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Note on the images in the thesis
The images in this thesis are stills taken from video footage shot by the author during fieldwork in Germany and Ghana in 2019. The participants depicted gave explicit and informed consent for the creation and use of these images within the context of the research. While anonymity cannot be guaranteed in audiovisual materials, efforts have been made to ensure that those depicted cannot be connected to ethnographic data in the text.

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The boy tottered over and said with his smile,
As his mum typed away on her PhD file,
"I am a baby, as sweet as can be,
Is there room on your lap for a baby like me?"
"Yes!" cried his mum, and the boy clambered on.
A hug and a chuckle and then – whoosh! – work was gone.

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Chapter 1.

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

> ‘Are these some of your friends?’ I asked, pointing to the photos on Ahoufe’s bedroom door. She nodded. ‘Do they have a similar story to you?’ I inquired. Ahoufe had migrated to Germany four years earlier and was excitedly preparing for her first trip back to Ghana. ‘Well,’ she said, pointing to one picture, ‘that’s Ella: she was born here, then moved to Ghana when she was nine months old, then came back to Germany for a year, then went back to Ghana, and after Junior High School, she moved back to Germany. She has a different story altogether.’ Her finger rested on a friend in another picture: ‘She goes to Ghana almost every year. She really has this Ghanaian background.’ To another picture: ‘This girl stayed in Ghana for a year after her *Abitur* [high school diploma].’ And another: ‘And this one went to Ghana for two or three years and then came back to Germany.’

Ahoufe and the friends in the photographs on her bedroom door are all young people of Ghanaian background living in Hamburg, Germany. They attend school, have part-time jobs, and spend time with their families and friends in Hamburg. But Ghana also plays an important role in their lives – not only through its presence in the churches they attend, the food they eat at home, and the community they are raised in, but also through their own physical mobility to and from the country. Ahoufe, now 20, was born in Ghana and migrated to Germany when she was 16. Her friends in the pictures on her bedroom door were born in Germany. Yet as the vignette shows, they are all transnationally mobile, displaying various combinations of periods of residence in and short visits to their or their parents’ country of origin, Ghana.

While mobility is commonplace in the lives of Ahoufe and her Ghanaian-background friends in Hamburg, it barely features in research on young people with a migration background. Much research on migrant youth focuses exclusively on their lives in their country of residence, exploring which family, school, and community factors support or inhibit their educational success and general well-being (Portes and Zhou 1993; Portes and MacLeod 1996; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Suárez-Orozco et al. 2009; Haller et al. 2011). The lives of young people born in the country their parents migrated to are considered to exist solely within that country’s borders, while young people who themselves migrate are conceptualised as ‘blank slates’ upon arrival, their pre-migration experiences mostly invisible in research on their post-migration lives (Mazzucato 2015). Transnational migration research has similarly considered migrant youth as largely fixed in place, albeit acknowledging that they have virtual, imaginative and affective connections to people and places beyond the borders of their country of residence (Levitt and Waters 2002; Levitt 2009; Haikkola 2011). These connections – such as contact with relatives in their family’s country of origin, the practice of home-country language, religion and cultural customs, or knowledge of their family’s past – shape migrant youth’s identities, values, and frames of

reference (Fernández-Kelly 2008; Reynolds and Zontini 2016; Orupabo et al. 2020). These bodies of research provide insights into the practices, influences, and relationships that constitute the daily lives of migrant youth in the country of residence – yet they are missing a crucial piece of the puzzle. They cannot explain how Ahoufe's childhood, Ella's back-and-forth moves, and their other friends' visits or longer stays in Ghana shape these young people's lives, because they do not consider their mobility to and experiences in the country of origin.

The absence of transnational mobility from research on migrant youth is puzzling, given that recent empirical evidence shows that young people with a migration background are highly mobile. A study of the transnational return visits of migrant youth in four European countries revealed that almost half visited their or their parents' country of origin at least annually (Schimmer and van Tubergen 2014). A large-scale survey of high school students in Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands similarly found that the majority of migrant youth visit their or their parents' country of origin at least every two years, while only 14 per cent have never visited the 'home' country (Mazzucato and Haagsman 2022). Young people with a migration background make up an increasingly significant proportion of youth populations around the world. In 2015, across the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development a total of almost 13 per cent, or over 25 million young people aged 15-34, were either born in their country of residence to migrant parents or migrated there themselves (OECD/European Union 2015: 235).[1] Yet the diverse mobility experiences of the growing proportion of youth with a migration background in the Global North – like Ahoufe, Ella, and their friends – is little researched and poorly understood.

Developing a better understanding of how, why and with what effects young people are on the move is important, because youth mobility 'is at the heart of contemporary social and political concerns' (Cheung Judge et al. 2020: 1). Geographic mobility is increasingly seen as an integral part of youth transitions to adulthood and as a pathway to the acquisition of interpersonal and professional skills needed in a globalised and interconnected world (Suárez-Orozco 2005; Robertson et al. 2018). Mobility for higher education has been held up as a particularly important conduit for the accumulation of beneficial resources, including international networks, intercultural skills, and prestigious credentials (Waters 2006). By contrast, negative assumptions abound about migrant youth's mobility: education policy tends to presume that mobility harms migrant youth's education because of the disruptions it can impose on young people's curricular continuity, while public policy often views migrant youth's ongoing connections to their country of origin as coming at the expense of their 'integration' into their country of residence (Carrasco and Narciso 2015: 1; Mazzucato 2015). Some scholars argue that migrant youth's transnational mobility can in fact produce

[1] Statistics based on the 22 of the 34 OECD member countries in 2015 for which data were available.

positive competencies that challenge these negative policy assumptions (Suárez-Orozco 2005: 211; Orellana 2016: 91; Mazzucato 2015). Yet, these positive impacts remain understudied.

This thesis explores the transnational mobility of young people with a migration background between their countries of origin and residence, in order to understand in which ways they are mobile, how they experience their mobility, and how mobility affects their lives. To do so, I conducted research with young people of Ghanaian background living in Hamburg, Germany. The case of Ghanaian-background youth in Hamburg is relevant for the study of transnational youth mobility for three main reasons. First, Ghana has a highly mobile population. Many Ghanaians either experience migration themselves or have migrants in their family networks (Mazzucato 2007; Mazzucato et al. 2018; Schans et al. 2018), and Ghanaian migrants abroad regularly travel back to their country of origin (Orozco et al. 2005). As such, many young people in Ghana and of Ghanaian background around the world are part of highly mobile transnational networks. Second, Ghanaians in Germany represent a relatively recent migration flow between Africa and Europe on which little research exists (Mazzucato et al. 2015; Schans et al. 2018). While much research on migrant youth in Germany addresses historically significant migration flows from guest-worker programmes (e.g., Turkish and southern European) or the recent flows of refugees and asylum seekers (e.g., Afghan and Syrian), to my knowledge, no studies exist on young people of Ghanaian migration background in Germany, despite representing a significant migrant group and different forms of migration to those in the existing literature. Third, Germany has long been one of the main receiving countries of Ghanaian migrants. It hosts Europe's second-largest Ghanaian community after Italy, and Hamburg is home to the largest Ghanaian community in Germany (Nieswand 2008; Mörath 2015).

Against this backdrop, this thesis answers the following research question: *How do young people of Ghanaian background living in Hamburg, Germany, experience their transnational mobility over time and space, and how does mobility affect their lives?*

To answer this overarching question, the empirical chapters (5-7) each address one of the following sub-questions:

1. How do young people's mobility experiences in the form of visits shape their changing relationships to the country of origin over time and space? (Chapter 5)
2. How do young people gain resources in the country of origin and then translate and use these resources to navigate their school transitions in the country of residence following an international move? (Chapter 6)
3. How do young people build and maintain transnational peer relationships through their mobility trajectories? Which resources do they obtain from these relationships,

and what effects do these resources have on their lives in the country of residence? (Chapter 7)

To answer these research questions, I conducted 14 months of ethnographic fieldwork with 20 transnationally mobile young people of Ghanaian background (aged 15-25) living in Hamburg, Germany. I took a youth-centric, multi-sited, mobile ethnographic approach in order to access young people's lives and to document their expectations, experiences, and evaluations of mobility throughout their lives.

This study is part of a broader international research project called 'Mobility Trajectories of Young Lives: Life chances of transnational youth in Global South and North' (MO-TRAYL), led by my first supervisor (Mazzucato 2015).[2] The project includes four qualitative studies of Ghanaian-background youth in Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands and Ghana, and a quantitative study on the mobility experiences of high school students in the three European countries. This thesis constitutes the German qualitative study. As such, my thesis is part of a larger research agenda and program that is forging innovative ways to study youth mobility and its effects on the lives of young people with a migration background. Further details on how the collaborative research praxis of the MO-TRAYL project shaped my study are provided in Chapter 4.

This thesis focuses on the mobility of young people with migration background between their countries of origin and residence. Various terms in this statement require definition to clarify the study's scope. Definitions of 'youth' or 'young people' vary widely, depending on the context and reflecting local conceptions of life stages. For example, Ghanaian and pan-African policies tend to employ broad definitions of youth that span mid-teens to mid-30s, while European policies tend to cap 'youth' in the late 20s. Research also uses varying definitions of 'youth' depending on the topic and context under study (Heath et al. 2009). In this thesis, I define 'young people' as those aged 15-25. While this age range is broadly in line with the United Nations' definition of 'youth' (15-24), it also allows me to focus on the mobility of those who are in or have recently finished secondary education, in contrast to a large body of research that focuses on youth mobility in higher education (Waters 2006; Brooks and Waters 2011; see Waters and Leung 2020 for a notable exception).

Similarly, 'migration background' is defined in various ways in research, policy and public discourse, and its definitions and applications can be problematic and discriminatory. Commonly accepted definitions of 'migration background' in research focus on place of birth and apply to those who migrated to the country of residence themselves or whose parents

[2] The MO-TRAYL project is funded by the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (Consolidator Grant No. 682982).

did; that is, the so-called 'first' and 'second generations', and sometimes even subsequent generations, raising questions around whether ethnic and cultural minorities can ever cease to have a 'migration background.' German federal statistics, meanwhile, focus on citizenship and classify someone as having a *Migrationshintergrund* if they or at least one of their parents were born without German citizenship, even if they were born in Germany (Statistisches Bundesamt 2020a). The German term for 'migration background' is a controversial and hotly contested label (Elrick and Farah Schwartzman 2015; Rühlmann and McMonagle 2019). In German public discourse, the term has a racialized connotation and 'is often applied […] to persons of colour, regardless of when their ancestors may have immigrated' (Rühlmann and McMonagle 2019: 94), whereas white people who fulfil such formal definitions are not necessarily identified as having a migration background. The term is also used in political debates as a proxy for ethnic and racial categories that are no longer collected in national statistics, perpetuating stereotypes of migrant-background youth as having low socioeconomic status and poor German language abilities (Elrick and Farah Schwartzman 2015).

While these and other researchers have criticized the term 'migration background' as a category of practice that represents nation-state logics and sometimes perpetuates discriminatory ideas, they also acknowledge its usefulness as a category of analysis. Dahinden (2016) proposes that the term can be used responsibly by adopting various research strategies, including contextualising the term's use, investigating other variables beyond migration background (including 'mobility'), and engaging with other social science theory beyond migration studies – all of which I do in this thesis. As such, while I acknowledge the need to use it with care, I contend that 'migration background' remains a useful term to explore the ways in which young people's lives are shaped by migration. As such, in this study, I use the terms 'young people (or youth) with a migration background' and 'migrant youth' interchangeably to signal young people who migrated internationally from Ghana to Germany or whose parents did. I use 'Ghanaian background' when referring to the specific migration background of my participants.

Researchers use various terms to refer to the places to which migrant youth trace their origins and the places where they live, such as 'home country' and 'host country' or 'country of departure' and 'country of destination.' These terms can perpetuate outdated notions of migration flows, identifications, and experiences. For example, my participants did not all consider Ghana 'home', and those born in Germany did not 'depart' from it as emigrants. Similarly, 'host country' implies a temporary and benevolent accommodation that does not accurately reflect the sense of belonging nor legal status of young people born in Germany or in possession of German citizenship or permanent residence; while 'destination country' implies the end of a linear migration journey, precluding the possibility of ongoing mobility. In this study, I use the terms 'country of origin' and 'country of residence' to refer to the

nation-states between which migrant youth are mobile. The former enables me to identify the place to which young people trace their family background or 'origin' (Ghana), regardless of their own place of birth. The latter indicates the country young people currently reside in (Germany), while allowing for various legal statuses and identifications with the country, as well as the possibility that it is not the place of their permanent settlement. The following section elaborates on the scientific relevance of this thesis, including the main bodies of literature that inform it and the primary research gaps that it addresses.

1.2 Studying the mobility of migrant youth: insights and research gaps

This thesis is located at the intersection of two main bodies of research: migrant transnationalism and mobility studies, which have each made valuable contributions to the study of migrant youth's lives and migrant mobility. Yet important gaps remain, particularly at the intersection of these fields – that is, on the transnational mobility of migrant youth. This thesis seeks to address these gaps in the following ways. First, this study adopts a youth-centric perspective which places young people's experiences, views, and voices at the centre of the investigation (Mazzucato 2015). Migrant transnationalism research has largely focused on adults. Even strands of research that focus on the experiences of migrant youth tend to highlight adults' perspectives on young people; study young people's transnational attachments mediated by migrant parents; or conduct retrospective research with adults about experiences during their youth. An emerging field of research explores the mobility experiences and patterns of migrant youth (Fürstenau 2005; Gardner and Mand 2012; Mazzucato 2015; Zeitlyn 2015; Robertson et al. 2018; van Geel 2019a), and more research is needed to understand the ways in which young people experience, perceive, and actively navigate their transnational mobility. Such approaches can provide not only empirical insights, given that young people's mobility is different to adults (Mazzucato and van Geel 2022) but also fresh theoretical perspectives on transnational mobility (White et al. 2011; Coe 2012b; Gardner 2012; Veale and Donà 2014).

Second, this study seeks to understand migrant youth's diverse experiences of being transnationally mobile. The mobility of young people with a migration background has featured minimally in second-generation transnationalism research, alongside more sedentary forms of transnational attachments from the country of residence, such as contact with family, the practice of origin-country language, religion and cultural customs, and knowledge of their family backgrounds (Levitt 2009; Reynolds and Zontini 2016). Meanwhile, second-generation returns studies mostly highlight single instances or types of mobility – for example, a relocation or repeated visits (Wessendorf 2007; Vathi and King 2011). They have not studied young people's experiences in the country of origin either before an international move, such as Ahoufe's childhood in Ghana, or throughout their mobility trajectories, like Ella's combination of periods of residence in and visits to Ghana.

By using the concept of *youth mobility trajectories*, which captures young people's 'different moves in space and time and the concurrent changing family constellations that they entail' (van Geel and Mazzucato 2018: 2145), I explore young people's diverse mobility experiences, including periods of residence and shorter stays of varying durations and with different purposes – reflected in the various mobility patterns evident in the opening vignette. Drawing on mobility studies' focus on mobility as an embodied, sensorial, and dynamic phenomenon (Urry 2002) – as 'movement imbued with meaning' (Adey 2010: 34) – I also investigate how young people experience being mobile, which requires a youth-centric approach as outlined above. I contend that a richer picture of mobility trajectories – including young people's patterns and experiences of transnational mobility – can reveal how their mobility changes over time and the consequences of this dynamism for their lives.

The third research gap this thesis addresses relates to the impact of experiences in the country of origin on life in the country of residence. As noted above, much research on migrant youth has focused on their lives in the country of residence, and research on migrant youth's mobility has tended to focus on the ways that mobility shapes their identity and belonging vis-à-vis the origin country (Binaisa 2011; Vathi and King 2011; McMichael et al. 2017). By adopting a mobility trajectories lens that considers young people's movements and experiences over time and space, this dissertation analyses the role the country of origin plays in young people's lives in the country of residence. To do so, I apply insights from literatures about the important contexts, relationships, and resources in the lives of young people in general to the study of transnationally mobile migrant youth. These include the role of extended family networks, educational experiences, and peer relationships in the country of origin – all of which have been mostly absent in research on migrant youth to date.

Fourth, this study uses an innovative methodology for studying transnational youth mobility. Research on second-generation transnationalism and returns has largely consisted of single-sited studies and retrospective interviews (Kibria 2002; Louie 2006; Binaisa 2011; Vathi and King 2011), resulting in simplified and static narratives of mobility experiences and limiting researchers' ability to explore the changing meanings and impacts of migrant youth's mobility over time and space. In mobility studies, by contrast, the development of 'mobile methods' has been central to the field's theoretical developments and emphasises the need for researchers to document mobility as it unfolds, often by being on-the-move themselves (Büscher and Urry 2009; Fincham et al. 2010). In this study, I employ various mobile methods within a multi-sited research design to capture young people's mobility trajectories over time and space and their embodied, dynamic experiences of being transnationally mobile.

