. of Socia Spaces: 1
No. Households at social space: 5
Description:
Bambaras gebbi is located at the edge of a river. The space within is thus sloped downward from West to East. The wider space at the entry area is a social space, and access spaces cascade down to the rear/river bank.
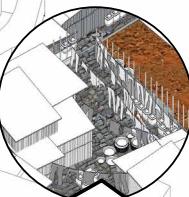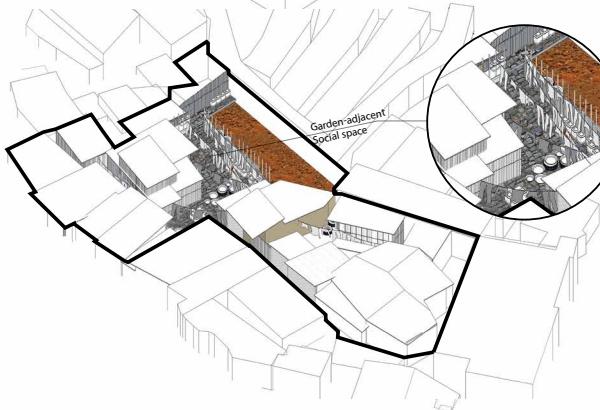
QIBE GEBBI

Area: ~1000m²
Perimeter: ~155m
No. of Households: 12
No. of Socia Spaces: 1
No. Households at social space: 2
Description:
Qibe gebbi has a social space adjacent to a vegetable garden. This allows the residents with a flexibility to expand it when the need for gathering arises. Tentacles of access routes lead to dwelling units.
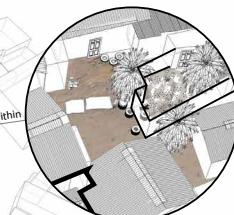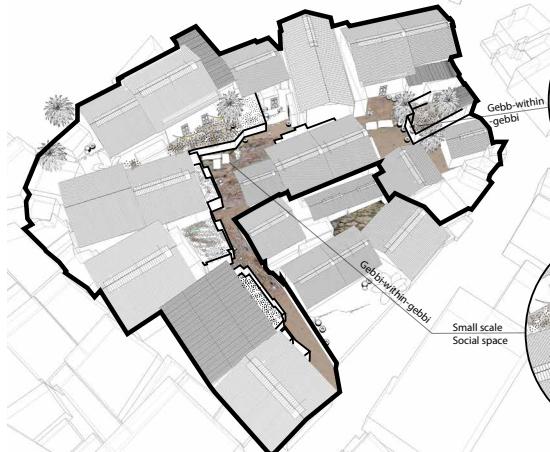
50 BETESEB GEBBI

Area: ~1500m²
Perimeter: ~195m
No. of Households: 50
No. of Socia Spaces: 1
No. Households at social space: --
Description:
50 Beteseb gebbi is a dense community with little social space thus, main gathering is done outside the gebbi. An access space connects two main gates (South & East). There are 5 gated gebbi-within-gebbi.

FIG. 6.22 Illustration of typological features of three selected *gebbi* from *Serategna sefer*.

GASH SEMMU GEBBI

Area: ~1000m²
Perimeter: ~145m
No. of Households: 19
No. of Socia Spaces: 2
No. Households at social space: 6 & 9
Description:
There are two social spaces devided by two kitchens and a storage room under one roof placed at an angle in the middle. The social space near the entry gate is encroached on by a temporaryly canvas covered storage whereas a partial wall, in the second social space seems to create a third division.

BEQEL GEBBI

Area: ~1300m²
Perimeter: ~160m
No. of Households: 22
No. of Socia Spaces: 1
No. Households at social space: 14
Description:
Beqel gebbi's social space is a continuous one. As malt producing community, the main working area is close to the entry gate, but the intensity of social and economic activities is relatively consistent throughout.

MEMHER TESEMMA GEBBI

Area: ~600m²
Perimeter: ~104m
No. of Households: 13
No. of Socia Spaces: 2
No. Households at social space: 8 & 2
Description:
A continuous social space and a shaded workshop area for the production of sandals out of used tyres are the two social spaces in Memher Tesemma gebbi. The sandal production is home-based income generation activity involving at least two families in the gebbi.

FIG. 6.23 Illustration of typological features of three selected *gebbi* from *Geja sefer*.

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Mapping the storified complexity of *gebbi*

The material dilapidation and visual clutter discussed in the previous section are relatively straightforward perceptions than the social complexity entrenched in *gebbi*. Hence, to understand what is visible, it is important to study what is the lived and storified experience of residents. This section presents visual illustrations of three *gebbi* through the stories of residents and on-site documentation. The use of visual documentation of both respondents' stories and the researcher's observation have thus both analytic and synthetic application. As stated in Chapter 3 and exemplified in Jan Rothuizen's work, drawing is a form of note taking, an object of analysis, and a technique of representation. Textual and visual information capture the place, stories, and the moment of documentation, and are processed and presented here in tandem. FIG. 6.24 and FIG. 6.25 are illustrations of a social space within *Meqdela gebbi* of *Dejack Wube sefer*. As shown earlier, this *gebbi* has two social spaces one of which is located at the deepest position away from the entry gate of the *gebbi*. It is a sort of cul-de-sac around which a number of households are clustered; nine of which have direct access to it. FIG. 6.26 to FIG. 6.32 narrate a morning in *Qibe gebbi* of *Serategna sefer*; a vibrant common space hosting a variety of social and economic activities. And FIG. 6.33 to FIG. 6.35 represent *Beqel gebbi* of *Geja sefer*; a dynamic space of production and social interaction. These illustrations are first documented on site as quick sketches, photographs, and audio and video recordings followed by redrawing, translation, transcription, and visual analysis works.

"We are very much used to who is washing clothes when. We don't even have to talk about it. But if there are some changes we inform eachother and that is that."

Glass window protected by a frame of metal bars.

plants serve as space defining elements, articulating corners, and claiming semi-private spaces off of the common space for private use by a family.

Corrugated Iron sheet wall

Concrete plastered wall

plants grown in plastic bags and buckets include herbs used for cooking and coffee making.

former wooden building parts now collected as "firewood for cooking"

Rubble of cobble stones and broken building parts indicates recent building modification

used tyre being reused as elevated base for washing clothes.

'mesob' (straw made trough) regularly used to store 'injera' used here for drying 'beqel' / malt.

FIG. 6.24 A cul-de-sac type social space in *Meqdela gebbi* of *Dejach Wube sefer*.

majority of the clothes hanging are hand woven traditional womens' wear

Hanging cables shared among neighbors for drying clothes

an about 1 sq.m. ceramic tile flooring defines entry way to a private residence.

grains and 'berbere' laid out for sun drying on plastic sheets.

Chiselled river stone floor laid on earth, no mortar or pointing.

'There are 36 households in this gebbi. At the entrance, on your left side there is the oldest building in the gebbi that was built by the former owner of the whole property; Ashebir Gebrehiwot. The second and bigger house is the one in the middle. He rented out the rest of the structures in the gebbi and hired a property manager who controlled the finances and maintenance of the gebbi in those days. So, it is through this manager that I rented this house here. Then the whole property was nationalized by the Derg regime and those of us who were already living here were transferred as tenants from Ashebir to the government. Only a few have recently left the gebbi through the condominium housing project. We have lived together for many years, so we still keep the relationship and visit each other. Our relationship is more that blood relation. In this gebbi we really love each other, we have a strong relationship. We have iddir, but iddir is not even necessary because the social bond we have is already sufficient.'

almost all corners are covered with vegetation

Recently washed clothes are hung to dry

'My brother works on what you see here set out to dry. These are cookie-trays in-the-making. He has a machine to press and mold them into shape. He collects paper waste such as used newsletters, tears them into pieces and uses home-made adhesive to mix them together. Then he sets it out to dry in plane shapes that he later puts through the machine as I told you. He was employed at a business doing the same job. But not he bought the machine himself and works for himself based here.'