Finally, this study contributes empirical data about a group and migration flow on which there exists little research. There is a dearth of studies on migration and mobility between

Africa and Europe, despite its empirical importance (Mazzucato et al. 2015), even less about young people of African migration background in Europe, and almost no research on their transnational mobility (see Carrasco and Narciso 2015 for an exception). The MO-TRAYL project, of which this thesis is part, is producing some of the little research that exists on the transnational mobility of young people of migration background between Europe and Africa (van Geel and Mazzucato 2018; van Geel 2019b; Akom Ankobrey et al. 2021; Anschütz and Mazzucato 2021; Osei et al. forthcoming).

1.3 Thesis overview

This thesis is article-based, meaning that the three empirical chapters (5-7) have each been published in or are under review at international peer-reviewed journals. They are structured as journal articles – each including its own introduction, theoretical framework, methodology, analysis, and conclusion – which creates some inevitable repetition in the thesis. The empirical chapters have each been minimally revised to ensure consistency of formatting, section numbering, and referencing style. At the time of writing, Chapters 5 and 7 were published and Chapter 6 was under review, as detailed on the title page of each chapter.

Preceding the empirical chapters are this Introduction (Chapter 1) and three further chapters. Chapter 2 reviews the main insights and gaps of the bodies of literature informing this thesis and weaves together the theoretical sections of the three empirical chapters into an overarching analytical framework for studying transnational youth mobility trajectories. The background context is presented in Chapter 3, focusing on the migration regimes, mobility trends, and education systems in Germany (specifically Hamburg) and Ghana. Chapter 4 presents the study's methodology – including the research design, sites and sample, methods and analysis, and ethical matters – and outlines its innovative elements that enabled me to study mobility as a dynamic and embodied phenomenon.

Chapters 5, 6 and 7 constitute the empirical chapters of the thesis. Each focuses on a different part of youth mobility trajectories and highlights a different aspect of my methodological approach. Chapter 5 explores how visits to Ghana shape migrant youth's changing relationships to the country of origin over time and space. Drawing on mobility studies, the chapter emphasises the value of considering the embodied, sensorial, and emotional elements of physical mobility to build more nuanced understandings of migrant youth's relationships to the country of origin, including their dynamism and complexity. A detailed analysis of the specific people, places, and moments encountered during visits reveals how the meanings of Ghana and the resources young people gain from their mobility there shift across several visits and within a single visit. The chapter outlines how three mobile methods – mobility

trajectory mapping, following mobility, and before-and-after interviewing – enable researchers to capture embodied mobility experiences over time and space.

Chapter 6 analyses how young people use resources gained during periods of residence in Ghana to navigate their school transitions in Hamburg following an international move. Drawing on sociological research on cultural capital and education, the chapter analyses how migrant youth gain 'embodied cultural capital' through their extended family networks and educational experiences in Ghana and how they use these resources in their school transitions in Germany. By considering migrant youth's entire mobility trajectories, including their lives prior to an international move, and analysing how experiences in the country of origin shape life in the country of residence, the chapter challenges the 'blank slate' conceptualisation of migrant youth prevalent in much research on their lives. Methodologically, the chapter highlights following mobility and school-based ethnography as productive ways to research the transnational educational experiences of migrant youth.

Chapter 7 investigates the role of transnational peer relationships in the lives of migrant youth. It explores how migrant youth build and maintain transnational relationships with other young people in Ghana through their mobility trajectories, including during periods of residence in and visits to Ghana, as well as through the use of ICTs during periods of immobility. I draw on youth studies research on local peer relationships to analyse the resources migrant youth gain from their transnational peer relationships through the lens of 'social capital'. The analysis shows how migrant youth gain educational motivation and transnational frames of reference through their transnational peer relationships, and how these forms of social capital affect their lives in Germany. The chapter moves beyond conceptions of young people's social support networks in both transnational migration and youth studies research, by exploring relationships in their transnational networks that are not dependent on adults and analysing the resources provided by peer relationships beyond their local environments. Mobility trajectory mapping and concentric circle network mapping are highlighted within the study's overarching methodology.

Chapter 8 concludes the thesis. It summarises the empirical findings and presents the study's broader theoretical and methodological contributions. It also reflects on how the study's limitations and findings point to promising areas of future research.

Chapter 2.

Conceptualising the mobility of young people with a migration background

2.1 Introduction

This study is located at the intersection of two bodies of research that both contribute to the study of youth mobility and contain research gaps and limitations that my thesis addresses. Migrant transnationalism explores how people live between two or more countries, maintaining active connections and activities in multiple places (Section 2.2). In particular, literature on transnational families (Section 2.2.1), second-generation transnationalism (Section 2.2.2) and second-generation returns (Section 2.2.3) has shown that young people maintain relationships, gain resources, and shape their identities and belonging through diverse transnational engagements, including travels to the 'homeland'. Yet transnational migration research has not focused on young people's mobility and has viewed their lives from the perspective of either the country of origin or the country of residence. The 'mobility turn' in the social sciences, by contrast, has highlighted the centrality of mobility in everyday life and its embodied and processual nature. Yet, this literature has had minimal engagement with migrant transnationalism (Section 2.3). The theoretical underpinnings of the mobility turn (Section 2.3.1) have developed in tandem with mobile methodologies (Section 2.3.2) and prompted a new focus on migrant mobilities within transnational migration research, though mostly focused on adult migrants. The concept of 'youth mobility trajectories,' which is at the core of this thesis, emerges from the intersection between migrant transnationalism and mobility studies as a way of studying the patterns, nature, and effects of young people's transnational mobility over time and space (Section 2.4).

Research on the local contexts, relationships, and resources central to young people's lives informs my choice of which aspects of young people's mobility trajectories to explore (Section 2.5). This includes research on young people's family and school contexts, namely cultural capital and education literature (Section 2.5.1), and studies on young people's peer networks, found in youth studies (Section 2.5.2). The insights from these literatures, applied to youth mobility trajectories, leads me to explore the 'transnational resources' that emerge through migrant youth mobility (Section 2.6). I conclude by weaving these diverse literatures into an analytical framework for my study of the mobility of young people with a migration background and outlining how the empirical chapters draw upon this framework (Section 2.7). As stand-alone journal articles, the empirical chapters contain some inevitable repetition in their theoretical sections; yet each also emphasises different aspects of this overarching analytical framework and contains a detailed discussion on the literatures pertinent to it.

2.2 Migrant transnationalism: life here and there

As described in Chapter 1, much migration research focuses on the lives of migrants – including migrant youth – in the country of residence, presuming that nation-state borders naturally delimit the spaces within which migrants' lives are contained (Wimmer and Glick

Schiller 2003; Mazzucato et al. 2004). Transnational migration research challenged this methodological nationalism by demonstrating that migrants' lives are lived between two or more countries and that migrants' 'integration' in the country of residence and their transnational connections are not necessarily in conflict but can be mutually reinforcing (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004; Mazzucato 2008) – that is, what happens *there* matters for life *here*. Basch, Glick Schiller and Szanton-Blanc (1994: 6), some of the first to theorise migrant transnationalism, defined it as 'the process by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement.' These social relations have been conceptualised as 'transnational social fields' (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004), or networks of social relationships with people geographically distant from one another, and the resources, values, and ideas available to them through these networks. As such, a transnational lens reveals that people in both the country of origin and the country of residence, whether they themselves have migrated or not, are part of transnational social fields involving people geographically distant but intimately connected in ways that have concrete consequences for their lives.

2.2.1 Transnational family studies: young people in the country of origin

Transnational family studies explore the transnational networks that migrants and their relatives back 'home' maintain and how they 'do family' across borders, including the resources that flow through transnational relationships and how such relationships are maintained across geographical distance (Bryceson and Vuorela 2002; Mazzucato 2013; Baldassar and Merla 2014). Two main ways in which transnational families stay connected is through information communications technologies (ICTs) and visits. ICTs allow migrant parents and their children in the country of origin to communicate on a regular basis and construct a sense of co-presence when separated from one another (Parreñas 2005; Dreby 2007; Schmalzbauer 2008; Madianou and Miller 2011; Baldassar 2016). However, these digital mediations can never fully overcome the geographical distance between children and parents (Razy and Baby-Collin 2011), making the face-to-face time enabled by migrant parents' intermittent visits to the country of origin so valuable (Fresnoza-Flot 2009; Haagsman and Mazzucato 2014; Baldassar 2016). Through ICTs and visits, young people in transnational families receive various forms of care from migrant parents. These include financial remittances, which pay for the costs of education and daily living expenses, and gifts (Dreby 2007; Schmalzbauer 2008). However, young people also receive immaterial resources from their parents abroad, including the love, care, and sense of closeness that the sending of gifts can convey, as well as emotional support, guidance, and advice provided through parents' online and in-person presence in their children's lives (Parreñas 2005). Finally, migrants' children in the country of origin obtain social capital through the 'culture of migration' in transnational families, which provides them with knowledge, contacts, and

resources that many young people use to embark on their own migration journeys later in life (Dreby 2007).

While young people are a central part of transnational families, this literature centres around adult migrants and how they maintain relationships with and fulfil their responsibilities to family members in the country of origin. In other words, it has focused on migrant parents' relationships with their children and with their children's caregivers. The ways in which young people in transnational families establish and maintain their own relationships with various actors have hardly been studied. Furthermore, transnational family studies tend to focus on children and young people who are 'left-behind' in the country of origin, positioning young people as immobile actors in relation to mobile migrant parents (Dreby 2007; Mazzucato and Schans 2011).

2.2.2 Second-generation transnationalism: young people in the country of residence

Literature on second-generation transnationalism, by contrast, explores how the lives of young people born and raised in the country of residence to migrant parents are embedded within and shaped by a transnational social field (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004; Levitt 2009; Reynolds and Zontini 2016). While the focus is on second-generation youth, many studies also include first-generation young people who migrated with their parents at a young age. Transnational practices studied in this literature are located within family environments 'that reference the homeland ideologically, materially and affectively each day' (Levitt 2009: 1231), including the use of linguistic, religious, and cultural practices and the influence of family background from the country of origin.

Young people's relationships to the country of origin in this literature are usually mediated by migrant parents. Their parents facilitate contact with relatives in the country of origin that provide 'social contacts and skills that are useful in both settings' (Levitt 2009: 1226). Similarly, through their migrant parents, young people come to know about various aspects of life in the country of origin, including living conditions, education systems, and work opportunities. This knowledge enables young people to construct dual frames of reference, whereby they compare life in the countries of origin and residence and gain perspective on their own social position (Orupabo et al. 2020). Whereas research has shown that adult migrants develop dual frames of reference through their direct *experience* of living in both the countries of origin and residence (Vertovec 2009), migrant youth have been shown to develop dual frames of reference mostly through their indirect *knowledge* of the country of origin. For example, knowledge of the education system in the country of origin can make migrant youth feel grateful for the opportunities available in their country of residence (Orupabo et al. 2020).

Cultural resources like pride, motivation, and confidence are transmitted by migrant parents through stories, values, and ideas that reference the country of origin and are especially useful for their children's education in the country of residence (Franceschelli et al. 2017). For example, a study of disadvantaged yet high-achieving Mexican-background youth in the United States showed that their parents' stories of illustrious family pasts in Mexico helped them construct an identity based on achievement and pride, which motivated them to strive in school, despite their low socioeconomic position in the United States (Fernández-Kelly 2008). Coe and Shani (2015) showed that Ghanaian migrant parents in the United States consciously instilled educational values like respect, discipline, and hardship in their children. While the parents considered these to be Ghanaian cultural values not common among American youth, yet of value to their children in both contexts.

In these ways, second-generation transnationalism research has shown that migrant youth are embedded within transnational social fields that bring knowledge, resources, and relationships from the country of origin into their daily lives in the country of residence. However, like transnational family studies, second-generation transnationalism positions young people as immobile by focusing on their transnational engagements from within one country. This analytical focus ignores pre-migration experience in the country of origin among first-generation youth and ongoing mobility to and from the country of origin among both first- and second-generation youth (Mazzucato 2015). Young people's physical mobility to the country of origin is rarely mentioned and only alongside sedentary transnational practices from within the country of residence, rather than as the central focus of research (Kibria 2002; Smith 2002; Louie 2006; Haikkola 2011). This represents a significant research gap, given that young people's transnational lives are not only empirically understudied but also unique in comparison to adults' (Mazzucato and van Geel 2022) and, as such, offer fresh theoretical insights (White et al. 2011; Coe 2012b; Gardner 2012; Veale and Donà 2014).

2.2.3 Second-generation returns: young people between the countries of origin and residence

Literature on second-generation returns pivoted academic attention to young people's transnational engagements through movement. This research focuses on people who visit or permanently relocate to their parents' country of origin. Permanent relocations are often undertaken by second-generation migrants when they are independent adults, sometimes with children of their own (Wessendorf 2007; Reynolds 2011). Studies about visits to the country of origin also often focus on adults but study visits they made during their youth; as such, I review these studies.

Second-generation returns literature has documented the varied impacts that visits to the country of origin have on young people and the different relationships they create with the 'homeland'. Visits can help migrant youth learn about their heritage, establish and maintain family relationships, and foster a sense of belonging to the country of origin (Conway et al. 2009; Binaisa 2011; Vathi and King 2011; McMichael et al. 2017). But visits can also strengthen identification with the country of residence when they highlight the unfamiliarity and discomfort of features of the country of origin, such as its food, climate, and language (McMichael et al. 2017). Several studies have found mixed feelings among second-generation youth about their origin-country visits, particularly around identity and belonging (Kibria 2002; Louie 2006; Vathi and King 2011; Zeitlyn 2015). For example, visits can foster a sense of belonging within family networks for some refugee youth and alienation from a national community for others (McMichael et al. 2017). One study found mixed feelings between male and female second-generation visitors to Albania from the United Kingdom, Greece, and Italy, due to how gender roles respectively enabled or restricted their social interactions and activities there (Vathi and King 2011). In addition, origin-country visits can affect young people differently at different stages. For example, some studies have found that young people's interest in visiting the country of origin decreases over time as other responsibilities and interests take precedence (King et al. 2011; Vathi and King 2011).

Research on second-generation returns breaks the framing of migrant youth as immobile, thereby complementing the research on transnational attachments *within* the country of residence by showing that migrant youth also engage in transnational activities *beyond* it. However, this research also raises many new questions about migrant youth's mobility. First, second-generation returns literature focuses on single instances of mobility that are not contextualised within broader understandings of young people's mobility patterns over time and space. Second, because this literature focuses on the second generation, which presumes migrant youth are born and raised in the country of residence, the mobility it studies consists only of trips or relocations in one direction: from the country of residence to the country of origin. The experiences of migrant youth who themselves migrate to the country of residence or who move back and forth are not considered. Similarly, this literature's focus on the impact of mobility is also largely unidirectional: it is interested in the experiences and impact of mobility in and on life in the country of origin; it gives little attention to the impacts of visits on young people's lives back in the country of residence.

Finally, transnational migration research generally, including second-generation returns, while theoretically and conceptually looking beyond the country of residence, methodologically has largely remained within its borders (Mazzucato and Schans 2011). Multi-sited research on second-generation transnationalism and returns is relatively rare and mobility is usually studied through retrospective interviews rather than contemporaneous observation (Kibria 2002; Levitt 2002; Vathi and King 2011). Some studies include

fieldwork in the country of origin, but usually several years after the mobility in question (Louie 2006; Binaisa 2011; King et al. 2011). This methodological choice has theoretical implications, limiting the ways in which transnationalism can be studied and the insights that research can generate (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004). Important exceptions have demonstrated the value of conducting multi-sited studies of transnational youth (Zeitlyn 2015; Poeze et al. 2017; van Geel and Mazzucato 2020). The answers to these questions require a closer look at migrant youth's mobility patterns and experiences in order to understand how mobile migrant youth are throughout their lives, how they experience being mobile, and how mobility shapes their lives.

2.3 Mobility: embodied experience and dynamic processes

The 'mobility turn' in the social sciences challenged researchers across various academic fields to look at movement in everyday life, including the mobility of people, objects, and ideas (Urry 2002). While mobility scholars share with transnational migration researchers an aim of going beyond the notion of 'terrains' like nation-states as 'fixed geographical containers for social processes' (Sheller and Urry 2006: 209), they take this further, questioning the assumption that social life is essentially sedentary and instead normalising motion, reflecting an understanding that 'all the world seems to be on the move' (ibid: 207). By placing movement at the centre of inquiry as a shaping force of social life, the mobility turn has led to theoretical and methodological innovations in various academic disciplines that contribute to this thesis, including mobility studies and transnational migration research.

2.3.1 Theoretical innovations

Mobility studies focus on the very act of movement itself, positing that 'time spent traveling is not dead time' (Sheller and Urry 2006: 213) but rather rich in experience, activity, and meaning and 'always located and materialised' (ibid: 210). The mobility turn thus emphasises the *processual* nature of mobility and how mobility is *experienced* (ibid; Urry 2002). This view leads to a focus on the embodied experience of mobility, of how 'bodies sense and make sense of the world as they move bodily in and through it' (Büscher and Urry 2009: 100).

A key example of this focus on the embodied experience of mobility is John Urry's (2002) typology of proximity outlined in his seminal article 'Mobility and Proximity.' In this article, Urry asked 'why travel takes place' (ibid: 255). He did so at the start of the digital revolution, posing the question of whether and why physical mobility would continue to be important in a world of increasing mobility in other forms – including virtual, imaginative, and material. Urry argued that corporeal mobility provided unique access to embodied proximity with people, places, and moments that the other forms of mobility cannot fully replicate and that

make physical travel necessary (echoing findings from transnational family studies, see Section 2.2.1). He conceptualised these types of 'co-presence' as *face-to-face*, *face-the-place*, and *face-the-moment* proximity, respectively. Together, these 'bases of co-presence' (ibid.) emphasise the embodied, sensorial, and unique textures of physical travel and provide a framework for the study of mobility as it unfolds: the people encountered, the places visited or occupied, and the moments and events that serve as meaningful landmarks across time and space.

The mobility turn brought an explicit focus on migrants' corporeal travel into transnational migration research. It challenged researchers to look beyond the notion of fixed locations in transnational migration, networks, and engagements, and to instead explore the various experiences of mobility between locations (Schapendonk and Steel 2014). A mobility lens reveals that migration is not a simple, linear route from the country of origin to the country of residence, but rather a nonlinear, fragmented, and tumultuous journey (Schapendonk 2012; Wissink et al. 2017). Joris Schapendonk's work has been central in this field, identifying that migration journeys often involve circular, back-and-forth movements and periods of mobility and immobility and, as a result, reconceptualising migration as a *trajectory* (Schapendonk 2012). Migration trajectories acknowledge that migrants' movements are not only fragmented, nonlinear, and tumultuous over space; they also develop over time. This focus on 'travel through time-space' (Schapendonk 2018: 22) allows researchers to study how migration trajectories not only take unexpected and 'messy' forms, but also how they both shape and are shaped by various factors along the way, including relationships, identities, and aspirations (Schapendonk 2012, 2018).

2.3.2 Methodological innovations

In order to study the embodied experience of mobility, researchers need methodological tools that represent a processual *empirical* strategy that matches the mobility-as-process *theoretical* approach. Scholars have noted that 'traditional' research methods are generally poor at accounting for the embodied, dynamic, sensorial, and complex nature of mobility (Büscher and Urry 2009; Sheller 2010: vii). As such, the development of 'mobile methods' has been an integral part of the mobility turn (Sheller and Urry 2006; Fincham et al. 2010), by bringing analysis and method into conversation in ways that generate new understandings of their relationship (Büscher and Urry 2009: 99).

Mobile methods involve capturing mobility as it unfolds, usually by a researcher on-the-move or through other ways of tracking and documenting mobility in action (Sheller and Urry 2006). Mobile methods document the 'fleeting, multi-sensory, distributed, mobile and multiple' meanings of mobility in the moment (Büscher and Urry 2009: 103; Sheller and Urry 2006; Cheung Judge et al. 2020), enabling scholars to unpack the embodied experience

of mobility in ways that are difficult, if not impossible, through methods that are spatially and temporally distant from the mobility they study. Such mobile methods include time-space diaries, various forms of cyber research, 'walking with', video observations, ride-alongs, and voicemail diaries (Sheller and Urry 2006; Büscher and Urry 2009; Fincham et al. 2010). Mobile methods used in studies of long-distance or transnational mobility are also often part of multi-sited research designs (Marcus 1995; Mazzucato 2009), whereby researchers 'follow' their subjects between multiple sites concretely connected to each other through people's relationships, remittances, or movements (Mazzucato and Wagner 2018).

Transnational migration research on mobilities has drawn on mobile methods to follow migrants throughout time and space. While this sometimes means physically accompanying migrants on their journeys (van Geel and Mazzucato 2018), it can also include following their trajectories through phone calls and emails (Schapendonk 2013). This is in stark contrast to the literatures reviewed above that mainly collect data on migrant youth in the country of residence, even when researching their connections with and travels to the country of origin (see Section 2.2). Such single-sited and immobile methods are distant in both time and space from the mobility they study and are therefore ill-equipped to capture the embodied experience and processual patterns of young people's mobility.

However, despite the benefits mobile methods offer, they are not without critique. Merriman (2014: 168-9) argued that 'mobile methods are all-too-frequently associated with technological solutions to methodological questions' and cautioned researchers to not discard 'traditional' techniques like interviews and archival research in their eagerness to employ mobile methods. Furthermore, migrant mobility scholars have highlighted the importance of researcher reflexivity when using mobile methods, cautioning that 'moving with individuals creates its own biases' (Boas et al. 2021: 138), such as a false sense of shared experience that may mask power inequalities between researchers and participants. Finally, while mobile methods enable access to the embodied and processual nature of migrant mobility, multi-sited mobile methods can imply a choice of breadth over depth because time in each research location is limited (Mazzucato 2009).

2.4 Conceptualising transnational youth mobility as trajectories

Mobility studies, like transnational migration research, have largely focused on adults. This is also true for research at the intersection of these two fields: transnational migration research about migrant mobilities. This adult-centricity results in a significant research gap on the mobility of young people with a migration background, including their patterns and experiences of mobility, how these change over time and space, and how mobility affects their lives. This lacuna is not because migrant youth are immobile, as transnational family studies and second-generation transnationalism would suggest. On the contrary, recent

studies show that migrant youth are in fact very mobile. For example, almost half of migrant-background adolescents surveyed in the Netherlands, Germany, England, and Sweden reported traveling to their or their parents' country of origin at least annually (Schimmer and van Tubergen 2014). One of the only large-scale studies to collect data on youth mobilities found that the majority of migrant youth in Europe travel to their or their parents' country of origin at least every two years, and that this mobility does not diminish over the generations (Mazzucato and Haagsman 2022). In recognition of this empirical reality, and drawing on the theoretical insights from migrant transnationalism and mobility studies reviewed above, scholars are formulating a new research agenda around youth mobility – of which this thesis is part – to study the mobility of young people in its own right, as an embodied and processual phenomenon (Robertson et al. 2018; van Geel and Mazzucato 2018; Cheung Judge et al. 2020).

To explore young people's mobility, van Geel and Mazzucato (2018) developed the concept *youth mobility trajectories*. The authors define youth mobility trajectories as the 'different moves in space and time and the concurrent changing family constellations that they entail' (ibid: 2145). Rather than singling out an international migration or focusing on a one-off move (as in second-generation returns), youth mobility trajectories 'visualise a mobility pattern in its totality' (ibid: 2150), including the frequency, duration, and location of moves, and the periods of immobility between them, as well as the people a young person lived with in each place of residence. In order to move beyond the 'conventional categories' of first- and second-generation migrants, which frame migrant youth as essentially immobile, van Geel and Mazzucato propose using youth mobility trajectories to instead highlight migrant youth's mobility and focus on the diversity of their experiences. I explain how I methodologically operationalised youth mobility trajectories in Chapter 4.

Youth mobility trajectories address key shortcomings in studies that focus on migrant youth in the country of residence. First, mobility trajectories bring the various experiences in the country of origin of both first- and second-generation youth into view. Studies that focus on the country of residence tend to view first-generation migrant youth as 'clean slates' upon arrival (Mazzucato and van Geel 2022), erasing their lives in the country of origin prior to their migration and considering them immobile after their migration. Similarly, these studies view second-generation youth as immobile, living only within the country of residence. By tracing all types of mobility, not just international migrations, youth mobility trajectories instead show the ongoing relevance of the country of origin in their lives.

Second, mobility trajectories focus on the processual nature of mobility, rather than the static approach used in much transnational migration research, including second-generation returns. Mobility trajectories place young people's movements into broader context by encompassing all the moves they make, enabling researchers to track how they experience

their mobility and how mobility affects their lives over time and space. As such, investigating migrant youth's lives through a transnational mobility trajectories lens 'bring such analyses closer to the lived experiences' of young people with a migration background (van Geel and Mazzucato 2018: 2158).

2.5 Contexts, relationships, and resources in young people's lives

In order to understand how transnational mobility shapes young people's lives, it is necessary to investigate the contexts and relationships they access through mobility, and the resources that these contexts and relationships provide them with. Diverse mobility experiences 'have been found to be important in helping young people to access more resources than they have at their disposal in only one country' (Mazzucato and van Geel 2022: 203). For example, research has shown that trips to the country of origin give young people educational resilience to overcome schooling challenges in the country of residence (van Geel and Mazzucato 2020) and help them develop multilingualism and employment opportunities (Fürstenau 2005). Yet many aspects of young people's mobility and the resources it may provide remain unstudied. To determine which aspects of young people's mobility trajectories to investigate in this thesis, literatures on the key local contexts, relationships, and resources in young people's lives are instructive. In other words, research on the factors most important in young people's lives *here* informs the factors I investigate *there*, contributing to my analytical framework for studying transnational youth mobility trajectories.

2.5.1 The family and the school: young people and cultural capital

A significant body of research shows how family and school factors intertwine in young people's lives, serving as sites of the transmission, accumulation, conversion, and use of class-based resources, or cultural capital. According to Bourdieu (1986), cultural capital exists in three states: institutionalised, in the form of formal educational qualifications; objectified, in the form of material artefacts of cultural status like books and artworks; and embodied, in the form of knowledge, behaviours, and skills, including patterns of speech, cultural tastes, interactional styles, and educational values (ibid). Embodied cultural capital is particularly useful for studying young people's resources in educational contexts because it captures the 'micro-interactional processes whereby individuals' strategic use of knowledge, skills and competence comes into contact with institutionalized standards of evaluation' (Lareau and Weininger 2003: 569). In other words, studies of embodied cultural capital reveal the mechanisms through which cultural resources are transmitted and accumulated within family contexts and then activated in educational settings, and how educational institutions recognise and reward the resources that align with their values and standards.

Much of this literature has focused on cultural capital within national contexts and has not investigated these processes vis-à-vis ethnically and culturally diverse groups (Lareau 2011; Dumais 2015). Recent research does, however, explore cultural capital in the education of migrant youth. Studies on the education of migrant youth born in the country of residence have shown that they access origin-country cultural capital through their parents, with mixed results. Blackledge (2001) found that Bangladeshi mothers of British-born children had the 'right' capital to support their children's Bengali literacy, but the 'wrong' capital to support their children's education in British schools. Zeitlyn (2015: 101) described the 'multiple social fields' British-Bangladeshi children accessed through their parents and the British education system as being 'in competition' rather than in harmony. By contrast, Carnicer (2017) analyses how Turkish migrant parents' social mobility 'projects' contribute to their sons' cultural capital, enabling successful educational pathways in Germany.

Other research has focused on the role of cultural capital in the education of young people who themselves migrate to the country of residence. Some studies have focused on young people's post-migration educational experiences. For example, a study of Mexican newcomer high-school students in the United States found that teachers and school counsellors cultivate 'academic capital' through bilingual instruction and social networks (Hopkins et al. 2013). Devine (2009) studied how migrant children in Ireland accumulate social and cultural capital through their schooling after arrival in the country of residence. Both studies acknowledged that these students also brought cultural capital from the country of origin in the form of language – Spanish in the United States and English in Ireland. Further studies have explored how other forms of cultural capital from the country of origin – like a sense of entitlement to education and strategic knowledge – benefit migrant youth's schooling transitions in the country of residence, but without exploring how they gained such cultural capital (Emery et al. 2020). By acknowledging that young people possess cultural capital from their pre-migration experiences, they avoid the 'blank slate' conceptualisation prevalent in much research on migrant youth (Mazzucato and van Geel 2022). However, focusing on the country of residence results in a superficial analysis of the cultural capital young people bring with them from the country of origin. Finally, some studies acknowledge the ongoing transnational attachments of migrant youth through the active relationships they maintain with people in the country of origin and their transnational identities, and the positive influence these resources can have on their education in the country of residence (Jaffe-Walter and Lee 2018). However, while these studies take a transnational lens to migrant youth's present, they do not explore their past experiences in the country of origin.

2.5.2 The peer network: young people and social capital

Beyond a young person's parents and immediate family, their relationships with peers are crucially important. Peers' influence and importance increase during adolescence, rivalling

the role of adult caregivers throughout the teenage years (Collins and Laursen 2004). Young people gain various resources from their peer relationships, which are often described as social capital. Original theorisations of social capital were – like cultural capital – adult-centric (Bourdieu 1986; Coleman 1988; Putnam 1995), presuming that young people passively receive social capital from their parents. However, youth studies have shown that young people actively generate and use social capital from other relationships in their lives, including peers (Holland et al. 2007; Abada and Tenkorang 2009; Chesters and Smith 2015).

Social capital is an amorphous concept that has been used to refer to, among others, young people's 'sociability, social networks, social support, trust, reciprocity, and community and civic engagement' (Morrow 1999: 744). Yet, despite its vagueness, it remains useful for conceptualising how young people gain valuable resources from their social relationships. Holland, Reynolds and Weller provide a useful definition of social capital as 'encompass[ing] the values that people hold and the *resources* that they can access' (2007: 98, my emphasis) through social relationships.

Peers are a source of various resources for young people. Youth studies research has shown that peers help young people navigate periods of change, provide them with emotional support, and assist in their personal development (Wentzel et al. 2010; Mariano et al. 2011; Smith and Skrbiš 2016; Ryan et al. 2019). Like cultural capital, however, much research on young people's peer-generated social capital focuses on its intersection with education. Peers can influence young people's academic attainment and be a source of support during educational transitions (Studsrød and Bru 2011; Keay et al. 2015). They also provide educational motivation by modelling positive academic behaviours and values, which young people emulate and adopt, constituting beneficial resources for their education (Ryan 2000; Wentzel et al. 2010; Studsrød and Bru 2011; Ryan et al. 2019). These dynamics have been found in studies of youth without a migration background, but also of migrant youth (Pernice-Duca 2010; Lee and Lam 2016; Ryan et al. 2019).

Youth studies research on peer relationships have focused on peers in young people's immediate environments. Studies that incorporate youth with a migration background have similarly only looked at their local peers (Pernice-Duca 2010; Lee and Lam 2016), even when the migrant youth in question have lived and attended school abroad (Ryan et al. 2019). This reflects a perception in youth studies that social capital is 'embedded spatially, culturally and temporally in the locality where [young people] reside' (Raffo and Reeves 2000: 154). Some research that includes migrant youth has argued that maintaining connections to both their origin and residence countries results in the best outcomes. Yet these studies largely explore migrant youth's origin-country connections through local relationships with co-ethnic peers, rather than with people in the country of origin (Holland et al. 2007; Abada and Tenkorang 2009).

2.6 Transnational resources through youth mobility trajectories

Emerging research on transnational youth mobility shows that exploring young people's mobility experiences reveals new contexts, relationships, and resources that shape their lives (Fürstenau 2005; van Geel and Mazzucato 2020; Mazzucato and van Geel 2022; see also Fürstenau and Carnicer 2021). The literatures reviewed above that explore important *local* contexts, relationships, and resources in young people's lives enable me to extend this line of inquiry further, by highlighting hitherto unstudied aspects of migrant youth's mobility to and experiences in the country of origin. Guided by these literatures, I focus on the resources gained from family networks, school contexts, and peer relationships that young people access through their mobility. Using the concept of youth mobility trajectories (Section 2.4) enables me to explore not only how such resources are gained in the country of origin, but also how they shape young people's lives in the country of residence – that is, how such resources operate transnationally.

It is important to note that different literatures refer in different ways to young people's resources. The sociological literature on young people's family and educational contexts refers to 'cultural capital'; meanwhile, youth studies refer to the resources gained through young people's peer relationships as 'social capital'. Migrant transnationalism research variously refers to 'cultural capital' (Levitt 2009; Coe and Shani 2015), 'social resources' (Reynolds 2011), 'class-based knowledge' (Fernández-Kelly 2008), and simply 'resources' (Binaisa 2011). However, many of the specific resources encompassed by these terms overlap; for example, emotional support, motivation, respect, and resilience are each identified across two or more of these literatures. In this thesis, I am interested in migrant youth's *transnational resources* – that is, the values, perspectives, knowledge, and skills that young people gain in one country and then use in another through their mobility trajectories. In the empirical chapters, I refer to the transnational resources under study using the terminologies of the literatures I engage with in each.

2.7 An analytical framework for the study of youth mobility

This thesis responds to calls to expand the emerging field of transnational youth mobility, including the need for more research on 'the different kinds of moves that young people engage in, what transpires during these moves, and how this shapes their transnational lives' (Mazzucato and van Geel 2022: 204). It does so by exploring migrant youth's mobility trajectories and the transnational resources they gain through these trajectories – that is, the ways in which young people move between their countries of origin and residence, their experiences of being mobile, and how this mobility affects their lives. This analytical framework enables me to build upon existing knowledge of young people's transnational engagements from a single location (Sections 2.2.1, 2.2.2) and from isolated travels to the

'homeland' (Section 2.2.3), to explore young people's embodied mobility experiences over time and space (Section 2.3) through the study of youth mobility trajectories (Section 2.4). Furthermore, it enables me to investigate contexts and relationships in the country of origin (Sections 2.5.1, 2.5.2) that provide young people with transnational resources throughout their mobility trajectories (Section 2.6), in order to understand the impact of mobility on their lives.