A child is playing with a mop and a girl is splashing her face with water as two women spread spices and grains on a plastic sheet stretched on the stone pavement of the gebbi.

herbs and flowers planted in pots adjacent to entry door

Recently washed clothes are spread out to dry

FIG. 6.25 A cul-de-sac type social space connects to the circulation leading to an adjacent social within *Meqdela gebbi* of *Dejach Wube sefer*.

A number of satelite dishes
are mounted on roofs of
houses.

A number of cloth
hanging chords,
electrical wires, and
telecom cables
criss-cross the shared
space

External wall
made of
corrugated iron
sheet

Steel stair system
to access elevated
residence.

A narrow corridor/alley
connects two social
spaces with Mekdela
gebbi.

Large stone pavement

Malt spread out to
dry under the sun

Boards of recycled
paper, in the process
to be made into cookie
trays for sale.

TOC

Labels within the figure:

- Washed cloth hung to dry
- Corrugated iron sheet roofing
- Wooden stud hoists ropes that are used for hanging cloth.
- Corrugated iron sheet roofing
- Washed cloth hung to dry
- Serategna sefer iddir's mattreses
- Corrugated iron sheet wall
- Gypsum plastered and painted mud wall
- A ca. 50m long alley connects the gebbi with the main street
- Iddir members sorting Serategna sefer Iddir's utencils, tent, pots, cups, benches and such items.
- Common water supply point "bono" with seating around it.
- Six youngsters take turns to carry serategna sefer iddir's benches towards a mourner's residence.
- reused tires for washing support
- washing trough
- Buckets
- Steel Frames of iddir tent
- Portable cooking stove of Serategna sefer iddir.
- Cement screed pointed stone pavement

A morning at Qibe Gebbi of Serategna sefer:
Two households are doing laundry; a woman is cooking outdoors; children are running around and playing; three young women are sat by the water supply and chatting; a matress mender is fixing an old matress owned by one of the families; a young woman is cleaning the cement screed and stone mixed floor of the gebbi; a group of young-sters, led by an elder, are putting out benches, tents, matresses and tent materials that belong to Serategna sefer iddir for a funenrary service that is about to begin in another part of the sefer.

FIG. 6.26 A morning at *Qibe gebbi* of *Serategna sefer* I.

A web of electric wires hanging and entangled

Clothes hung on loosely tied ropes across the passageway to the gebbi

Rough concrete finished wall

Water supply pipes

Pointed HCB wall.

'As a child, I used to play football next to the teahouse outside the gebbi, and sometimes we also kick around within this compound. We don't have appropriate place for football.
We used to put up the 'demera' (bon fire) celebrations either on the space in front of the burnt buildings or close to the access alley that connects to our gebbi. Nowadays, we do it together with other gebbi on the main streets outside the gebbi.'

Cement pointed stone wall

A patchwork of re-used, rusting and run-down corrugated iron sheet exterior wall.

Grey water runs on the walkway

Weeds and large stones pave the approach to Qibe gebbi

A woman who hired a matress repair person closely supervises the repair work

A mattress repairs man hired by a resident of Qibe gebbi: he routinely goes around the sefer shouting 'ferash adash,' meaning 'matress repairs' until he is hired for the task. A cooking pots' repairs man did the same but, there was no job for him on this day.

'It is called Qibe (butter) gebbi because of what my mother does here. She brings butter from Sebeta town and sells it from here. Cheese costs 175 ETB and the butter costs around 100 ETB. It is all processed and readymade in Sebeta and she is only distributing it here. She started it even before I was born, she has been doing it as a business for a long time now. From Monday to Saturday, she sells it from within our home, but on Sundays, she takes it to St. George church area to sell it to on the streets. She has a lot of customers but is he business is dwindling these days because houses are being demolished and people are moving out of this area into the condominiums. Since the beginning of the demolition of parts of the sefer, the business has gradually declined. There was also another competing trader who was selling butter as well, but now she has moved to one of the condominiums herself. I also have friends who used to live here, in the part of the gebbi that is burnt down. Even though they have moved out to places like Jemo and Yeka Abado, they still come here, almost every day, to hang out with us who remained here.'

'Starting from the approach to the narrow alley the whole compound is called Qibe gebbi. That is because qibe (butter) is sold by our neighbors. The butter comes from Sululta and Sheno towns outside of the city. The neighbor buys it in bulk from Merkato and sells it from her house.'

FIG. 6.27 A morning at *Qibe gebbi* of *Serategna sefer* II.

'I was born in North Shewa and I came to the city during the last year of Emperor Haileselassie's rain and the beginning of the Derg regime. I and some of my friends came here secretly [hidden from our families]. When I first arrived in the city, I sheltered at a household that hired me as a maid for a while. Then, a friend asked me to live together in a rented house and I moved with her. It is at that time that I met my husband to be. We started living in a rented house somewhere in this sefer. Eventually we rented this house here, got married and raised four children. They are now adults with their own families. I used to work as a maid in different households during that time. The salary was small, 10 to 15 ETB per month. Thus, I also prepared and sold food at my home, like a small restaurant. I also sold 'injera' (staple food in Ethiopia). My husband passed away seven years ago at the age of 72. Once my children became independent, they asked me to retire, and currently, they support me, and I don't have to work anymore.

We rented this house from W/ro Negatua, a very caring lady, including her husband. She used to live here too. But when Derg came to power, she died of misery, as all her property got taken by the government and became seriously ill and suffered to death. They were never compensated for the property. She was a good lady; she used to prepare food for the events at St. George church. She had a number of maids who tended for the domestic works of cooking and brewing. After her death, some of those maids remained here by renting parts of the compound from the government. The lady took care of me when I gave birth back in the days. She provided for all the food I and my family needed during my post pregnancy period. I am basically a customer renting a house here, but she was very kind to me, such a kind person.

I have both women's and men's iddir. Serategna sefer iddir is one of them and the storage you see there is of that iddir… I like the holidays and feasts I celebrate together with my neighbors. We call each other and gather in different houses in turns and have coffee, eat, drink and feast together. I like that about this gebbi. I don't want to move out of it; I can't even walk the stairs of the condominiums since I have problems with my leg. Currently, I don't feel safe anywhere else, I don't feel insured. I worry a lot about that. Right now, I prefer not to move out of here; the place I lived for a long-time in. I have iddir here and St. George church is close by all these are important to me. Those who have moved to the condominiums do not have these privileges. I cannot walk for a long distance too, you see.'

Bed sheets hanging to dry in the midday sun.

Sealed window.

Lamp

Painted corrugated iron sheet wall

Water supply line

Wall forming algae from moisture.

A mother sits by the shared water source (bono) and chats with her daughter

Laundry waste water openly flows on the ground.

''We have a shared kitchen for twelve households of the gebbi. I only use it for big events, to bake bread and to brew 'tella.' For everyday cooking I use a charcoal stove at my home.

FIG. 6.28 A morning at *Qibe gebbi* of *Serategna sefer* III.

'Our home was quite small. About a year ago, we acquired the permit from the 'kebele' (local administration) to modify it a little bit. So, we added a floor as you can see. We have a small sleeping and storage area added up there. That gives us more space in the living area as you can see, and we are able to partition it to have another bedroom behind there too.

'We have a shared water source in the middle of the gebbi. But also, we have tap water for example for three households including mine separately. We also share the kitchen you see there for all the households in the gebbi. When there is a feast or a holiday, that is where we all bake and cook. For example, if we bake bread, it will be two at a time and we follow turns to do so. It is mainly for bigger events that we cook there, but for daily consumption we cook at our own places. There is love and understanding and we accommodate each other's needs and wishes.