Each of the three empirical chapters builds upon the various contributions of the reviewed literatures while addressing important research gaps identified above. Together, the chapters answer my overarching research question: *How do young people of Ghanaian background living in Hamburg, Germany experience their transnational mobility over time and space, and how does mobility affect their lives?* Chapter 5 unpacks the embodied and processual nature of young people's mobility trajectories, paying particular attention to the specific people, places, and events that make up their mobility experiences, and exploring the dynamic meanings and impacts of these factors on young people's relationships to the country of origin. It does so by bringing insights from mobility studies about the embodied and dynamic nature of mobility experiences to bear on transnational migration research on migrant youths' relationships with the country of origin.

The remaining two empirical chapters then build on this understanding of mobility trajectories as processual patterns comprising embodied experiences to explore specific contexts and social relationships in the country of origin that migrant youth access through their mobility trajectories, and the transnational resources that they build through these experiences and employ in their lives in the country of residence. Chapter 6 analyses the resources young people gain through their family relationships and educational experiences during periods of residence in the country of origin – through the lens of 'embodied cultural capital' – and how they use and adapt these resources to navigate their school transitions following an international move to the country of residence. It brings literature on cultural capital and education together with migrant youth research through a transnational mobility lens that considers experiences in both the countries of origin and residence. Chapter 7 applies insights from youth studies to the gaps in transnational family studies, and vice versa, to identify a new source of transnational resources for mobile migrant youth: transnational peers. The chapter investigates how young people establish and maintain transnational peer relationships with same-generation friends, relatives, and romantic partners in the country of origin through their mobility trajectories; what types of resources – or 'social capital' – young people gain through these relationships; and how they employ these resources in their lives in the country of residence.

In order to reflect the diversity and breadth of mobility experiences over time and space among young people with migration background, the three chapters each analyse a different

part of young people's mobility trajectories: Chapter 5 focuses on visits to Ghana, Chapter 6 focuses on periods of residence in Ghana, and Chapter 7 combines visits and periods of residence in Ghana. Finally, the theoretical and conceptual framework for the empirical chapters is supported by an innovative methodological design that takes a youth-centric approach and builds on the insights of mobile methods. I explain in Chapter 4 how I methodologically operationalise this research design.

Chapter 3.

Migration, mobility, and education in and between Ghana and Germany

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the background context for the empirical chapters that follow. While critiques of methodological nationalism highlight the importance of looking beyond the nation-state to understand transnational phenomena, they also acknowledge that the nation-state and its institutions are important shaping forces in the lives of transnational migrants (Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2003). This chapter presents the backdrop of the lives of the young people in this study by focusing on the two main nation-states between which they are mobile: Ghana and Germany. For Ghana, I focus on the national picture, given I conducted fieldwork there in various places and my participants have lived and spent time in many parts of the country. For Germany, I focus on Hamburg but include information on the national level where relevant (e.g., migration policies). This focus is justified because Hamburg was the only place in Germany where I conducted fieldwork, while the inclusion of information on relevant national-level policies serves to highlight Hamburg's demographic, political, and educational position in the country.

Following a brief introduction of each context, I focus on two themes at the heart of this thesis in each place: migration and mobility, and education. Given my participants are all transnationally mobile between Ghana and Germany, their lives are all shaped to some degree by Ghana's migration culture and Germany's (specifically Hamburg's) migration regime. Education is the full-time occupation of most of my participants in Hamburg, and they all either have direct experience of education in Ghana or have been exposed to it through their transnational mobility. I also discuss the interlinkages between migration, mobility, and education in each place. Finally, I zoom in to the particular background of my case study where these two contexts meet, by discussing Ghanaian migration to Germany and the Ghanaian community in Hamburg. The chapter draws on secondary literature and my own observations, particularly in schools where I conducted fieldwork.

3.2 The Ghanaian context

Migration and education are cornerstones of life in Ghana: 'growing up and going abroad' (Coe 2012b) and becoming an 'educated person' (Abotsi 2020) are two fundamental aspirations nurtured among Ghanaian youth. Migration permeates Ghanaian society: almost half of Ghanaian households have a family member overseas (Mazzucato et al. 2018) and high rates of return migration mean that many Ghanaians have access to first-hand accounts of the experience of moving abroad (Mazzucato 2007; Schans et al. 2018). During my fieldwork in Ghana, teachers asked me to ferry packages to their relatives in Germany; taxi drivers asked me about visa policies in my home country, Australia; and businesspeople recounted where they had eaten the best Ghanaian cuisine in Europe. Similarly, education is everywhere in Ghana: one third of Ghana's total population of 31 million is enrolled in

school.[3] Uniformed students stroll the streets, dusty school signs are clustered on roadsides, and television and radio programs promote the value of schooling (see also van Geel 2019a: 181). These two aspects of Ghanaian society are each presented in turn below, followed by a discussion of the interconnections between migration, mobility, and education in contemporary Ghana.

3.2.1 Migration and mobility in Ghanaian society

Migration and mobility are prominent aspects of contemporary Ghanaian life, but they are not new. Being mobile has long been a feature of life on the African continent, and 'mobility in its ubiquity is fundamental to any understanding of African social life' (de Bruijn et al. 2001: 1; Mavhunga et al. 2016). Whether for trade, employment, education, protection or family, human movement in Africa has historically been part of life and seen as a source of valuable resources (Coe and Pauli 2020).

Ghana was primarily a country of immigration until the 1960s, hosting many migrants from other West African countries (Peil 1995: 346; Anarfi et al. 2003). Ghanaians themselves have emigrated in large numbers since independence in 1957. Approximately half of the Ghanaian population has migrated internally (Commonwealth Secretariat 2021: 144). There are no clear statistics on the number of Ghanaians abroad because of a lack of data collection by the Ghanaian government and large numbers of undocumented Ghanaian migrants (Schans et al. 2018: 267). However, estimates posit that at least one million Ghanaians – or roughly 5 per cent of the population – live abroad (Orozco et al. 2005; IOM 2009; Twum-Baah 2005 cited in Schans et al. 2018: 267). Another way to view the prevalence of migration in Ghanaian society is to look at the proportion of people in Ghana who have a family member who has migrated. A household survey in Ghana found that 43 per cent of households have a nuclear or extended family member abroad (Mazzucato et al. 2018). Most Ghanaian international migrants originate from the prosperous Ashanti and Greater Accra regions and are generally well educated and socioeconomically advantaged (Peil 1995; Anarfi et al. 2003; Mörath 2015). While the majority of Ghanaian migrants reside in other African countries, roughly a third of Ghanaian emigrants now reside in the Global North, including in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Germany (Mazzucato 2007; IOM 2009). Ghana has consistently been among the top ten countries of origin of African migrants residing in OECD countries (OECD/AFD 2019).

Mobility and migration are not exclusively adult phenomena in Ghana. Child fostering is common, whereby children circulate between various caregivers in Ghana, usually within extended family networks, often because their parents are abroad or elsewhere in Ghana (Coe

[3] UNESCO Institute for Statistics, http://uis.unesco.org/en/country/gh (accessed 5 October 2021).

2012a; Poeze et al. 2017). Ghanaian young people are also involved in and affected by international migration in various ways. Young people migrate internationally themselves, with many of those who move to the Global North doing so under family reunification schemes (Commonwealth Secretariat 2021; see Anschütz and Mazzucato 2021 regarding Belgium). The prominence of migration in Ghanaian society means that ideas of migration constitute part of young people's socialisation, and many Ghanaian youth aspire to migrate internationally themselves, including university students (Hallberg Adu 2019; Kyei 2021) and children from diverse social-class backgrounds (Coe 2012b).

3.2.2 Education in Ghana

Education is a high priority in Ghana. Nearly a quarter of government spending goes to education (World Bank 2015) and the country's education system performs highly in continental comparisons (Bashir et al. 2018). The Ghanaian education system is centralised and still largely based on the British colonial curriculum (Pinto 2009). English is the official language of the country and educational instruction, though Ghanaian languages are also taught at school and spoken in the home. Compulsory basic education includes kindergarten (2 years), primary school (6 years), and Junior High School (JHS, 3 years). Approximately two-thirds of students who complete basic education go on to secondary education (Commonwealth Secretariat 2021: 30), called Senior High School (SHS, 3 years), which is not compulsory. The results of the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) at the end of JHS determine entry to SHS, which is competitive. Schooling enrolment and completion rates have risen dramatically in recent decades across all levels of education. Between 1950 and 2010, the primary education completion rate rose from 6.3 per cent to 85.3 per cent, while the secondary education completion rate rose from 1.1 per cent to 22.5 per cent in the same period (Barro and Lee 2013). A recent policy change made SHS free and has further swollen enrolment numbers.[4]

Private schools have proliferated in Ghana in recent years and account for an increasing proportion of enrolments at both the primary and secondary education levels (World Bank 2015) and across all socioeconomic strata (Tooley et al. 2007). Yet research comparing quality differences between public and private schools is inconclusive (ibid.). For example, public schools have more trained teachers but larger class sizes than private schools on average (World Bank 2015). Private schools are also very diverse, including low-fee and low-quality institutions as well as expensive and highly regarded schools offering international school-leaving qualifications (Tooley et al. 2007). Preferences for public or

[4] SHS enrolment numbers swelled by 30.7 per cent in the first year of the free SHS policy, according to a presentation in 2018 by the Minister of Education, Matthew Opoku Prempeh, https://www.sambuz.com/doc/implementation-of-free-shs-programme-and-the-double-track-presentation-223011 (accessed 5 October 2021).

private schooling tend to vary by stage of education: while many families opt for private education for their children at the primary and JHS levels, many of Ghana's most prestigious SHS are public schools.[5]

3.2.3 Interlinkages between migration, mobility, and education in Ghana

Migration, mobility, and education are deeply connected in Ghana. Young people's internal mobility is often motivated by educational purposes (Hashim 2005). Some young people move between households in order to attend a particular school or reside with caregivers who can provide access to quality educational instruction (Coe 2012b; Abotsi 2020; Anschütz and Mazzucato 2021). Many move to reside at school itself; the vast majority of SHS offer both 'day' and 'boarding' options for students, making educational mobility 'normalised' in Ghana (Coe 2012b; van Geel 2019a: 181).[6]

Similarly, international migration and education are often linked for young Ghanaians, both in practice and aspirations. The first waves of Ghanaian emigration following independence consisted largely of students heading abroad to attend university in the United States and Europe, including Germany (Nieswand 2008; Mörath 2015; see Section 3.4.1). There are currently more than 15,000 Ghanaian students abroad,[7] and Ghana's number of internationally mobile students has grown by more than 40 per cent in the last five years (Campus France 2020: 33). Educational migration is also a common aspiration among young people in Ghana, including school-aged children (Coe 2012b) and tertiary students (Hallberg Adu 2019). Young people not only emigrate to study, but also because they *have* studied: a staggering 45 percent of Ghana's tertiary-educated workforce moves abroad (Gibson and McKenzie 2012).

3.3 The German context

Hamburg is Germany's second most-populous urban centre and one of its sixteen states, or *Bundesländer*. It lies in the north of the country and is historically connected to many international trade partners and migration routes through its port. More than a third of Hamburg's 1.9 million[8] residents and half of its youth population were born outside Germany or in Germany to foreign parents (Statistikamt Nord 2021). Throughout my fieldwork, Hamburg's diversity was visible not only in its people, but also in its politics. On-street advertisements for a political education campaign announced that 'Home is not where one is

[5] https://citinewsroom.com/2021/04/some-ghanaians-share-views-on-quality-of-education-in-private-and-public-schools-debate/ (accessed 5 October 2021).
[6] See, for example, the 'List of Senior High Schools in Ghana and their Categories 2019', http://myshsrank.com (accessed 5 October 2021).
[7] 'Ghana', http://uis.unesco.org/en/uis-student-flow (accessed 7 September 2021).
[8] Hamburg's population at the end of 2018, based on Hamburg census data (Statistikamt Nord 2019).

born, but where one lives in safety and with dignity'[9] and the local government launched a public campaign to seek culturally diverse new recruits to the civil service.[10] This diversity can be traced through the institutional actors and mechanisms that govern the lives of those with a migration background, as well as through the educational structures and stakeholders that youth with a migration background encounter. Hamburg's migration regime and education system are each addressed in turn below, followed by a discussion of the ways in which migration, mobility, and education interlink in the city.

3.3.1 Migration regime in Germany, specifically Hamburg

Germany, like many countries in the Global North, has undergone enormous demographic, social and political changes in its relationship with migration over the past decades. While foreigners constituted just 1 per cent of the population in 1950 (Eichhorst and Wozny 2012), at the end of 2019, more than 12 per cent of the total population of nearly 82 million did not hold German nationality and more than a quarter had a migration background (Statistisches Bundesamt 2020a). In 2020, only the United States had more migrants among its population in absolute numbers (UNDESA 2020). Despite ongoing debate over Germany's historically monocultural self-identity and ambivalent feelings towards migrants (Auernheimer 2005; Rühlmann and McMonagle 2019), contemporary Germany is now commonly perceived as a 'migration society' (*Migrationsgesellschaft*), both domestically and internationally. From the 1950s to the 1970s, the main immigration flows were related to the recruitment of temporary workers from southern Europe and Turkey to meet growing labour demands (Eichhorst and Wozny 2012). Returning ethnic Germans who had been expelled from the country as a result of the Second World War, and their families, constituted the next dominant group of immigrants, particularly in the 1990s (ibid.). Today immigration to Germany is far more diverse, including large-scale humanitarian, skilled, and family-reunification migration. Significant recent changes in Germany's migration policy include the citizenship reform of 2000 and the immigration act of 2004, which expanded access to German nationality and updated and standardised the country's immigration policy (Süssmuth 2009; Farahat 2013).

This section provides information on the elements of Germany's migration regime relevant to the lives of my participants. By 'migration regime', I mean policies related to migration and the institutions involved in implementing them (Mazzucato 2015). I did not explicitly collect data on the legal statuses of my participants (for reasons outlined in Section 4.3.3)

[9] My translation of the German original, 'Heimat ist nicht da, wo man geboren wird, sondern da, wo man in Sicherheit und Würde lebt'.
[10] The campaign, called 'Bist Du Dabei?', can be translated as 'Won't you join us?' or 'Are you with us?' The campaign set a target of 20 per cent of new recruits to the civil service with migration background, which was reached in 2020. https://www.hamburg.de/bist-du-dabei (accessed 7 September 2021).

nor research the effects of legal status on mobility. This section provides a backdrop to the legal statuses my participants held, as far as I could discern from my fieldwork, and the related policies that structured their lives in Germany and their transnational mobility. I focus on three main aspects: residence permits through family reunification, *Duldung* toleration permits, and German citizenship. I then briefly outline how mobility is enabled or limited for each of these three statuses. The end of this section sketches out the institutional context of Hamburg's migration regime.

Family reunification is a common pathway for foreign nationals to gain a residence permit in Germany (see Section 3.4.1).[11] In fact, Germany issues more family-related residence permits than any other European state and almost half of the first permits issued in Germany are for family reasons (EMN 2017). German migration policy allows for 'minor, unmarried children' to enter to Germany to join one or both parents 'in order to protect the institution of […] the family', [12] albeit a Eurocentric conception of the nuclear family that does not recognise the more expansive nature of family for many migrants, including those from West Africa (Mazzucato et al. 2018). What follows draws on part 6, 'Residence for family reasons,' of the *Immigration Act 2004*. [13] The parent(s) that dependent children are reunifying with must be German citizens or in possession of a valid temporary 'residence permit' (*Aufenthaltserlaubnis*) or permanent 'settlement permit' (*Niederlassungserlaubnis*). There is no minimum period of legal residence in Germany by the parent(s) that must be fulfilled before family reunification can take place.[14] Further, the parent(s) must not be dependent on state benefits and must have sufficient financial means and living space to support and accommodate the dependent child. If the dependent child is reunifying with only one parent, that parent must prove they have sole custody. Children 16 years or older who enter Germany on family reunification grounds must demonstrate a command of the German language or that they will be able to 'integrate into the [German] way of life', based on their 'education and way of life to date.' Dependent children's residence permits based on family reunification can be converted into settlement permits after three years rather than the usual five, dependent on the household's continued existence in Germany and the child's German language skills.

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[11] Family-related residence permits are one of four main categories of residence permit issued to foreigners in Germany. The other three categories are educational, occupational, and humanitarian (Parts 3-6, Immigration Act, *Zuwanderungsgesetz*).

[12] 'Family reunification', Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, https://www.bamf.de/EN/Themen/MigrationAufenthalt/ZuwandererDrittstaaten/Familie/familie-node.html (accessed 7 September 2021).

[13] 'The Act to Control and Restrict Immigration and to Regulate the Residence and Integration of EU Citizens and Foreigners (Immigration Act) of 30 July 2004.' In German it is referred to as the *Zuwanderungsgesetz*.

[14] By contrast, minor children of refugees must apply to reunify with their parent(s) within three months of their parents' asylum being granted in Germany; https://www.dw.com/en/refugee-family-reunification-in-germany-what-you-need-to-know/a-40449409 (accessed 1 October 2021).

Foreigners residing in Germany without a valid residence or settlement permit can be subject to deportation. A particular legal status called a *Duldung*, literally a 'toleration', is granted to people whose deportation is temporarily suspended. It is most commonly granted to asylum seekers whose claims were rejected but who cannot be deported for various reasons, including being an unaccompanied minor, lacking identity or travel documents, or being a close family member of a legal resident or German citizen (Drangsland 2021).[15] The *Duldung* is a short-term permit,[16] so its holders must regularly visit the local Immigration Office (*Ausländerbehörde*) to have their *Duldung* re-evaluated and extended if the reasons for it are still in place (Drangsland 2021: 36). Many people live with a *Duldung* long-term (Castañeda 2010). In 2019, approximately 180,000 people in Germany had a *Duldung*, more than 18 per cent of whom had lived in Germany for more than 5 years.[17] *Duldung* holders' access to employment and 'integration' resources (e.g., language courses) is highly restricted (ibid.),[18] though school-aged youth with a *Duldung* can attend school (see Section 3.3.3). While the *Duldung* traps its holders in a 'liminal status' (ibid.: 253), the law provides for its conversion into a legal permit under certain conditions (Residence Act,[19] Section 25b). Young people (aged 14-21) with a *Duldung* can be granted residence permits after four years of schooling in Germany (or after obtaining a school-leaving or vocational qualification) and if it appears they can 'integrate' into the German 'way of life' (Residence Act, Section 25a (1)).

German citizenship was traditionally based on bloodline (*ius sanguinis*), making access to naturalisation and citizenship difficult for immigrants and their children born in Germany (Süssmuth 2009). The 2000 citizenship reform, however, resulted in a modernized and more-inclusive citizenship law, or *Staatsangehörigkeitgesetz* (Vink 2017), including the introduction of *ius soli* provisions, enabling citizenship for people born in Germany and naturalisation for long-term residents, but only under certain circumstances (de Groot and Vink 2010). Children born in Germany can become citizens if at least one of their parents is a German citizen or has a permanent settlement permit and has resided in Germany for a minimum of eight years (BAMF 2021: 40).[20] In 2008, more than 40 per cent of immigrants in Germany had naturalised after an average residence of 9.5 years in the country (Bauböck et al. 2013: 24). Naturalisation requirements include eight years of residence (or five in the

[15] https://www.diakonie.de/wissen-kompakt/ausreisepflicht-duldung-bleiberecht (accessed 7 September 2021).
[16] Drangsland (2021: 36) describes observing *Duldungen* with durations of between 2 weeks and 6 months in her fieldwork with migrants in Hamburg.
[17] Figures from Deutscher Bundestag 2019, https://dserver.bundestag.de/btd/19/082/1908258.pdf (accessed 4 October 2021). However, it is not clear whether people held their *Duldung* for these durations or potentially lived in Germany under other permits or conditions.
[18] https://www.diakonie.de/wissen-kompakt/ausreisepflicht-duldung-bleiberecht (accessed 7 September 2021).
[19] 'Act on the Residence, Economic Activity and Integration of Foreigners in the Federal Territory,' or Residence Act. In German it is referred to as the *Aufenthaltsgesetz*.
[20] Presumably, children who do not meet these requirements are granted a residence permit and are able to naturalise once they fulfil the standard requirements for naturalisation, outlined in the text above. However, I was unable to find any specific information on this.

case of family reunification; see above), the means to support oneself and one's immediate family, and successfully passing an integration test and a German language test. German educational diplomas can replace the citizenship test for minors and the language requirement for children under 16 (Farahat 2013). One distinctive – and highly controversial – feature of Germany's citizenship law is its so-called 'Option Model' (*Optionsmodell*), which requires dual-nationality citizens to choose between their German or foreign nationality by the age of 21 (ibid.). An amendment to the Nationality Act in 2014 made this requirement somewhat more inclusive of migrant-background children, by allowing those who have grown up in Germany or whose second nationality is that of an EU member state or Switzerland to keep both citizenships.[21]

The legal status of foreign nationals dictates their ability both to be mobile within Germany and to enter and exit the country. Residence and settlement permit holders can travel within the Schengen zone, while travel further afield is dependent on the limitations and requirements of their passport. These permits are in principle invalidated, however, six months after leaving Germany, except with prior approval of the local Immigration Office (*Ausländerbehörde*).[22] German citizens can freely travel within Germany and the Schengen zone and are not restricted regarding the amount of time they may stay outside the country. Their entry to third countries is governed by the regulations of their destination. For example, German citizens require a visa to enter Ghana, issued by the Ghanaian Embassy in Berlin, and a tourist visa to enter Ghana costs 110 Euros.[23] *Duldung* holders' movements are, by contrast, heavily restricted: they generally cannot leave the area in which they reside (Castañeda 2010: 253) and they are in principle prohibited from leaving the country (Drangsland 2021: 3, 25). However, in practice, it is possible to obtain special permission to leave and re-enter Germany with a *Duldung*, at least for minors travelling in the context of educational trips. During my fieldwork, I arranged one such permit for a participant to attend a workshop in the Netherlands (see Section 4.5.3).

While migration policies are decided at the federal level, the states, or *Bundesländer*, are responsible for their implementation. The key migration-related institutions in Hamburg are the Immigration Office (*Ausländerbehörde*) and the Central Office for Residents (*Einwohner-Zentralamt*). The Immigration Office 'is responsible for all matters pertaining to legal residence', including the issuance of residence and settlement permits (BAMF 2021: 32) and related functions mentioned above, such as the regular evaluation and extension of

[21] People are considered to have grown up in Germany if, by their 21st birthday, they have fulfilled at least one of the following conditions in Germany: 8 years of residence, 6 years of schooling, or completed school or occupational training. (Article 25, *Staatsangehörigkeitsgesetz*; see also https://www.bmi.bund.de/EN/topics/migration/obligation-one-citizenship/obligation-one-citizenship-node.html, accessed 4 October 2021).
[22] https://welcome.hamburg.de/allgemeines/13838716/auslandsaufenthalt/ (accessed 4 October 2021).
[23] https://ghanaemberlin.de/consular-section/visa/ (accessed 4 October 2021).

Duldungen and the granting of permission for long stays abroad for residence and settlement permit holders. The Central Office for Residents manages naturalisation and asylum procedures.[24] Various other government ministries and institutions also offer migration-related services. For example, language and integration courses are provided by the Ministry for Labour, Health, Social Affairs, Family, and Integration (*Behörde für Arbeit, Gesundheit, Soziales, Familie und Integration*). The *Länder*-level implementation of migration policy results in significant differences between the states in processing times, naturalisation rates, and interpretation of legal requirements (Farahat 2013). Hamburg had the highest naturalisation rate of all *Länder* in Germany in 2010 and has run successful naturalisation promotional campaigns, unique in the country (ibid.).

3.3.2 The education system in Hamburg

In this section, I sketch out the basic features of Hamburg's secondary education system, including school types and qualifications, tracking and permeability, and the cultural and socioeconomic profiles of Hamburg schools. I draw on secondary literature and my fieldwork in Hamburg schools to lay out the broad context regarding educational structures, regulations, and demographics, and a more specific background regarding the educational environments of my participants.

Unlike migration, education policy in Germany is governed at the state level. Historically, most *Länder* had three types of secondary school – *Hauptschule, Realschule*, and *Gymnasium* – which had different durations, qualifications, and levels of prestige (Auernheimer 2005). Several *Länders'* education systems are now undergoing reforms, implying changes in the number and type of school forms available and the pathways and qualifications they lead to (van Ackeren and Block 2009). Since a 2009 reform, Hamburg has two secondary school types (ibid.). Following four years of primary school (*Grundschule*, Grades 1-4), students in Hamburg move on to either a *Stadtteilschule* or *Gymnasium* in Grade 5. At a *Stadtteilschule* (literally a 'neighbourhood school'), students can complete school-leaving exams at the end of Grade 9 (*Erster allgemeinbildender Schulabschluss*, ESA), Grade 10 (*Mittlerer Schulabschluss*, MSA), or Grade 13 (*Abitur*). The ESA and MSA can lead to further vocational training at *berufliche Schulen*, while the *Abitur* is required to enter university. *Gymnasien* are academically oriented schools that offer a streamlined *Abitur* track one year shorter than at *Stadtteilschulen*. Roughly half of Hamburg students in general education attend each school form (BSB 2019: 6). Private schools comprise less than 10 per cent of all secondary school enrolments in Hamburg (ibid.).

[24] https://www.hamburg.com/welcome/entry-residence/immigration-registration-offices/11745690/central-office (accessed 1 September 2021).

Children are required by the Hamburg School Act to attend school (*schulpflichtig*) from the age of 6 for a duration of 11 years (*Hamburgische Schulgesetz,* art. 37).

Teachers provide a recommendation for which secondary school type a student should attend at the end of primary school; however, parents are ultimately responsible for deciding whether their child will go to a *Stadtteilschule* or *Gymnasium*. Many parents choose to enrol their children in *Gymnasien* because of the perceived higher quality of education available there and the prestige attached to this school type. For example, more than one-fifth of Grade 5 students at *Gymnasien* in 2018/19 had not received a *Gymnasium* recommendation (BSB 2019: 27). At the national level, such early tracking has been shown to perpetuate disadvantage, particularly among migration-background youth (Andell 2008; Crul et al. 2012), who may not speak German in the home before starting school but who receive fewer *Gymnasium* recommendations even when they have similar grades and social status to their 'German' counterparts (Auernheimer 2005). While Germany's educational tracking is considered the harshest in Europe (van de Werfhorst and Heath 2019), the two-pillar system in Hamburg is, at least in theory, less restrictive for two reasons. First, the *Abitur*, which is required for university admission, is available in both *Stadtteilschulen* and *Gymnasien*, unlike in other states, where it is only available at *Gymnasien*. Roughly one-third of the students who graduated with the *Abitur* in 2018/19 in Hamburg did so at a *Stadtteilschule* (BSB 2019: 43). Second, a key feature of the Hamburg education system is its permeability (*Durchlässigkeit*). In theory, students can move between school forms throughout their education. In practice, however, the permeability flows largely in one direction: in 2018/19, a total of 1,607 students moved from *Gymnasien* to *Stadtteilschulen*, while 216 did the reverse (BSB 2019: 28).

The perceived and actual differences between the two secondary school types in Hamburg relates closely to the profiles of their student bodies. Students at *Stadtteilschulen* are, on average, more socioeconomically and culturally diverse than those at *Gymnasien*. In the school year 2018/19, when I conducted fieldwork, roughly 1 in 10 *Gymnasien* students and 1 in 3 *Stadtteilschulen* were from low-class backgrounds (BSB 2019: 10). These figures were reversed for the proportion of upper-class students: 1 in 10 *Stadtteilschulen* and 1 in 3 *Gymnasien* students (ibid.). In the same school year, roughly 6 in 10 *Stadtteilschulen* students and 4 in 10 *Gymnasien* students had a migration background (ibid.: 12-13). However, the social composition of both school types varies widely by *Stadtteil*, or neighbourhood. For example, the proportion of those under 18 with a migration background varies between 13.6 and 96.4 per cent in the city's neighbourhoods,[25] meaning *Gymnasien* in culturally diverse areas are likely to be more diverse than *Stadtteilschulen* in less-diverse neighbourhoods. Teachers at the main school where I conducted fieldwork told me that around 80 per cent of

[25] https://region.statistik-nord.de/main/2/0/ (accessed 1 October 2021).

their students had a migration background. The Social Index (*Sozialindex* or *KESS-Index*) is used to allocate resources to Hamburg public schools. Schools are given a score from 1 to 6 (lowest to highest) that reflects 'the different social and cultural compositions of the respective student bodies.'[26] The two *Stadtteilschulen* where I did fieldwork had KESS scores of 1 and 2, while the *Gymnasium* I observed had a KESS score of 6.

Germany's teachers reflect society's cultural diversity less than their students. In 2010, less than 10 per cent of teachers nationally had a migration background in 2010 (Rotter 2015: 175), compared to almost 19 per cent of the total population (Statistisches Bundesamt 2017). While such statistics are not publicly available for Hamburg, as far as I am aware,[27] several initiatives aim to increase the diversity of teaching staff, including a quota for recruits to the teaching profession (Rotter 2015) and a network for teachers with a migration background.[28, 29] Based on my observations, the proportion of teachers with a migration background in the schools I visited was similar to the 2010 levels.

Over half of Hamburg's school students have a migration background (BSB 2019: 12), compared to 38.5 per cent of school students nationally (Statistisches Bundesamt 2020a: 47). The two *Stadtteilschulen* where I conducted fieldwork had large proportions of students with a migration background, and African-background students made up a visibly large proportion of the student bodies. This demographic diversity was also reflected in the multicultural activities and ethos of these schools. During fieldwork, I saw Kurdish dance classes at a school fair, websites affirming schools' 'international outlook', and banners in hallways proclaiming participation in the network, 'School without Racism, School with Courage'.[30] I also sat in on staff meetings where teachers discussed their view that reception classes for migrant students not only shape students but are also strengthened by students' abilities, backgrounds, and talents. While these statements of cultural diversity and schools' anti-discrimination stance do not necessarily translate into migrant students' full inclusion in the curriculum nor equality of outcomes with 'native' students, they do signal educational environments in which students' migration backgrounds were framed positively and in which educators actively sought opportunities to celebrate them. By contrast, at the *Gymnasium* I

[26] https://www.hamburg.de/bsb/hamburger-sozialindex/ (accessed 6 September 2021).
[27] Interestingly, there is not a single mention of teachers with migration background in the 'Pedagogical Personnel' chapter of Hamburg's 2020 Education Report (*Bildungsbericht*), while ample statistics on students with a migration background are available in the chapter on 'Children and Youth in Hamburg' (BSB 2020).
[28] Network 'Teachers with Migration Histories' (*Netzwerk 'Lehrkräfte mit Migrationsgeschichte'*), https://li.hamburg.de/netzwerk/ (accessed 3 September 2021).
[29] Education officials told me that parent councils (*Elternrat*) are similarly unreflective of the diversity of their students' family backgrounds (Interview, 4 September 2019). Among my participants, I heard of one parent who had been active in the parent council at his children's school.
[30] https://www.schule-ohne-rassismus.org/ (accessed 7 September 2021). 33 of Hamburg's 157 *Stadtteilschulen* and *Gymnasien* (including state and private schools) are part of this nation-wide network. Naturally, participation in this network does not guarantee that a school is racism-free. See a critique at https://deutsches-schulportal.de/schulkultur/es-gibt-keine-schule-ohne-rassismus/ (accessed 4 October 2021).

visited, my participant was one of a handful of African-background students among more than a thousand pupils.

3.3.3 Interlinkages between migration, mobility, and education in Hamburg, Germany

Given its high proportion of students with a migration background, Hamburg's education system is structurally interlinked with migration and mobility in various ways. Here I focus on schools' policies on students' travels during the academic year and mechanisms for incorporating newly arrived migrant students – themes particularly relevant to contextualising my participants' educational trajectories and experiences.

School policies on students' travels during the academic year are relevant for migrant youth's mobility to the extent that they limit their ability to be mobile. Compulsory school attendance (*Schulpflicht*) is taken seriously in Hamburg. As noted above, according to the state's Education Act (*Hamburgische Schulgesetz*), anyone who is resident in Hamburg is obliged to attend school in Hamburg (article 37.1) for 11 years, between the ages of 6 and 18 (articles 37.3, 38.1). The obligation to attend school can be suspended for various 'important reasons', as long as 'adequate instruction or equivalent support is otherwise guaranteed' (article 39.2). Extensive rules, checklists, and forms exist for handling student absences, including home visits by teachers,[31] which IVK teachers told me they conducted often, adding to their already heavy workloads. Approval of planned absences (e.g., travelling during the school term) is at the discretion of school management. Unexplained or unapproved absences can be penalised with fines (150 Euros per day, up to 1,000 Euros) and can even attract criminal charges.[32] However, such penalties are purportedly very rare, and reports of police checks at airports shortly before or after school holidays are largely urban myths.[33] Teachers at the two *Stadtteilschulen* I observed were aware of their students' – both in reception and mainstream classes – mobility to and from their (or their parents') countries of origin. Reception-class teachers at the main school where I conducted fieldwork told me that a handful of their students each year requested longer holidays to spend extended periods of time with family in the country of origin and that, in most cases, the principal approved such absences because she acknowledged the personal and educational value of such trips. I heard staff at the other *Stadtteilschule* deliberating whether to do the annual class trip to somewhere like Italy instead of Turkey, given that 'most of the kids [in mainstream classes] are there [in Turkey] one or two times a year anyway' to see family.