Electric supply lines enter houses through windows or ceilings.

Wood-framed CIS door

Space infront of their living room where the twins were having breakfast.

Vertically extended /added space.

Serategna sefer iddir storage

Abandoned shelf.

Woman Washing cloths.

For a funeral we seldom use the open space in the middle to mount the tent. And the women's iddir uses the shared kitchen to prepare the food for the funeral.

We have shared toilets; a toilet per four households. We have water source to be shared among all, but we also have individual taps for every home too.

The ropes that are suspended for drying cloth is for common use. There is no one saying this is mine or that is mine. We don't quarrel on such shared utilities.

I had hosted the wedding of my son here. All the cooking and preparation was done here in the gebbi and transported to a venue we privately rented for the event. All the neighbors and singers came here in the morning, we sang and danced as we accompanied my son when he left, on the wedding day, to the bride's home.

We benefit from a strong social life in our sefer. Even when there is a funeral and the three days have already passed. Neighbors keep visiting the bereaved, we gather extra money to their benefit. We make sure the mourning family is well taken care of. This is thus, even beyond the customary function of the iddir.'

Sealed top window; a sole source of lighting the interior

Metal Sheet door of a private residence

Thinly plastered and painted HCB wall

Metal Sheet door of Serategna sefer Iddir Store.

Washing trough

Old/reused tyres for washing support

Cleaning items (Garbage spade, Mop, and Garbage sack)

Metal support for washing trough

waste water drains through river stone tiles

washing troughs

Wooden benches of Serategna sefer iddir

Portable metal stove (for fire wood based cooking), owned by Serategna sefer iddir

'Before the Derg regime W/ro Nigatwa used to be the landlord of this gebbi, some current inhabitants of the compound used to be her servants. She was then dispossessed of this probetrty by the derg government, who subsiquently rented it out to those who had no houses for cheap prices. The kitchen is communal, but we use the communal kitchen only for heavy cooking, for the day-to-day cooking we use our own living space. I've had a wedding ceremony for my son at this gebbi, we have women's association too; we have a lot of history in this gebbi.'

'Recently, a fire accident destroyed some houses in this gebbi. Those residents who lost their houses because of that have been relocated to Jemo, Yeka abado and places like that. Since then we are using the land as a garder to grow some vegetables.'

FIG. 6.29 A morning at Qibe *gebbi* of *Serategna sefer* IV.

Behind the steel frames on the left is the larger common space of Qibe gebbi.

A garden fenced with abandoned shelves, couches and an outer most layer of plastic sheet.

Young residents' trial to utilize the space for income (woodwork and tailoring) was an unsuccessful investment. Currently, the gebbi dwellers led by a woman produce vegetables for household use.

Abandoned shelf

Abandoned metal work.

Garden weed grows at corners

Space in the Qibe Gebbi 13 years ago used to house 11 families. (destroyed by fire accident)

a large shading tree is seen at the background

Electric pole and cables

Rugs and old sheets hanging on wire.

growing vegetables (kale, tomatoes, lettus, and occasionally some onions and garlic.)

Wood work from the burnt-down houses remain visible

Another gebbi

Patches of rusting CIS and wooden frame fence around the vacated land

False-banana trees are commonly used as foil for the baking of traditional bread and as cultural cutlery presentation for meals.

'My mother was born and raised in Fiche town. Her mother, my grandmother died when she was only seven. Berhanesellassie, who was the landlord of the gebbi and others in this area, also had around 60 'gasha meret' land property in Fiche and he and his wife W/ro Negatua adopted her there and brought and raised her here. So I was born and raised afterward in this house.

I have four iddir; two women's and two men's iddir—Mikael and Giorgis iddir. Some of my iddir co-members (iddirtegna) have left the gebbi and moved to the condominiums such as Jemo, Gelan, Tulu Dimtu, and Yeka Abado areas. You see, about thirteen years ago, a fire incident burnt down the houses that used to be over there, the empty space that you see up front now. The first building, out of all the houses in the gebbi, was part of those that got burnt. We really don't know what caused it; it just happened on one unfortunate night while we were all asleep. Because of that, eleven households moved out of the gebbi. The government gave them houses in different parts of the city. Since it became empty, we planted kale and cabbage and now it's a small farm. Whatever I produce from it, I share it with the whole gebbi, I

don't eat it alone. In addition, whenever there is a big event, be it a graduation, wedding, or funeral, that space now serves as an extension to the open space here and allows us to erect the tent needed.'

'The fire started at about 8:00 or 9:00 PM, some were asleep, but most were still fortunately awake. Otherwise, we would all have died of the fire. When my neighbor came out of her house and turned around, she saw the fire. I was tired of a long journey from another town back here, so I had gone to sleep early. Then when we heard the cries 'fire, fire, fire' we all ran out into the streets. It didn't reach my house, but it destroyed a lot of property. Those who left the gebbi because of the fire were temporarily hosted at a place close to Shewa hotel area. But another incident of fire destroyed that place too; any of the property that was saved from the previous fire was destroyed by the second one there.'

FIG. 6.30 A morning at Qibe *gebbi* of *Serategna sefer* V.

The rear facade of an apartment building lining the Haileselassie I street and toweing over Qibe gebbi

Hung cloth can be seen through open windows of apartments

The rear facade of an apartment building

Multiple satelite dishes anchored to roofs

HCB wall

Recently added floor makes a double story house.

washed and wire hung sofa drapery

Recently added floor makes a double story house.

Wooden posts hoist cloth hanging cables

galvanized CIS wall

The girls wash cloth collaboratively; as one girl soap washes the other one rinses and hangs the clean cloth.

Folded mattress

Ladies chatting sitting by water supply

clean water filled barrel

soaping

Shared water supply

stone pavement

clean water filled bucket

rinse trough

rinse bucket

waste basket

Sound of children playing, and elders shouting comands across can be heard

stone pavement

'Well, it would be nice if our homes are repaired and maintained (by the government as the entity that collects the rent money). If it was allowed for us to expand our houses vertically, we can add bedrooms for the children up there. These are small rooms and the local administrators do not allow any changes to the structure. They forbid us from adding floors and change the structure but, maintaining things as they are is allowed. A few years ago, they were a bit lenient with those rules, and I used that opportunity to expand a little bit, on my own expense, and have an extra bedroom for myself on the ground level, and a couple of rooms, as a mezzanine floor, for two of my children.'

FIG. 6.31 A morning at *Qibe gebbi* of *Serategna sefer* VI

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Layers of plastic mats and corrugated iron sheet make up roof

Multiple shoes placed on top of roof

Lightu bulb

AD Poster

The space immediately infront of an entry to a residence is customarily used for domestic activities such as cooking on the daily basis. In some instances, it is also claimed and appropriated for income generation avctivities.

Entance to resdidence 2
A dweller here runs a recipe preparation business with small restaurants as customers

Plug   switch

corrugated iron sheet forming wall of house

Entance to residence 1
A dweller here runs the vegetable grinding business

old wooden doors

charcoal stove

weighing device hooked to wooden log used to measure vegetables to be diced or minced by machine

machine used to finely dice vegetables.

CIS wall

drapery covers a sack

small plastic buckets

aluminum pot

plastic mat floor covering

steps leading up to Entance of house

charcoal stove

'The grinder you see here is a small business I do. I charge 2 ETB per a kilogram of vegetables such as tomato and onion that people bring to be ground.'

FIG. 6.32 A morning at *Qibe gebbi* of *Serategna sefer* VII

'My grandparent used to own the whole Gebbi [before the 1975 nationalization of properties]. My grandfather used to bring and trade leather and spices from the Southern region. Once they settled here, he changed his business into the production and distribution of mirrors. The warehouse, where they used to produce it in is still here. And my grandmother started producing malt and selling it to those who brew. Ever since, the males down the generation line continued the mirror production business, and the females continued the malt production. We support our families based on these. The mirror production is now expanded to the sale and fitting of large glass panels for buildings and such and the malt production has now expanded to the whole sefer.'