[31] https://www.hamburg.de/bsb/schulpflichtverletzungen/ (accessed 4 September 2021).
[32] https://www.bussgeld-info.de/schulverweigerung-bussgeld/ (accessed 7 September 2021).
[33] See, for example, https://www.flugrecht.de/news-ampl.php?id=947 and https://www.shz.de/regionales/abflug-vor-den-ferien-schulschwaenzerei-muss-nicht-sein-id17322731.html (accessed 4 September 2021).

Mechanisms for incorporating newly arrived migrant students are relevant for contextualising how the education system deals with mobile young people who have schooling experience in other countries. Newly arrived migrant students in Hamburg who do not speak German are allocated to a reception class by the School Information Centre (*Schulinformationszentrum*, SIZ). These reception classes were first established in the 1950s to educate the children of temporary foreign workers (*Gastarbeiter*), albeit in their home languages, using foreign curricula, and often under the responsibility of origin-country diplomatic missions, with the expectation that they would ultimately return to their countries of origin (Plöger 2021). The structure of reception classes – and the degree to which they intend to 'integrate' migrant students within mainstream education or prepare them for a 'return' to their countries of origin – has shifted over the intervening decades in line with changing migration flows and political discourses around, and public acceptance of, migration (ibid.). In Hamburg, reception classes are called 'international preparation classes' (*Internationale Vorbereitungsklasse*, IVK) and are hosted within mainstream secondary schools, forming a 'parallel system' alongside regular classes (Fürstenau 2017). IVK classes focus on teaching students German, but also include subjects such as Math, English, and Social Sciences (ibid.; Plöger and Barakos 2021). While most newcomer students attend IVK for a year before transitioning to mainstream classes (often within the same school), some remain in advanced IVK classes to complete the Grade 9 ESA or Grade 10 MSA exams. IVK classes are deeply heterogeneous groups, where students from diverse national, cultural, linguistic, and educational backgrounds learn alongside each other (Fürstenau and Niedrig 2018). Two thirds of public *Stadtteilschulen* (39 of 58) and almost half of public *Gymnasien* (29 of 61) in all of Hamburg's seven districts (*Bezirke*) have IVK classes (BSB 2020).[34] In the school year 2018/19, over 2,800 students attended IVK classes in Hamburg, which amounted to 1.75 per cent of the city-state's total school population (BSB 2019).[35] Hamburg's Education Act bases the right and responsibility to receive an education on place of residence, not legal status (BSB 2013; GEW 2017).[36] As such, all newly arrived students, regardless of their method of entry to Germany and legal status, can attend school in Hamburg, including IVK classes.

[34] Bildungsatlas Hamburg, http://bildungsatlas-hamburg.de/Fluechtlingsbeschulung/ (accessed 7 September 2021).
[35] This figure includes students attending IVK classes and *Basisklassen*, another form of reception class for newly arrived students who are not yet literate in the Latin script.
[36] The right to education regardless of legal status is also in line with Germany's Constitution and various international treaties and conventions that Germany is a signatory to, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 2) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 28) (GEW 2017). In general, public bodies and services are legally required to report their knowledge of undocumented persons to the relevant authorities (Castañeda 2010; as per Article 87 of the Residence Act [*Aufenthaltsgesetz*]). Schools and other educational and care facilities are exempted from this legal requirement.

3.4 The two contexts meet

3.4.1 Ghanaian migration to Germany

Germany has long been one of the main European destinations for Ghanaians moving abroad (Schans et al. 2018). It hosts the second-largest group of Ghanaian migrants in continental Europe, after Italy (Mörath 2015). According to Schmelz (2009), Ghanaian migration to Germany has gone through three main phases: educational migration, asylum-seeking migration, and family reunification. Like other African migrant communities in Europe (Yount-André 2020), the first generation of Ghanaian migrants to Germany from the late 1950s to the mid 1970s was dominated by university students (Nieswand 2008; Schmelz 2009). In the socialist German Democratic Republic (East Germany), many Ghanaian education migrants received scholarships funded through bilateral governmental agreements, whereas the entry of Ghanaian education migrants in the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) was facilitated by low student fees and initially liberal immigration and enrolment requirements (Martin 2005). While the number of Ghanaian education migrants remained steady in the following decades, other forms of migration increased, coming to characterise later periods (ibid.). From the 1970s until the mid-1990s, most Ghanaian migrants to Germany were asylum seekers fleeing political and economic turmoil in Ghana (Schmelz 2009). Following a 'turning point in migration policy' in 1993 that restricted access to humanitarian protection in Germany (Castañeda 2010), Ghana has been considered a safe country of origin (Drangsland 2021: 42).[37] This change also coincided with improving conditions in Ghana and a decreasing number of people leaving the country to seek refuge abroad (Anarfi et al. 2003). As such, the third phase, from the mid-1990s to the present, represents a diversification of Ghanaian migrants arriving to Germany, many of whom immigrated through family reunification policies (Mörath 2015; see Section 3.3.1).

The only official statistics on people with Ghanaian background in Germany include the number of people with Ghanaian citizenship residing in the country (Schmelz 2009; Mörath 2015). At the end of 2019, a total of 37,465 Ghanaian citizens were registered in Germany, a figure that has steadily risen over the past decade and which represents the third-largest African migrant group in the country (Statistisches Bundesamt 2020b).[38] Unofficial estimates, however, posit that the total population of people with Ghanaian background is

[37] Some Ghanaians do, however, still apply for asylum in Germany. Of the 37,465 Ghanaian nationals in Germany as at 31.12.2019, 5,220 had applied for protection. Of these, 830 were awaiting a decision, 1,825 had been granted protection (*mit anerkanntem Schutzstatus*) and 2,570 had been denied protection (*mit abgelehntem Schutzstatus*). Over a quarter of both groups were aged 17 years or younger. Of those denied humanitarian protection, 2,180 had a *Duldung* (*geduldet ausreisepflichtig*) (Statistisches Bundesamt 2020c). These statistics do not provide further information on the nature of or reasons for applicants' claims for humanitarian protection.

[38] The two largest African migrant groups in Germany are from Morocco and Nigeria. There are slightly fewer Tunisian and Egyptian migrants than Ghanaian migrants (Statistisches Bundesamt 2020b).

double this number (Mörath 2015), including children of Ghanaian citizens, Ghanaians who have naturalised, and undocumented migrants (Nieswand 2008; Schmelz 2009). An estimated quarter of the Ghanaian community is under 25 years old (Mörath 2015).

The majority of Ghanaians in Germany, as in other parts of the world (see Section 3.2.1), come from the Ashanti region and are Christian. While Ghanaians in Germany are less well-educated than their counterparts in English-speaking countries, where highly educated Ghanaians can practice their professions with relative ease (Orozco et al. 2005; Mörath 2015), many have completed at least secondary education in Ghana (Orozco et al. 2005). This trend is consistent with Ghanaian migrant populations in general, which have grown more highly educated over time (Schans et al. 2018). However, Ghanaian migrants in Germany tend to work in low-wage jobs in the service sector (Schmelz 2009; Mörath 2015). The Ghanaian community is also very transnationally mobile: three quarters of the Ghanaians in Germany visit Ghana at least every two years (Orozco et al. 2005).

3.4.2 The Ghanaian community in Hamburg

Hamburg has been a hub for Ghanaian migrants since the period of educational migration in the mid-twentieth century (Nieswand 2008; Schmelz 2009). Today it is home to approximately one in every five Ghanaians in Germany, constituting Germany's largest Ghanaian community (Mörath 2015; Beddy 2020). In 2019, a total of 6,690 Ghanaian citizens were registered in Hamburg (Statistisches Bundesamt 2020b), while around 14,700 people of Ghanaian migration background, including those who migrated from Ghana or have at least one parent who did, were registered in the city in 2019 (Statistikamt Nord 2020). At that time, Ghana was the ninth most-common country of origin among Hamburg's migrant population, and the only African nation in the top thirty (ibid.).

Beyond basic demographic statistics, little documentation of Hamburg's Ghanaian community exists besides community publications (Beddy 2020) and mentions of Hamburg in the small pool of academic and policy research on Ghanaians in Germany (Nieswand 2008; Schmelz 2009; Carl 2013; Mörath 2015). As such, the remainder of this section is based on the limited literature available and my own observations from fieldwork in 2018-2019.

Hamburg's Ghanaian community is not concentrated in any particular neighbourhood(s) but is rather spread out, albeit mostly in the more culturally diverse and socioeconomically disadvantaged southern and eastern parts of the city. Churches and Afro shops that sell Ghanaian food and cosmetic products are hubs of Ghanaian community life (Mörath 2015). Various sources estimate that there are between thirty and fifty Ghanaian churches in Hamburg alone (Schmelz 2009: 22; Carl 2013: 256; Beddy 2020: 325-327). Several non-

profits with Ghanaian-background leadership provide educational mentoring and support for children and young people of African migration background, including Future of Ghana Germany, EduKids, and TopAfric. By contrast, older community organisations that provide political representation or conduct development activities in Ghana, like the Ghana Union, attract few young people (see Section 4.3.1). While several Ghanaian adults I met lamented the lack of Ghanaian role models in the community for Ghanaian-background youth, the situation did appear to be slowly improving. I overheard participants and their friends proudly trade anecdotes about Ghanaian acquaintances working in dominantly white settings (e.g., as civil servants), and a Ghanaian-background politician was elected to a district assembly during my fieldwork.[39]

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter has established the background context of this transnational study by outlining key information on migration, mobility, and education in Ghana and Germany, specifically Hamburg. Migration and mobility have long been key characteristics of Ghanaian society and continue to shape the lives of many Ghanaian young people today, whether through their own internal or international mobility for educational or family reasons, or through the mobility of family members. Education is also a fundamental part of life for young people in Ghana and those of Ghanaian background abroad, and is highly valued as a source of knowledge, status, and important cultural values. Mobility and education are intricately linked in Ghana, with many internal and international migrations prompted by the pursuit of educational qualifications or enabled by them. The migration regime in Germany includes the national-level policies that determine the rules on immigration, residence, naturalisation, and citizenship, as well as the state-level institutions that implement and interpret them. Since 2000, the German migration regime has undergone substantial reforms, which have made German citizenship more accessible to residents without ethnic German ancestors and updated the immigration and residence regulations to reflect the changing nature of immigration to Germany. Hamburg's high proportion of residents – and particularly youth – with a migration background and the city's relatively progressive political and institutional climate have created a context in which cultural diversity is, at least rhetorically, embraced and celebrated. The interlinkages between migration, mobility, and education in Hamburg are reflected in the regulations and school policies governing students' travel during the academic year and in the city's system for incorporating newly arrived migrant students. Finally, information on the phases of Ghanaian migration to Germany and the large and well-established Ghanaian community in Hamburg set the stage for my research sample: young people of Ghanaian background living in Hamburg.

[39] https://www.spdfraktion-hamburg-mitte.de/portfolio-item/irene-appiah/ (accessed 7 September 2021).

Chapter 4.

A methodology for studying youth mobility

4.1 Introduction

This chapter describes my methodological approach in this study, including the main characteristics of the research design (Section 4.2); my sites and sample (Section 4.3); the methods I used to collect data and my approach to data analysis (Section 4.4); and the various ethical considerations of my fieldwork, including informed consent, positionality, and modes of reciprocity (Section 4.5). In section 4.6, I offer some concluding remarks on the overall contribution of this innovative methodology to my research. Challenges I encountered, and the ways in which I addressed them, are included throughout the chapter.

4.2 Research design

In order to study young people's transnational mobility trajectories and the effects of mobility on their lives, I adopted an ethnographic methodology, which enabled me to trace, document, and follow young people's mobility up-close and to contextualise their mobility patterns and experiences within a detailed understanding of their transnational lives. Ethnography's small sample sizes, contextual depth, and exploratory nature do not aim to be generalisable and representative but rather to give space for new questions, topics, and insights to emerge. This is particularly valuable for research that investigates an under-studied topic like transnational youth mobility. While I employed 'a relatively open-ended approach' (Hammersley and Atkinson 2019: 19) that became more refined and focused over the course of fieldwork, four principles guided my research design throughout, including that it be youth-centric, multi-sited, mobility-focused, and couched within a collaborative research framework. Below, I elaborate on these principles and explain how they developed throughout my fieldwork and contributed to my research. Given these four principles permeated my research, they are also evident in the following sections on sites and sample (Section 4.3), data collection and analysis (Section 4.4), and ethics (Section 4.5).

4.2.1 Youth-centric

In line with calls to 'investigate young people's views, perspectives and experiences of mobility […] through youth-centered methodologies' (Mazzucato and van Geel 2022: 204), my research design placed young people's own voices, experiences, and perspectives at the heart of the study. My conception of what constituted youth-centricity and the best ways to achieve it, however, shifted over the course of my research. From the literature, one can easily get the impression that 'youth-centric research' is synonymous with 'participatory research' and that the best way of including youth in research is by using participatory activities to co-construct knowledge (Luttrell et al. 2011; Gardner and Mand 2012; Bastien and Holmarsdottir 2015). Based on discussions in the MO-TRAYL team, my prior work in a youth art studio, and my experience with visual ethnography, I devised various

participatory methods early in my fieldwork, including a photographic workshop in collaboration with a Ghanaian community organisation in Hamburg. Ultimately, however, young people were not interested in such activities. The methodological uniqueness of youth-centric research lies not so much in the data-collection tools used, but rather in the researcher's sensitivity to the specificities of young people's life-stage, including the institutional structuring of their lives and time and the power inequalities inherent in the research process (Heath et al. 2009: 4-5). I soon learned that the best way of making my research youth-centric was not to devise specific 'youth-centred' activities – which often reflect adults' perceptions of young people's preferences (Mitchell 2006; Notermans 2008) – but rather to participate in young people's lives and interests; to be open to, curious about and respectful of their views and perspectives; and to let them guide me as to what topics and phenomena related to my research interests were important and relevant (Christensen and Prout 2004).

If youth-centricity does not imply the use of unique research methods, one might reasonably wonder whether the approach I am describing is in fact youth-centric or simply participant-centric, as all ethnography arguably is. I contend that there is a difference. As outlined in Chapter 2, little transnational migration research has focused on youth, and those studies that have largely view young people in relation to adults. Furthermore, even studies that do focus on youth tend to research them *through* adults (e.g., interviewing teachers and parents about young people, or focusing on young people's transnational attachments mediated by their parents). As such, a youth-centric research design requires a significant shift in how young people are approached, included, and positioned in research. This shift implies a conscious effort to place young people at the centre of the research and involves multiple, ongoing decisions to enact this focus in practice. For example, I interviewed adults connected to a participant (e.g., their parents or teachers) only with that participant's explicit consent. I considered young people's own perspectives as the departure point and adults' contributions as contextualising additions, rather than as authoritative accounts. Consistently returning to the youth-centricity of my research design also forced me to both articulate and challenge my own assumptions. For example, I originally described adults I interviewed for my research, like teachers, as 'experts', but came to view young people as the experts on their own lives, while other interviewees were 'key informants'.

4.2.2 Multi-sited

Following on from the youth-centricity of this research, the requirement that it be multi-sited was a natural extension: in order to study young people's perspectives and experiences of transnational mobility, I needed to conduct my research in the places between which they were mobile. While my research question delimited my multi-sited scope to Hamburg and Ghana, I opted to 'follow the people' (Marcus 1995) in determining exactly which sites I

included in my research, and when. The neighbourhoods where I conducted fieldwork in Hamburg were based on the locations of my participants' homes, schools, churches, and libraries. My visits to Ghana were timed to coincide with my participants' trips there. In Ghana, I circulated between the places where my participants spent most of their time. Because participants were often in different places in Ghana at the same time, I prioritised spending time with participants to whom I had the best access (e.g., concrete plans to stay with them) over participants who were less available. I then used digital methods to follow the mobility of participants when I could not physically accompany them (see Section 4.4.2). However, I also aimed to spend time with various participants and was cautious not to overstay my welcome. Given few participants were in Ghana at any one time (between two and four on each trip), I managed to strike a balance between maximising my opportunities and diversifying my experiences.

Researchers have noted that multi-sited research can imply a choice for breadth over depth (Mazzucato 2009; Hannerz 2012). However, this characterisation of multi-sited research does not necessarily apply to research on transnational mobility. In fact, I argue that a multi-sited research design enabled me to obtain depth *through* breadth in three ways. First, my research in each site deepened my relationships with participants in the other site. Given my participants lived in Hamburg and visited Ghana during summer holidays, most of my fieldwork (12 out of 14 months) was based in Hamburg. My rapport with my participants and knowledge of their lives in Hamburg enabled me to conduct rich ethnographic research in Ghana, despite spending relatively little time there. Similarly, the time I spent in Ghana further enhanced my rapport with participants back in Hamburg and helped contextualise my understandings of mobility's effects on their lives there (see Section 4.5.2).

Second, incorporating research in both Hamburg and Ghana was necessary because young people's mobility between these two countries was itself the object of study. As such, a multi-sited research design broadened the aspects of young people's mobility I could access, increasing the overall depth of my research. Hannerz notes that multi-sited research is not 'a mere comparative study of localities' (2012: 402) but a study of *linkages* between sites (see also Mazzucato and Wagner 2018). My participants' mobility linked Hamburg and Ghana, and the breadth achieved by including both sites enabled me to research their mobility in more depth than if I had studied it from one place. In Hamburg, my participation in young people's education, home life, recreation, and social networks showed me how their past mobility experiences affected these aspects of their lives. In Ghana, I spent time with participants in the places and contexts that constituted their trips there, often staying with them and their families for several days or weeks at a time. This enabled me to research their embodied mobility experiences as they unfolded, and to meet people, see places, and share experiences they had told me about in Hamburg.

Finally, my fieldwork in Hamburg was very different to my fieldwork in Ghana, both in terms of the number of participants I was following at any one time, and the nature of the time I spent with them. In Hamburg, my contact with participants consisted of meetings fitted into their busy schedules and involved travelling across the city to meet participants, sometimes several in a single day. My fieldwork in Ghana, by contrast, was more concentrated; (some) participants had more time to meet and my access to them was greater. For example, I made 19 observations of Ella in Hamburg between 2018-2019, and I stayed with her in Ghana for 19 days in the summer of 2019.

4.2.3 Mobility-focused

Based on my research question, my research design needed to not only include these different sites but also focus on the mobility between them. As outlined in Chapter 2, second-generation transnationalism and returns research has largely created static accounts of migrant youth's mobility and has largely focused on single instances of mobility. In order to investigate transnational youth mobility trajectories, I focused on three main aspects: mobility patterns, experiences, and effects. I used various methods to address these points – not all of them multi-sited – and some methods were useful for focusing on more than one aspect. (See Section 4.4.1 for a detailed description of these methods.)

First, I researched young people's patterns of mobility by paying attention to moves made in the past, moves made during fieldwork, and the kinds of mobility they imagined in their future. These included internal mobility between different households, neighbourhoods, cities, and regions in Ghana and in Germany, as well as international moves between countries. It included short-term visits (e.g., summer holidays with family), medium-term relocations (e.g., for a school exchange or internship), and long-term moves (e.g., migrating from one country to another). The main way in which I researched young people's mobility patterns was through mobility trajectory mapping (see Section 4.4.1). But information on their mobility patterns also emerged through other activities in the field, including interviews and informal conversations with participants, their parents, and their friends.

Second, I investigated young people's experiences of mobility by paying attention to the embodied, sensorial, and ephemeral layers of mobility as it unfolded (Büscher and Urry 2009: 103; Cheung Judge et al. 2020). A palette of mobile methods allowed me to capture these dynamic meanings and experiences before, during, and after a move – together building a rich portrayal of *what it feels like* to be mobile. Mobility trajectory mapping enabled discussions about the details and memories of particular mobility experiences throughout their lives. Interviews following a trip captured fresh impressions of the embodied experience of being in Ghana. The richest source of information on young people's mobility experiences, however, was following their mobility in real-time.

Finally, I studied the effects of mobility. Generating an understanding of how transnational mobility shapes young people's lives requires deep ethnographic engagement in their lives over time. Various methods enabled me to research this. Before-and-after interviews helped me unpack the anticipated and actual effects of individual trips to Ghana. Mobility trajectory mapping prompted participants to reflect on the impact of particular moves or how their mobility trajectories as a whole had shaped them as people. Concentric circle network mapping revealed the ways mobility had shaped their social relationships. Being alert to the traces of mobility even in non-mobile moments – for example, through interviews about their education and observations in their classrooms in Hamburg – helped me uncover the effects of young people's mobility on various aspects of their lives.

4.2.4 Collaborative

Ethnography is generally a solitary pursuit and most methodological texts about ethnography presume a single researcher working alone. Exceptions are rare in transnational migration research (Mazzucato 2009; Poeze et al. 2017). My experience of conducting this study, however, was significantly different. As one of the MO-TRAYL project's case studies, my research was part of a larger team effort, and my methodology was shaped in important ways by collaboration. I explain the innovation of this part of my methodology and its impacts on my research here. Other examples of how collaboration shaped particular aspects of my methodology are given in the relevant sections below.

Prior to fieldwork, weekly team meetings and thematic trainings built a shared knowledge base and conceptual understanding, especially important to bridge and draw on the interdisciplinary backgrounds of the various team members. Data-collection tools were collaboratively developed for the ethnographic projects, which I then used and adapted in the field (see Section 4.4). During fieldwork, monthly team Skype meetings allowed us to compare and debate emerging findings across sites, sharpening my focus on what insights were particularly interesting or unusual. A WhatsApp group for the PhD researchers served as an outlet for sharing fieldwork photos and anecdotes, providing emotional support, and asking for advice on ethical dilemmas and organisational strategies. Half-way through fieldwork, all MO-TRAYL team members returned to Maastricht University for one month to conduct collaborative preliminary analysis of our data and receive further methodological training.[40] In the latter stages of fieldwork, we held a creative storytelling workshop for participants from the European fieldsites (see Section 4.5.3), and following fieldwork,

[40] The methodological training included a session in which we (PhD researchers) brainstormed ways of dealing with challenging scenarios encountered in the field. In one scenario, I role-played a fieldworker who was being interrogated by suspicious parents in a young participant's home – something I had not personally experienced but which some of my fellow researchers had. Shortly after returning to the field, I encountered one such scenario, and found my prior 'practice' from the roleplay helpful in finding the words and confidence to navigate the situation and calm the nervous parents.

collaborative practices including a writing group also supported my data analysis and writing (see Section 4.4.3). Two of the empirical chapters are co-authored with the MO-TRAYL Principal Investigator (PI), who was my main PhD supervisor. As such, while my PhD project and this resulting thesis are my own work, my methodological approach in the field, as well as the insights and findings that constitute the thesis, were embedded within and deeply shaped by the collaborative praxis developed by the MO-TRAYL team throughout the project.

4.3 Sites and sample

4.3.1 Finding the multi-sited field

While the choice of Hamburg as the main fieldsite for this study was determined by its selection as one of the MO-TRAYL case studies, my specific research locations, contexts, and participants were determined through fieldwork, as is common in ethnographic research (Hammersley and Atkinson 2019: 20). The early stages of my fieldwork required significant experimentation and exploration to answer such questions, including how to access potential participants. I realised early on that community organisations – common entry points in migration research (cf. Serra Mingot 2018: 45) – were not ideal for accessing young people. While my conversations with various Ghanaian organisations helped me understand the Ghanaian community landscape and adults' perspectives on youth issues, these contacts were mostly dead-ends for finding participants. A photography workshop that I planned together with a Ghanaian organisation was cancelled for lack of interest (see Section 4.2.1); the promised contacts from community leaders never materialised; and young people did not attend the community events I was invited to.

Instead, I accessed the field through various other means. Based on my prior studies (Ogden 2017), I was particularly interested in the educational dynamics of transnational youth mobility, and as such, was keen to include schools in my research. They turned out to be excellent entry points. My co-supervisor, a professor at Hamburg University, connected me with a high-school teacher of reception classes for newly arrived migrant students. I volunteered in and observed various reception classes at her school throughout my fieldwork.[41] Four of my participants (had) attended the school, and much of my understanding of the Hamburg school system was a result of my time there. I also conducted observations at two other schools: one of which I accessed through a mutual friend (the school counsellor) and where I met a participant; the other was an existing participant's school, to which she invited me with her teacher's approval. My access to schools in Hamburg was surprisingly easy, and I found school staff generally welcoming and helpful.

[41] I volunteered in and observed reception classes 48 times in this school, mostly in the first half of 2018.

This was likely because my entry was facilitated through personal contacts rather than 'cold calling' or official letters.

Another rich entry point was religious youth groups and churches, which are central hubs of Ghanaian communities around the world (see Chapter 3). I was introduced to two such groups through existing participants and to another by an older Ghanaian contact who suggested I attend her congregation's youth group. Over 10 months, I regularly attended the weekly sessions of an interdenominational Christian youth group, which was largely attended by Ghanaian-background youth, including five of my participants. I also attended several Sunday youth services of two Ghanaian congregations to which eight participants belonged (5 and 3, respectively).[42]

My fieldsites in Ghana were determined by the locations participants visited on their trips (see Section 4.2.2). These were the capital, Accra (Greater Accra Region); the second-largest city and seat of the Ashanti kingdom, Kumasi (Ashanti Region); and the comparatively quiet, green town of Koforidua (Eastern Region). As such, entering the field in Ghana was not about finding new participants, but rather about gaining access to existing participants and their lives in Ghana.

In summer 2018, I spent 3.5 weeks in Ghana at the same time as two participants. We had known each other only a few weeks and had not yet established strong relationships. As such, my access to them during the trip was limited to an occasional house visit or day out together. In between our meetings, I invested my time in learning about Ghana's education system. In total, I visited seven schools in Kumasi, including two schools previously attended by participants. I spoke with school directors, teachers and administrative staff about their students' mobility, their experience with 'sent back' students from the Global North, and their perceptions of the differences in educational cultures between Ghana and Europe. In summer 2019, four participants visited Ghana. By then, I had developed stronger relationships and was able to spend much of the 5-week trip with them at their family homes, former schools, shopping malls, tourist sites, and visiting relatives and friends in the three cities.

4.3.2 Sampling

My sampling was guided by the criteria for participants developed within the MO-TRAYL project. As such, all of my research participants fulfilled the following criteria: (1) they are a young person of Ghanaian background, meaning both their parents were born in Ghana,

[42] There was significant crossover between the participants who attended the interdenominational youth group and one of these two Ghanaian congregations, with 4 of the 5 youth-group participants also belonging to one of the congregations.

regardless of the young person's own birthplace; (2) they had experienced at least one international move between Ghana and Germany, which could include changes of residence, visits, or both; (3) they resided in Hamburg during fieldwork; and (4) they had attended or were attending secondary school in Hamburg.

By including young people of Ghanaian background as defined above, I avoided sampling based on migrant-generation categories (i.e., first- and second-generation), which was essential to my focus on mobility trajectories as the key variable rather than place of birth. The category of 'youth' is defined in various ways around the world and depending on the context (see Chapter 1). For example, the African Youth Charter and National Youth Policy of Ghana define 'youth' as 15-35, while German and European Union policy documents generally adhere to an age range of 15-29. Academic research on youth also varies; for example, the *Journal of Youth Studies* describes its 'core interest' as being 'on young people in their teens and twenties,' though it notes that 'the scope cannot be defined chronologically.'[43] I defined 'youth' as those between 15 and 25 years old, in line with the MO-TRAYL project (Mazzucato 2015) and with reference to the United Nations' age range for youth (15-24 years old). In order to investigate mobility, young people who had not experienced at least one move between Ghana and Germany were excluded. (Such cases were very rare, however.) The criteria of residence in Hamburg and attendance at Hamburg secondary schools were practical and strategic: while the first criterion ensured that participants were all based within the same geographic area to facilitate fieldwork, both criteria enabled me to analyse the impact of their mobility trajectories on factors in their shared residence context (e.g., education system).

I constructed my sample through purposive sampling to achieve diversity within the above-mentioned criteria (Gentles et al. 2015: 1778-1782). I actively sought variation in mobility trajectories to analyse the nature and impact of diverse youth mobility experiences. I achieved this diversity by seeking participants through various entry points in the field, as described above. I met six of my participants through schools, six through snowball sampling (i.e., through other participants), four through church groups, three through other young people (non-participants), and one through an African community education initiative.

4.3.3 Sample size and characteristics

My core sample consisted of 20 young people aged 15-25 (see Table 4.1). Twelve were born in Germany and 8 in Ghana. All participants had together made 29 visits to Ghana, ranging from no visits (for 6 of the 8 Ghanaian-born participants) to 5 visits each, and had changed

[43] https://www.tandfonline.com/action/journalInformation?show=aimsScope&journalCode=cjys20 (accessed 22 January 2022).

residence between the two countries 14 times. Fourteen participants were female and 6 were male. My participants lived across all 7 *Bezirke* (districts) of Hamburg, and their schools and churches were spread throughout the city. However, they all shared similar socioeconomic profiles, both in Germany and in Ghana. They generally attended schools with low KESS-Index scores (see Section 3.3.2), and most of their families occupied working-class positions in Hamburg, with their parents working blue-collar jobs, like cooks and cleaners. In Ghana, however, their social-class backgrounds were often higher. Like many Ghanaian migrants to the Global North (Peil 1995; Anarfi et al. 2003), most participants came from Kumasi, Ghana's second-largest city, while some originated from Accra or other regions, and their parents and extended families were well educated.

In terms of educational backgrounds, most participants had attended a *Stadtteilschule*, while some had also attended a *Gymnasium* for part of their secondary schooling in Hamburg. Of the eight participants who had left secondary school by the end of my fieldwork, seven had completed the *Abitur*. Most participants with Ghanaian education had attended prestigious boarding and international schools in cities known for their educational institutions, such as Accra, Kumasi, and Cape Coast, or had amassed significant educational capital in Ghana because, for example, their caregiver was a teacher (see Chapter 6).

The diverse mobility trajectories of participants also reflected their varied legal statuses in Germany, including citizenship, residence permits, and *Duldungen* (see Chapter 3). The MO-TRAYL team decided not to ask participants about their legal status if we felt this might damage carefully constructed relationships of trust. As such, I did not learn the legal statues of all my participants. However, my knowledge of some participants' statuses, combined with contextual information (see Chapter 3), allow me to make certain statements about my sample. All participants who were born in Ghana and migrated to Germany reunified with at least one parent who had lived in Germany for several years. Some of these participants had a residence or settlement permit based on family reunification, and as such could travel internationally, including back to Ghana, within limits; at least four participants had a *Duldung* during (part of) my fieldwork, meaning they had not been internationally mobile since arriving in Germany. Many of those born in Germany had – or were eligible for – German citizenship.

4.3.4 Key informants

Key informants in both Hamburg and Ghana enabled me to triangulate and contextualise my participants' experiences and provided useful background information. Most came from schools and other educational institutions. I conducted semi-structured interviews with seven teachers in Hamburg, including two of Ghanaian background. The other five were teachers of participants, and I interviewed them only with the respective participants' consent (see

Section 4.2.1). I also observed my participants in these five teachers' classrooms (see Table 4.2). Informal conversations were another source of information from interviewed teachers and others I encountered. I interviewed some staff members of relevant educational institutions in Hamburg. I also interviewed teachers, school directors, and administrative staff at seven schools in Ghana during my fieldwork trip there in 2018.

Other key informants included Ghanaian community and church leaders in Hamburg, who provided information on the community's history and shared their perspectives on issues facing Ghanaian-background young people in Hamburg. I also spoke to participants' families and friends in Hamburg and Ghana. In general, young people preferred to keep their involvement in the research separate from their family spheres, with some notable exceptions. I formally interviewed one mother and held informal conversations with other parents in Hamburg. I had more access to participants' families in Ghana, where I visited the homes of six participants and stayed with two families (including three participants, two of whom are siblings). Finally, I learned about the mobility trajectories of participants' siblings and friends, which further contextualised my participants' experiences.

4.4 Data collection and analysis

Ethnography can seem 'deceptively simple' (Hammersley and Atkinson 2019: 47). While this seeming simplicity can be useful when explaining to potential participants that research consists of 'hanging out' with them, it masks a complexity of various methods under the ethnography umbrella. I chose, designed, and implemented the methods in this study in light of my focus on transnational youth mobility. Prior to fieldwork, the MO-TRAYL team collaboratively developed and tested various 'core tools' that enabled the collection of comparable data across fieldsites but which could be adapted to the particularities of each study. Ultimately, I adopted a 'no-size-fits-all' approach to data collection, drawing on the various tools available and constructing an approach that suited each participant. This section elaborates on my choice and use of data-collection methods. I first present the mobile methods at the core of my research, followed by the other methods I used to collect data. I then describe my approach to data analysis.