Electric and cloth drying cables stretch across the gebbi

Plastic shade covering storage area.

Wheat stored outdoor, yet to be processed to Beqel.

Drying baskets.

Central space is used for malt production on a daily basis. On occasions itis used for iddir events, weddings, and feasts.
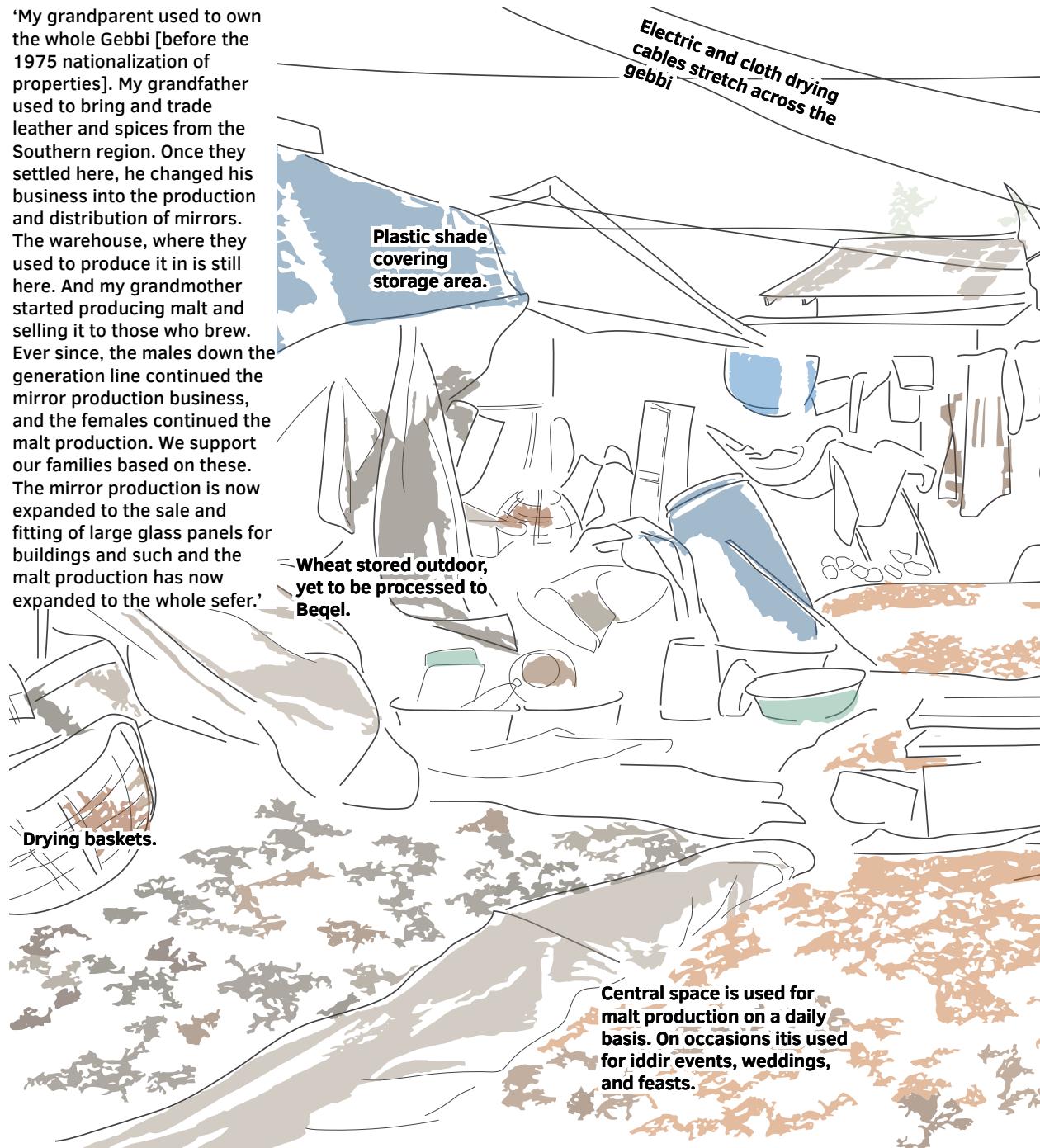
FIG. 6.33 The malt producing community of *Beqel gebbi* in *Geja Sefer* I.

This building is the first structure built in the Gebbi by the owners of the property before its nationalization in 1975.

False banana trees

'The Old House'.

Drying plastic bag.

Families most often use their immediate exterior space for daily chores, shared kitchens are used for bigger events.

'The wheat for the malt comes from Kolfe area. We call delivery people on the phone, and they bring it to us on donkeys. Depending on the season and weather, the malt production takes from 3 to 15 days. The rainy seasons are particularly challenging. We sell it to small scale traders from Merkato who will then distribute it further. The relationship between the delivery people, the traders, and ourselves is old and we rely on each other a lot. This relation-ship allows us to avoid brokers and middlemen and makes our business relatively affordable. Here, everything is close by. If you then move out everything becomes too far. The transport becomes impossible. '

Households customize floor materials in front of their house to claim space for private use.

White painted rocks fence gardens

Wooden boxes and pallets for storage.

Walkway left for circulation.

The 'beqel' production utilizes recycled plastic sheets at different stages—for storage, spreading and drying out-doors, or covering during rain.

'I came from a village called Dach within Buta Jira area in Gurage in 1977 E.C. as I followed my husband whom I married in the rural area then. My husband was widowed but was living here before marrying me. I have heard that, back in the days, the malt production was based on 'profit-to-be-shared' arrangement with the then landlord of the gebbi. Fifty percent of the profit was given to the landlord and the rest was for the producers themselves. So, his deceased wife used to work with this arrangement with the landlords.

Donkeys bring the grains from the market to us here. We then put the grain into barrels and soak it in water. It stays soaking overnight and on the next morning, we drain it with the two baskets you see over there and put it into clean sacks. On the third morning, we put it back into barrels and wash and drain it again. Then we lay it on the ground on top of paper-mats and put rocks on top of it. It stays buried up to five days maximum. After five days, we unearth it and break it into pieces. We only break it into large pieces so that we can put it in vertical position and save as much working space as possible. Gradually, it dries and becomes ready for sale. Just one quintal of grain can take about 15 days of work during the rainy season, but on average it is a nine days' process. Overall, during the rainy season we are only able to work on two quintals and in the dry season we can produce a quintal per week.

There is no money that we save aside out of this work, but we are barely able to feed ourselves. I borrow the grains needed to start the process from traders at 'ehil berenda' (grains market) in Merkato, and return or pay them back afterwards, then borrow again. It is a cycle of debt, not much profit in it. It is also very much labor-intensive.'

Mops and brooms placed on top of the roof

A series of partitioned and shaded space used by households for production and storage the malt-in-process, materials and equipment.

Run-down corrugated iron sheet covered with a layer of plastic shade in the front.

Platform made of wooden crates and palets prepared for storage overnight to keep the dried malt off of ground moisture and rain drains.

Rough river rocks used to apply pressure on the burried, wet grains become smooth in due time upon sustained use.

Wheat processed into malt, laid out to dry in the sun, brought out at dawn and collected at dusk every day for 4-15 days depending on the season.

FIG. 6.34 The malt producing community of *Beqel gebbi* in *Geja Sefer* II.

In addition to the corrugated iron sheet fence, trees mark the borders between gebbi

Clothes hanging on the edges of the gebbi so as to avoid the dripping of water onto the malt that is ready to be sold

Basket made of bamboo used to filter wheat from water before fermentation begins.

Though small in amount, dark colored malt made of barley is seen. This is sometimes produced upon special request by customers.

Plastic mat laid underneath the drying malt.

'I came from a village called Dach within Buta Jira area in Gurage in 1977 E.C. as I followed my husband whom I married in the rural area then. My husband was widowed but was living here before marrying me. I have heard that, back in the days, the malt production was based on 'profit-to-be-shared' arrangement with the then landlord of the gebbi. Fifty percent of the profit was given to the landlord and the rest was for the producers themselves. So, his deceased wife used to work with this arrangement with the landlords.

Donkeys bring the grains from the market to us here. We then put the grain into barrels and soak it in water. It stays soaking overnight and on the next morning, we drain it with the two baskets you see over there and put it into clean sacks. On the third morning, we put it back into barrels and wash and drain it again. Then we lay it on the ground on top of paper-mats and put rocks on top of it. It stays buried up to five days maximum. After five days, we unearth it and break it into pieces. We only break it into large pieces so that we can put it in vertical position and save as much working space as possible. Gradually, it dries and becomes ready for sale. Just one quintal of grain can take about 15 days of work during the rainy season, but on average it is a nine days' process. Overall, during the rainy season we are only able to work on two quintals and in the dry season we can produce a quintal per week.

There is no money that we save aside out of this work, but we are barely able to feed ourselves. I borrow the grains needed to start the process from traders at 'ehil berenda' (grains market) in Merkato, and return or pay them back afterwards, then borrow again. It is a cycle of debt, not much profit in it. It is also very much labor-intensive.'

'When I moved to this gebbi; I came from a town called Ginchi, the residents were already producing and selling malt. I learnt the tread quickly. Those who are healthy and strong take the product to the market themselves, without any intermediaries. I used to do that in my early days. Those people whom I met in that period, my customers, never left me. Now that I am old and ill, I cannot take my product to the market, so those customers come to my doorsteps to pick it up themselves. They then take it to different markets and sell it; even as far as Sululta and Sebeta towns. I raised my four children as a single mother based on this work.'

A number of women living in the gebbi wake up early in the morning everyday to attend to the malt production process, either to bury it or to set it out to dry. They keep tending for the malt during the day and in response to the position and intensity of the sun and the possibility of rain.

Mud and straw wall with exposed wooden beams.

Rusted CIS partition.

Water tap at the corner is used for the malt produc-tion.

Barrel to store water in

Malt just taken out of four days of burial; the wheat has now transformed into a bread like form entangled with fibers. When laid out in the open, usually at dawn, it comes out with heat that is produced by the fermenation process.

Cat keeps watch for mice from eating away the burried malt in its processing stage.

FIG. 6.35 The malt producing community of *Beqel gebbi* in *Geja Sefer* III.
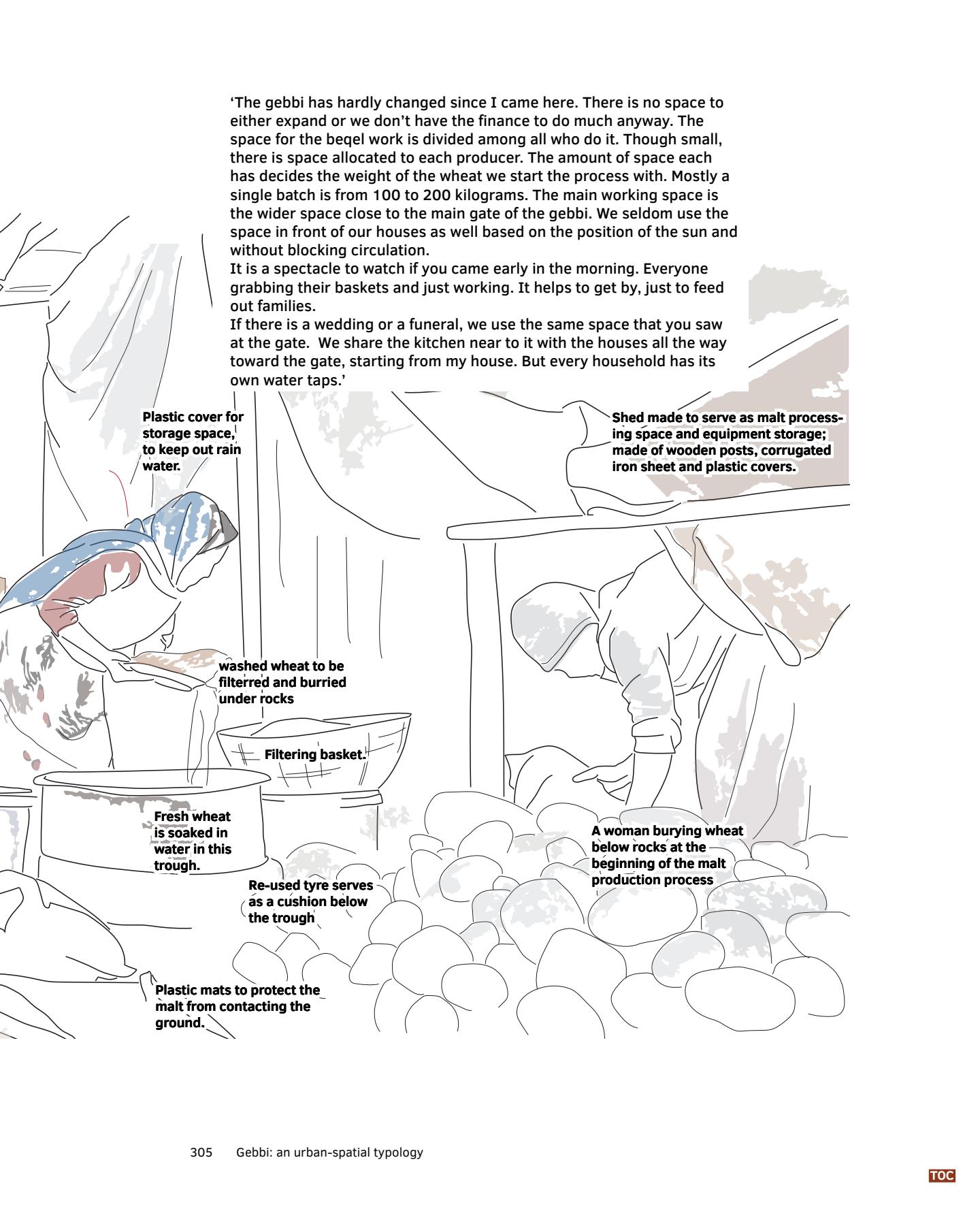
'The gebbi has hardly changed since I came here. There is no space to either expand or we don't have the finance to do much anyway. The space for the beqel work is divided among all who do it. Though small, there is space allocated to each producer. The amount of space each has decides the weight of the wheat we start the process with. Mostly a single batch is from 100 to 200 kilograms. The main working space is the wider space close to the main gate of the gebbi. We seldom use the space in front of our houses as well based on the position of the sun and without blocking circulation.

It is a spectacle to watch if you came early in the morning. Everyone grabbing their baskets and just working. It helps to get by, just to feed out families.

If there is a wedding or a funeral, we use the same space that you saw at the gate. We share the kitchen near to it with the houses all the way toward the gate, starting from my house. But every household has its own water taps.'

Plastic cover for storage space, to keep out rain water.

Shed made to serve as malt processing space and equipment storage; made of wooden posts, corrugated iron sheet and plastic covers.

washed wheat to be filterred and burried under rocks

Filtering basket.

Fresh wheat is soaked in water in this trough.

A woman burying wheat below rocks at the beginning of the malt production process

Re-used tyre serves as a cushion below the trough

Plastic mats to protect the malt from contacting the ground.

To summarize, it is impossible to capture the *gebbi* as fixed architypes. They are geometrical and spatially variant—every *sefer* is different, and every *gebbi* exhibits differences in size, shape, and form. Thus, a typological discussion, as in the purely architectural sense, can hardly be done based solely on the physical features of the *gebbi*. It is based on the conception of them as palimpsests of the various features illustrated so far; both of social and spatial characters, that a certain defining parameter for *gebbi* can be established.

FIG. 6.36 An illustration of the difference in size, shape, and form of twelve *gebbi* documented and analyzed.

It is determined so far that the *sefer* are a cluster of *gebbi*. The *gebbi* are thus an urban spatial typology that constitute *sefer*'s morphology. Firstly, the *gebbi* is a continuum of space bound by residential buildings and circumscribing fencing, that serves circulatory, social-interaction, and income-generation functions. The buildings and fences are the spatial limits that yield a common space that is identified as the *gebbi*.

Secondly, the *gebbi* are organic compositions of space and form. The spontaneous process through which the *sefer* emerged has resulted in irregular forms and spaces within the *gebbi*.

Thirdly, the *gebbi* have at least one distinct, compactly defined main social space that exhibits intensified social and economic activities, and tight knit social relationships. Even though these spaces are generally open and accessible to those who reside in a *gebbi*, proximity and having direct access to them, creates variation in the degree of ownership and utility of it among dwellers in a *gebbi*.

Fourthly, as the size of a *gebbi* and the number of households increases the number of such spaces increases too. And when the size of a *gebbi* and the number of households within it is significantly high, such as in the case of 50 Beteseb *Gebbi* of *Serategna sefer*, separate *gebbi* within the larger *gebbi* tend to be established by placing hard (limited access) or soft (permeable) borders. The *gebbi*-within-*gebbi* are indicative of dwellers' need for a degree of privacy or separation within the shared mode of daily practices. In some cases, gates within a *gebbi* that deter access result from the tenure modality that was in place prior the nationalization of properties in 1974. Meaning, what used to be residences of owners or landlords of the larger *gebbi* in that period are separately defined with borders of various types: fences, gates, shrubs, or stairs. In other cases, these borders are placed to limit the number of households and relationship size to a certain amount. Further enquiry is needed to qualify and quantify the network sizes that dwellers find appropriate to the size and form of a social space within *gebbi*.

Fifthly, the *gebbi* is defined by the socio-spatial sharing, negotiation, and claiming acts that constantly structure and define it. These social practices are autochthonously developed means of moderation of use of space among dwellers. Many dwellers declare their pride in the ability of their *gebbi* community to coexist, collaborate and cooperate to make the most out of the limited space and resources and state that these practices define their *gebbi*.

And sixthly, the scarce provision of utility, visual clutter, and material caducity of *gebbi* are results of continued neglect by planning and governance bodies of the temporal needs of communities. Demands arising from rise in density are not met and are rather aggravated by vague regulations and inconsistent administrative practices.

7 Conclusion

The introduction in chapter 1 of this dissertation brought forth methodological and theoretical gaps and nexuses towards inclusive theorization of non-Euro-American urban contexts through cross-disciplinary exploration. To this end, it further highlighted the need for methodological innovation in architectural research, an exploration that can enhance research in architecture itself that simultaneously equips it with the means for transdisciplinary collaboration and outputs. In the chapter that followed, the specific case of the *sefer* of Addis Ababa as urban forms of neglect, both in the historical accounts of the city and in the formal planning and governance actions of the state across different regimes is expounded. These discussions highlighted the need for expanded and nuanced reading of the *sefer* to apprehend its complex make up—socially, economically, and spatially. Thus, pursuing methodological and theoretical opening for such urban conditions as the *sefer* that, existing research (especially generated via the study of mainly transatlantic cities) and development mechanisms either ignore or lack the tools to diligently capture, became the primary aim of this research. Towards this aim, this dissertation; renders a detailed account of the *sefer* of Addis Ababa city as an exemplary case, introduces and tests the trinocular as a new socio-spatial research method, and in doing so, interjects in the scholarly discourse regarding architectural and interdisciplinary research methods and context driven urban theory.

This research finds that the *sefer*, *iddir*, and *gebbi* are socio-spatial conditions and systems that boost resilience for majority urban communities in Addis Ababa. A transdisciplinary research method that utilizes the three viewing lenses of cognitive borders, social networks and relations, and spatial typologies is also found to be a productive means to understand these urban conditions and systems. The trinocular is thus a methodological advancement to those that would lead to either obscure or simplistic reading of complex urban contexts toward an expansive and inclusive one. The two sections that follow will summarize these two findings: the socio-spatial conditions and systems that the research identified, and the trinocular as a tested methodology. And in section 7.3, a review of recent developments in transdisciplinary research and the cross-cutting qualities and potentials of the trinocular are summarized.

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7.1 *Sefer*, *iddir*, and *gebbi*

Sefer are flexible boundary conditions that are primarily cognized by their dwellers. They are results of indigenous and autochthonous foundation and continued processes of self-actualization by communities that construct them. The neglect by and deviation from formal administrative delimitation and administration exhibited in *sefer* has led to its existence more in a cognized manner among dwellers than in the formal logics and documents. It is thus among the stories told and practices observed in the case sites that the cognitive borders of the respective *sefer* emerged as discussed in chapter 4.

Narratives, legends, and stories that are embedded in the names of *sefer* and their landmarks and in daily use by residents establish cognitive borders as heritage and identity are deployed as active means of 'meaning making.' Some cognitive borders are physically conditioned, meaning natural/topographic and artificial hard limits such as fences establish borders within and out of the limits they mark. The social and symbolic relevance of such physical limits are thus the conditions in which the cognized identities develop. Other borders are conterminous cognitive borders—they co-define each other either in reference to another external prevalent condition such as the Imperial palace in the case of *Serategna sefer* and its neighboring *sefer*, or among/against each other based on historicized communal relations therein. And in some instances, cognitive borders can be suspended because of cognitive ambivalence caused by perceived or real uncertainties and actual demolition of places of favored relations among communities. These borders are retained in communal narratives and identity making processes.

The *sefer* are also a collective of intricate, multi-layered socio-economic relations such as the *iddir* that are social capital for dwellers. *Iddir* is thus, a form of social capital embedded in *sefer* and appears in the structures of relations among residents, and it is also a structure by itself upon which other forms of social relations, and thus social capital, emerge. Development programs that threaten the social networks and relations that are embedded in *sefer* and *iddir* disrupt or destroy the social capital that residents invest in thus, causing socioeconomic insecurity or bankruptcy. In its elemental, and functional sense *iddir* is a socio-spatial activity that requires five types of spaces: portable shelter/tent, storage, kitchen, periodical gathering space, and administrative space/office.

The *gebbi* is an urban spatial typology that constitutes the *sefer*'s morphology. It is also the last frontier of communality just prior domestic spaces which, in many cases, can be a single multi-functional room. Territorially speaking, the term *gebbi* represents the aggregate of three elements; the fence, built forms/structures, and the circumscribed space. But it is essentially identified by the latest, while the houses and the fence are conceived as its spatial containments. Characteristically, and as a result of its formation and evolution, the *gebbi* is a composition of irregular shapes, forms, and spaces with at least one main social space. The number of social spaces tends to increase based on topography, size of the *gebbi*, and the number of households embedded in it. The social spaces are dynamic in size and shape because of the continued practices of claiming, sharing, and negotiation by and among residents regarding its utility, materiality, and aesthetics. The visual clutter and physical caducity that is present in almost all *gebbi* is a result of the temporariness, tenure insecurity, and neglect that *sefer* in general are under. This does not exclude the possibility of poverty present at local-administrative, communal, or individual levels, being possible causes, but such assessment is not in the purview of the current research and none of the findings within this research point to such a thesis.

7.2 The trinocular: prospects

The trinocular is a methodological device for research in the fields of design and planning. It engages and aligns with other disciplinary traditions that have pluralistic tendencies intended for inclusive reading of urban conditions that are regularly referred to as different, 'informal,' at times non-urban, or places that need to 'develop.' Research practices in grounded theory, comparative urbanism, and visual ethnography provided the positional and technical ground for the trinocular, but methodologically it remains in the realm of design research as it does not strictly follow the analytic practices of any of these epistemic traditions. Systematically collected data are analyzed in a continuous mode of feedback to make the discovery of wider concepts and theories possible; as such, it is not a linear, step-by-step, or layer-by-layer enquiry. Data collection, analysis and theorization are performed simultaneously as is notable, for instance, in the theoretic discussion and data analysis that is present across, and as part of, the presentation of findings in

chapters 4, 5, and 6. Language and meanings are essential aspects of the collection and analysis of data. The allegoric nature of speech, and the cultural roots of words, phrases, sayings, and stories required mindful engagement from the researcher during observation, interviews, translation, transcription, and non-precoded, cyclic analysis. In both the language, and the object of research, dissimilarities or anomalies are treated as matters of fact in the context, and seamlessly adopted in analysis and representation. And visual materials are used in data collection, analysis and reporting or representation on equivalent standing as textual information.

Such an agile and scrupulous methodology resulted in the exposition of *sefer*, *iddir*, and *gebbi* as spatial realities, social constructs, and socio-spatial concepts of adaptation, resilience, and socioeconomic security for the majority poor communities in Addis Ababa. The focus on the specific case of the *sefer* in Addis Ababa is thus an implicit comparative move. There are no other case sites for comparison but the concepts and findings in this research have potential for comparative and projective application. The methods and concepts thus can be dislocated and used to read and conceptualize other complex urban conditions in different geographies. This is thus a possible area of further application boosted by the heuristic nature and spontaneity embedded in the trinocular as a methodology. They can also be applied in projective research and practice; as is the tendency of design research, within the context itself. Since the research places residents at the center of the enquiry and positions self-actualization as the main mode of placemaking and by extension, urbanization, its findings can be used in 'user-centered,' and 'participatory' innovative research and practice. Future housing policies and projects in Addis Ababa, for instance, must start from the acknowledgement and legitimization of the *sefer* as a pragmatic mode of urbanization. Its spatial and social organs then can be the starting point of new imaginaries—they can be metaphors, or can be abstracted, adopted, appropriated, mimicked, scaled-up and in some cases trans-positioned.

Considering this methodology is only tested in the context of Addis Ababa and this dissertation alone there remain some questions as to its efficacy across contexts and design disciplines. For instance, the three lenses are a result of a process of initial observation, interviews, and analyses, but then, it would be fair to ask if the framework is too site specific. In addition, the test of the trinocular in the context has benefitted from the researcher's cultural and liguistic locatedness. The allegoric nature of stories and language was better explored because of this fact. Thus, another question would be if the methodology is too reliant on cultural and liguistic familiarity. It is clear thus, further experimentation and trans-position, as stated above, is needed to address such uncertainties and refine the efficiency of the trinocular.

7.3 Reporting on cross-cutting quality of the trinocular

This dissertation in essence is a methodological and theoretical move within design research practices to unearth the 'different.' And it is imbued with anthropological disciplinary tools, traditions, and attitudes. Cognitive borders, social relations, and spatial typologies; the three thematic lenses of the trinocular, are deployed in this research as concepts of concern for cross-disciplinary research. As such, there is no limitation in context to their utility for reading context specific complexities in other locations. Size, borders, and scale are spatial; social relations are humanistic; and the typologies are formal and spatial concerns of architecture and place making. The trinocular thus, advances conceptual, technical, and tactical means of inter-, intra-, trans-, and cross- disciplinary collaboration between architecture and other fields.

Various epistemic domains have been referenced as generative, cooperative, and operational devices of this move throughout this research. Recognized in different terms and theoretical perspectives such as "'a spatial turn,' 'a topographical turn,' 'a material turn,' 'an ontological turn,' or even 'a post human turn,'" anthropology, since the 1980's, has shown increased interest in "space, place, material surroundings, and how the human and non-human interact and entangle."[367] And recent developments such as design anthropology, and architectural anthropology, have moved towards either cross-disciplinary or collaborative overlaps between anthropology and design research and practice. They are theorized depending on their perspective or proximity to design research—whether they are tangential to or transgressing its disciplinary borders. Amerlinck's interdisciplinary definition of architectural anthropology, Stender's advocacy for a more transgressive approach to it, and Ingold's prophecy of the melding of architecture and anthropology symbolize these varying tendencies.

The trinocular, when assessed against these recent developments, differs in that it is not working between or across the sites of everyday life and the design office—it solely operates within the earlier. Even though it can provide a steppingstone for

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[367] Stender, "Towards an Architectural Anthropology—What Architects Can Learn from Anthropology and Vice Versa," 28, 32.; See also, Deborah Reed-Danahay, "Social Space: Distance, Proximity and Thresholds of Affinity," in *Thinking through Sociality: An Anthropological Interrogation of Key Concepts* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2015), 69, 91.

collaborative outcomes, it is a specific progression within the realms of design research. A fruitful cooperation though, demands an alignment in thought, methods, and posture. Hence, architecture, its interdisciplinary practices, and fieldwork traditions needed to be reevaluated. The devotion to understanding complex urban forms, their located meanings, and values requires both lateral and longitudinal expansion of architectural research, and theory. In this regard, the trinocular provides laterality through the incorporation of principles and techniques that are staple to other disciplines, and longitudinally, it advances the ways of fieldwork in complexity that is founded on its comfortableness with anomalies.

This can best be made visible if the trinocular is also evaluated against the three challenges, identified by Stender, for architecture and anthropology to develop fruitfully—communication, temporality, and normativity. In communication, especially referring to the use of visual material, she states, architectural and anthropologic researchers differ radically. The projective tendencies of architectural research also differ from the 'life as it takes place' approach of anthropologists. And most importantly, there exists difference in normativity: in that, architects tend to make qualitative judgements while anthropologists are trained to refrain from them. When evaluated against these challenges: (1) communication: the trinocular advances the use and treatment of visual material equivalent to textual material, (2) temporality: it significantly tapers projective enquiry and focuses on narrativized experiences and historicized accounts, and (3) normativity: its objective of capturing the 'different' through nuanced reading of the anomaly show that design research can and should make bold anthropological moves by tapering its instinct for qualitative judgements.

Going forward, and especially in alignment with the drive to re-center and dislocate urban and architectural theory, the trinocular can be developed as a pedagogic tool in architectural education. Even though design pedagogies in the so-called Global South encourage site visits as a form of fieldwork, they are seldom casual and lack structures that advance inquiry and active learning.[368] To his disappointment, Elias Yitbarek Alemayehu, found that the design studio that he was leading with a design brief to develop context-specific housing typologies resulted in "nothing different from previous studios—it was non-contextual."[369] Here thus, the trinocular

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368 Ashraf M. Salama, "'LEARNING ABOUT' AND 'LEARNING FROM': Enabling Approaches for Decolonizing Architectural Pedagogy in the Global South," in *The Routledge Companion to Architectural Pedagogies of the Global South* (London: Routledge, 2022), 27, https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003018841.

369 Elias Yitbarek Alemayehu, "Foreword," in *Global Housing: Dwelling in Addis Ababa* (Prinsenbeek: Jap Sam Books, 2020), 7–9.

can be used as a structured tool for architectural education, within the context of complexity, as in this case, Addis Ababa. One can thus anticipate the growth of located critical scholarship helpful for the generation of in-context knowledge and know how—re-centering architectural theory.

Efforts such as that of the Global Housing educational program developed at the Department of Architecture of Delft University of Technology (TU Delft) wherein, a diverse cohort of students and educators are engaged in intense cross-cultural exchanges within the studio, while at the same time are dislocated into complex urban contexts such as Addis Ababa, Nalasopara, and Dhaka,[370] can benefit from the structures of the trinocular as a means to explore context specific knowledge. Meaning, the trinocular in this situation, can be a framing tool to cross-pollinate concepts that are unearthed from a specific location. Through sustained engagement of this kind, it can thus be anticipated that cross-cultural scholarship can grow in a manner that diffuses established categories and cartographies—dislocating urban and architectural theory. These pedagogical experimentations at various scholastic environments can also be further testing grounds for the trinocular itself.

And finally, this research started in 2016 with the interest to conceptualize a counter proposition to the housing programs such as the IHDP discussed in chapter 2 —to generate alternative housing solutions through bottom-up research. The top-down tilt of the IHDP and the primacy of efficiency and speed of construction in its formation are thus problematized at the outset of this research. Placeness, belongingness, and autochthonous practices of place making in the city were found to be essential concepts that were missing in the drafting of such housing policies and programs. These concepts were since found to be difficult to be apprehended with only the tools and methods of architectural research, especially considering the object of query was a complex urban context—the *sefer* of Addis Ababa.

The proposition of the trinocular as a cross-disciplinary methodology of architectural research is thus needed to fill this gap. In due course, the projective ambition to conceptualize alternative housing solutions through this research is intentionally curtailed. The counter proposition since became knowledge production and research methodological innovation against the prevailing means that led to the tilt identified in programs such as the IHDP. Its findings discussed in section 7.1—the *sefer*, *iddir*,

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[370] Mota Nelson and Dick van Gameren, "DWELLING BEYOND CULTURAL DIFFERENCES: Architectural Education for Peripheral Urbanization in Bangladesh, Ethiopia and India," in *The Routledge Companion to Architectural Pedagogies of the Global South* (London: Routledge, 2022), 419–32, https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003018841.

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and *gebbi*—are necessary knowledge foundation now for the development of design alternatives. The exposition of community and placeness in the borders cognized by the residents, their socioeconomic daily practices, and the spatial typologies that facilitate them was hence a necessary step—essential for new design explorations and ideations. In the future, application of the trinocular in analytic work within housing design practices, similar to its prospects in education discussed above, will further be useful to uncover concepts that relate to, for instance, domestic spaces in *sefer*. In line with, and as a spin-off of this research, the Addis Ababa Living Lab (2ALL), a research project funded by NWO-WOTRO has now taken up the projective exploration of housing solutions within the *sefer* of Addis Ababa.

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"የአድኅሽ ከ እና የማኅበረሰብ ተሳትፎ ዳይሬክቶሬት የ2013 በጀት ዓመት የ9 ወር ሪፖርት፡ ለህዝብ ከንፉ አመራሮች፣ ማኔጅመንት አባላት፣ ክፍለ ከተማ ቡድን መሪዎችና ለማኅበራዊ ዘርፍ ባለሙያዎች የቀረበ." ግሎባል ሆቴል አዲስ አበባ: በአዲስ አበባ ከተማ አስተዳደር የሥራተኛና ማኅበራዊ ጉዳይ ቢሮ, 2013.

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Curriculum vitae

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Born in Ethiopia, 1983

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Education

2010/11

The Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, ETH Zurich, Switzerland. Masters of Advanced Studies in Urban Design (MAS)

2001-2006

Addis Ababa University (AAU) - Ethiopian Institute of Architecture Building Construction and City Development (EiABC), Ethiopia. Bachelor of Science (BSc) in Architecture and Urban Planning.

Work experience

Practice

2005
Intern Architect at EDIT Plc. Consulting Architects and Engineers and S7 Consulting Architects and Engineers.

2006-2008
Architect at SKAS Consulting Architects and Engineers.

2008-2016 (Part time)
Jury Member for the adjudication of Architectural Design competitions: Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia New Parliament Building, Ethiopian National Stadium, Ethiopian National Theatre.

Promoter of the Architectural Design Competition for the Head Office of the Addis Ababa Chamber of Commerce Sectoral Associations (AACCSA).

Academic

2008-2010
Assistant Lecturer at Addis Ababa University (AAU) - Ethiopian Institute of Architecture Building Construction and City Development (EiABC)

2012-2016
Lecturer and Chair Holder at Addis Ababa University (AAU) - Ethiopian Institute of Architecture Building Construction and City Development (EiABC)

2016
Guest Lecturer at Delft University of Technology

2016 - present
Doctoral candidate at Delft University of Technology

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Publications

"Hybrid District," in Building Brazil (Berlin: Ruby Press, 2011), 182-197

"Pedregulho Revisited," in Building Brazil (Berlin: Ruby Press, 2011), 434-445

"Places of Transit," in Building Ethiopia (Addis Ababa: EiABC, 2012), 138-143

"A City Shaped by Diplomacy. The Case of Ethiopia's Capital Addis Ababa," ABE Journal. Architecture beyond Europe, no. 12 (December 26, 2017)

"Coen Beeker's 'Urban Fields' for Addis Ababa," in The Beeker Method: Planning and Working on the Redevelopment of the African City, Occasional Publication, vol. 27 (Leiden: African Studies Centre Leiden, 2017), 109–22

"Fasil Giorghis and Zegeye Cherenet, Members of the NESTown Group," in To Build a City in Africa: A History and a Manual (Rotterdam: nai010 publishers, 2019), 388–95.

"Shaping Addis Ababa: The Formative Role of Diplomacy," in Global Housing: Dwelling in Addis Ababa (Prinsenbeek: Jap Sam Books, 2020) 29-48

"Addis Ababa's Sefers: Communities in Transformation," in Global Housing: Dwelling in Addis Ababa (Prinsenbeek: Jap Sam Books, 2020) 49-68

Notable practices

2015-2016 - Project Coordinator and Urban Designer for the Urban Design Work of the Main City Centre of Addis Ababa in collaboration with the Addis Ababa and Surrounding Oromia Integrated Development Plan Project office (AASOID) of the Addis Ababa City Administration.

2016 - Coordinating Architect for the Architectural Design Works of Institute for Elder's Retirement and Institute for Rehabilitation and Medication of Physically Challenged People for the Addis Ababa Bureau of Labor and Social Affairs.

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Addis Ababa's sefer, iddir, and gebbi

Nuanced reading of complex urban forms

Anteneh Tesfaye Tola

This research is motivated by the scholarly calls for new concepts and analytic tools for documenting, analysing, and theorizing complex urban territories such as those of cities in Africa. With implicit comparative intent, it takes the case of Addis Ababa city and its old and typifying places—the *sefer,* to develop and test a new architectural transdisciplinary research methodology referred to as the trinocular. By way of this methodology, it unearths and introduces *sefer*, *iddir*, and *gebbi* of Addis Ababa as not only socio-spatial phenomena but concepts and vocabulary for a located and nuanced reading of the city itself. *Sefer* are introduced as flexible boundary conditions that are primarily cognized by their dwellers—results of indigenous and autochthonous foundation and continued processes of self-actualization by communities that construct them. *Iddir* is unearthed as a form of social capital embedded in *sefer* that appears in the structures of relations among residents. And the *gebbi* as an urban spatial typology that constitutes the *sefer*'s morphology—the last frontier of communality just prior domestic spaces which, in many cases, can be a single multi-functional room.

These concepts and vocabulary, it is argued, in both practical and metaphoric sense, should be the starting point of new urban imaginaries for Addis Ababa. Urban planning and housing projections thus, should draw inspiration from these notions, elements, and phenomena. Furthermore, lessons learnt from the trinocular and the findings are presented as new avenues for architectural research in similar, less-known, and complex urban conditions as the *sefer* of Addis Ababa.