Table 4.1. Participant characteristics

	Name[1]	Age[2]	Sex	Region of most time spent in Ghana[3]	Time lived in Ghana[4]	Visits to Ghana[5]	Primary caregiver(s) Ghana[6]	Primary caregiver(s) Hamburg[7]	Caregivers' occupation in Hamburg[8]	Level education Hamburg[9]	Attended IVK Hamburg
1	Nana	14	M	Greater Accra	14 years	0	Mother (1)	Parents	M: unemployed; F: retired	IVK	Yes
2	Mary	17	F	Ashanti	15 years	0	Grandmother (1)	Mother & SF	-	IVK	Yes
3	Austin	16	M	Ashanti*	14 years	0	Aunt (1)	Mother & SF	M: kitchen manager, SF: -	Secondary	Yes
4	Esra	17	F	Ashanti*	-	1	-	Mother	M: cleaner	Secondary	No
5	Blessing	24	F	Ashanti*	-	1	-	Parents	-	University	No
6	Akosua	18	F	Greater Accra*	18 months	5	Grandmother (1)	Mother & SF	M: unemployed (runs business in Ghana)	Secondary	No
7	Marjorie	18	F	Ashanti*	-	3	-	Parents	M: cleaner; F: cook	Secondary	No
8	Lucy	21	F	Ashanti*	-	4	-	Mother	M: cleaner	University	No
9	Phillip	22	M	Greater Accra	-	3	-	Parents	M: cleaner; F: cook	University	No
10	Rebecca	19	F	Ashanti	-	2	-	Mother	M: unemployed	Secondary	No
11	Vera	20	F	Greater Accra	-	1	-	Mother	M: security; SF: security	University	No
12	Angela	15	F	Ashanti	-	1	-	Mother	M: cleaner; F: odd jobs	Secondary	No
13	Kingsley	16	M	Greater Accra*	15 years	0	Grandmother (3)	Mother	M: unemployed	Secondary	Yes
14	Emma	17	F	Ashanti*	-	2	-	Mother	M: childcare; F: delivery driver	Secondary	No
15	Ahoufe	19	F	Ashanti*	16 years	1	Mother (3)	Parents	M: cleaner; F: cook	Secondary	Yes
16	Ella	19	F	Greater Accra*	14 years	1	Grandmother (5)	Parents	M: cleaner; F: cook	Secondary	Yes
17	Kwaku	21	M	Eastern Region*	17 years	1	Grandmother (2)	Mother	M: unemployed	Secondary	Yes
18	Isaac	20	M	Greater Accra*	16 years	0	Grandmother (3)	Mother	M: bakery assistant	Secondary	Yes
19	Olivia	16	F	Greater Accra*	-	3	-	Parents	M: cleaner; F: cook	Secondary	No
20	Constance	22	F	Brong Ahofo*	21 years	0	Grandmother (1)	Mother	M: cleaner	IVK	Yes

Legend: **1**. Names are pseudonyms, many of which participants chose themselves. Participants are listed in the chronological order of their first involvement in the project. **2**. Indicates the participant's age at first involvement in the research; all participants fell within the 15-25 age range during fieldwork. Some participants' ages are reported differently in the empirical chapters when writing about their ages at later stages of fieldwork, for example, during a trip to Ghana analysed in the text. **3.** Indicates which of Ghana's 16 administrative regions participants have spent the most time in, either as a resident or during visits. An asterix (*) indicates that the participant also lived in and/or visited other regions in Ghana. **4**. Figures are rounded to the nearest full year or month. Those who have not resided in Ghana are marked by a dash (-). **5**. Indicates the number of short visits (less than 3 months) made to Ghana from Hamburg. **6**. Indicates person who cared for the participant the longest during their residence in Ghana. Number in parentheses indicates total number of caregivers in Ghana. Those who have not resided in Ghana are marked by a dash (-). **7**. & **8**. M = Mother; F = Father; SF = Stepfather. Dash (-) indicates no information. **9**. Indicates highest level of schooling attended in Hamburg during fieldwork. IVK (*Internationale Vorbereitungsklasse*, or 'international preparation classes') are the reception classes that newly arrived migrant students attend in Hamburg (see Section 3.3.3).

4.4.1 Mobile methods

To document and analyse young people's mobility patterns, the MO-TRAYL team developed **mobility trajectory mapping** (Mazzucato et al. forthcoming), building on earlier iterations of the method (van Geel and Mazzucato 2018). This method enabled me to systematically collect information on participants' geographical moves in time and space (including short trips and changes of residence and caregivers), educational information (e.g., schools attended, qualifications, years repeated or skipped), and the location and mobility of important relatives, resulting in a visualisation of their mobility trajectories (Appendix A). Given I was focused on mobility between Ghana and Germany, each of these countries had its own column on the map, while third countries were grouped together in another column. All maps had the same order of countries (left-to-right: Ghana, Germany, third countries), to enable the visual comparison of participants' trajectories.

Figure 4.1 of Ahoufe's completed mobility trajectory map demonstrates how much detail can be captured in this one visualisation. The years and Ahoufe's corresponding ages are on the vertical axis, while the places she has lived in and travelled to are on the horizontal axis. A symbol key and notes add information on her education and travels. We start 'reading' Ahoufe's map with the black dot (her birth) and follow her trajectory upwards through space and time. The solid black line represents Ahoufe's (im)mobility and the dotted black line, her short (< 3 months) trips. The coloured solid and dotted lines represent her parents' and sister's locations and visits, including when they lived separately from her (e.g., her father moved to Germany when she was 5 and visited her in Ghana 4 times). Numbered red squares represent schools Ahoufe attended, orange triangles show school disruptions, and orange dots show when she finished a schooling stage. We can see that, before she moved to Germany aged 16, Ahoufe was highly mobile in Ghana: she lived in five towns and cities across three regions, with three different caregivers, and regularly visited her mother while at boarding school in the Central Region. We can also see that Ahoufe has a complex educational history, attending 12 private and public schools (9 in Ghana and 3 in Germany), and experiencing four disruptions (3 grade repetitions and 1 grade skipped). Finally, we can see that Ahoufe has visited Ghana once and has travelled to the Netherlands and France since living in Germany. While completed mobility trajectory maps contain this rich amount of detail, they can be adapted to focus on certain elements and be more easily legibile, for example, by removing the school and family layers and leaving just the participant's mobility (see Figures 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 in Chapter 5).

I often collected information on young people's mobility trajectories in a sit-down interview, using a template grid and interview guide (see Appendix A). Following this interview, I created their mobility trajectory map, which I then asked participants to check. The maps sometimes prompted participants to remember missing details, and one participant even took

it upon herself to record an interview with her mother to fill in gaps. Sometimes it took two or three rounds to arrive at a map we considered complete and correct. I soon stopped using the template grid, because participants seemed to find it off-putting and boring, perhaps because it resembled official paperwork or school assignments (Martorell-Faus 2020). In some cases, I abandoned the trajectory mapping interview altogether and instead mapped their mobility trajectories using information gleaned from participant observation. Completed trajectory maps informed further interviews, conversations, and observations about young people's mobility experiences. For example, I could point to a particular move on the map (e.g., "What do you remember about this move from Mamprobi to Kasua?") or recall a detail from the map in conversation (e.g., "How come you attended five different schools in Kumasi?"). I always gave participants a copy of their completed trajectory map, which elicited various positive reactions. One participant said the map would help him explain his life story to others in the future, including migration officials.

The second mobile method I used was **following mobility**. Six female participants made trips to Ghana during my fieldwork, and I accompanied all of them in-person for between one and 19 days. In some cases, I visited a participant at their home, went together to a shopping mall, or hung out at the airport departure lounge before our flights. In others, I stayed at participants' family homes for several days and accompanied their daily activities, including hanging out at home, doing chores, going shopping, meeting family and friends, attending funerals and weddings, and visiting their old schools (see Table 4.2). These visits allowed me to observe and discuss the embodied and emotional aspects of their mobility as it unfolded. I often met people identified in participants' concentric circle network maps (see below) and visited places on their mobility trajectory maps. When I could not accompany participants' trips physically, I followed them digitally, mostly through WhatsApp messages and voice memos. This enabled me to ask about visits as they unfolded, rather than relying on retrospective accounts weeks, months, or even years later (see Chapter 5).

Before-and-after interviewing was the third mobile method I used. I conducted these interviews with participants generally within a few weeks of their departure to and return from Ghana. This method's two-part nature enabled me to document and compare the anticipated and actual impacts of trips. 'Before' interviews covered young people's expectations and plans for their upcoming trip. For those visiting for the first time, 'before' interviews served to document their imaginaries of Ghana, while those who had lived in or been to Ghana before reflected on what might have changed – or not – since their last visit. They also offered great opportunities to discuss the possibility of spending time together in Ghana and for me to share my own feelings about travelling there, which helped build rapport. In 'after' interviews, I drew upon my knowledge of their trips to elicit reflection on events they had experienced, places they had been, and people they had spent time with.

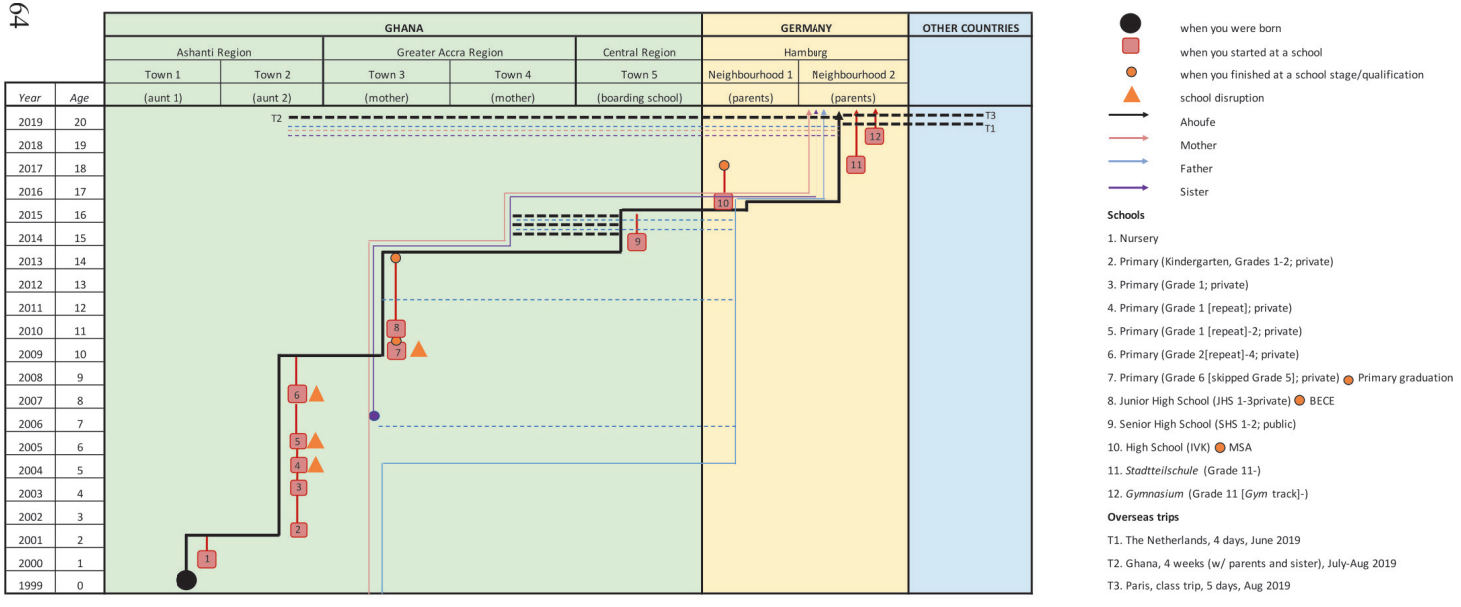

Figure 4.1. Ahoufes mobility trajectory map

4.4.2 Other methods

In addition to these three mobile methods, I also collected data through interviews and observations that allowed me to contextualise participants' mobility experiences and understand the effects of mobility on their lives. One such interview was **concentric circle network mapping**, through which young people create a visualisation of their network that serves as a basis for an interview about the important relationships in their lives – and how these relate to their mobility trajectories. The map is created in stages. First, participants write the names of the people important to them in three concentric circles surrounding the participant at the centre, relative to their importance (see Appendix B.I; Gardner and Mand 2012). Any people with whom they have problematic relationships are placed in a small circle outside the concentric circles. Second, they indicate the named people's ages, locations, and relationship to them (e.g., cousin, friend, aunt). Finally, participants are asked who provides support in various aspects of their life, including school, personal relationships, and plans for the future (see Appendix B.II). I prioritised mobility trajectory mapping with all participants because it was fundamental to my research focus, and I used other methods according to my access to and relationship with participants. For example, I conducted concentric circle network mapping with ten participants. While some listed multiple specific people, others (usually young men) listed categories, such as 'siblings', 'my classmates' and 'my teachers' (see Appendix B.III). Regardless of how the template was filled in, the resulting network maps and the rich conversations they led to generated important insights about their transnational networks (see Chapter 7).

Interviews were often the first research activity I conducted with participants, as they gave us a chance to meet, discuss the research, and build rapport, while giving young people a sense of what their participation might involve (Bernard 2011: 158). In all interviews, and throughout my fieldwork in general, I followed my participants' lead in terms of their language preferences, using German, English, or a mix of the two. Interviews generally lasted between 1 and 2 hours. I largely employed semi-structured interviews, using a topic guide memorised before the interview or discreetly listed as key words on my tablet or phone to create a casual atmosphere. Because young people were often unfamiliar with being interviewed, I often relied on MO-TRAYL topic guides, which covered themes including their educational experiences and aspirations for the future (see Appendix C).

Participant observation in Hamburg helped me understand how young people's transnational mobility affected their lives there. Furthermore, hanging out proved far more effective than interviews in cases where young people struggled to articulate their thoughts and feelings, or preferred to not elaborate on certain topics. Informal conversations came more naturally to many young people and complemented the information that I gained through interviews and the mobile methods described above. In Hamburg, I conducted

participant observation in participants' schools, churches, public libraries, homes and workplaces, at parties, weddings, shopping centres, cafés, football games, the Hamburg *Dom* fair, on buses and trains, and at the cinema, concerts, and art galleries.

Online contact was an invaluable tool not only for following young people's trips to Ghana (see above), but also for fieldwork in Hamburg. Initially, online contact was a way to contact and schedule meetings with participants. However, it developed into a data-collection method and a way of building and maintaining rapport, especially during periods when I was not in the same city as participants. My fieldnotes are full of WhatsApp chats and transcribed voice memos in which young people share news, school grades, and thoughts about their visits to Ghana, and videos and photos of their musical performances and drawings. To make participants aware that our online contact was part of my fieldwork, I regularly commented on its value for my research.

For all these data-collection methods, I took extensive **fieldnotes**. I did this in various ways to capture the maximum amount of detail with as much precision as possible, while acknowledging that human memory is imperfect and perception is subjective (Bernard 2011: 291). All data on participants was stored in a chronological Word file for each individual, whereas other fieldnotes (e.g., about a trip to the Immigration Authority or a classroom observation not involving a participant) were stored separately in dated Word documents. Where possible during observations (especially at school) and interviews, I handwrote brief 'jottings' (Emerson et al. 2011: 29; Bernard 2011: 292) on my tablet, on paper, or on my mobile phone. I often made audio recordings on my phone immediately after a fieldwork activity and then wrote up detailed fieldnotes the same or following day. Most interviews were audio recorded, except in the few cases where interviewees requested that I not record, or in circumstances that made recording difficult (e.g., a walking interview or too much background noise). I then listened to and typed summaries of the interviews, including the topics covered, important details, and verbatim transcriptions of any key quotes (all with time stamps). I copied the content of online contact into participants' files. I stored all digitised fieldnotes on a password-protected university server, used a password-protected tablet, and never left handwritten notes unsupervised.

4.4.3 Analysis

By the end of fieldwork, I had amassed over 1,500 pages of fieldnotes, based on hundreds of hours of observation and dozens of interviews. The free-floating and organic shape of ethnographic research, while one of its greatest assets, also presents challenges for making sense of the vast quantities of data it generates (Emerson et al. 2011: 171). My data analysis unfolded in three main phases throughout the research, each with a different purpose, scope, and process, becoming more focused over time (Hammersley and Atkinson 2019: 250) and

reflecting the fact that 'analysis pervades all phases of the research enterprise' (Emerson et al. 2011: 173; Bernard 2011: 338).

The first phase of data analysis occurred during fieldwork. Alongside my fieldnotes and interview transcriptions, I used spreadsheets to track participant characteristics and graphs to map their periods of residence in and visits to Ghana. Further preliminary analysis occurred through familiarisation with my material, including transcribing, writing fieldnotes, and revisiting participant files in preparation for further fieldwork – during which I would add reflection notes that tracked emerging ideas and analytical connections between cases. Monthly fieldwork reports for my supervisors forced me to zoom out from the day-to-day detail of fieldwork and look for larger themes, patterns, and striking cases. Monthly MO-TRAYL Skype meetings and a month-long visit to Maastricht in September 2018 enabled me to discuss and compare emerging findings with the team.

The second phase of data analysis occurred immediately after fieldwork. Over several weeks, I carefully read through all my data. During this process, I compiled several documents, each on a different main theme, where I gathered relevant data from my fieldnotes – a kind of reverse coding. These themes included those identified during fieldwork and those that emerged during the read-through of data. The three longest documents – that is, the themes on which I had the most data – formed the starting points of the empirical chapters. (The others have been filed away as potential future publications.) I received training on qualitative coding software but ultimately decided not to use it. Given my research did not need the minute level of coding required by, for example, discourse or conversation analysis, and given my own preference for 'thinking with my hands', I opted to code 'manually' using pen, paper, and searchable Word documents.

The third phase involved the analysis conducted for each empirical chapter. This was the most intensive and focused phase of data analysis, during which I delved into the detail and dynamics of particular themes, while attempting to keep sight of the overall story of my thesis. This analysis occurred iteratively with literature reviews, identifying what existing scholarship = contributed to my analysis and which gaps in the literature my data addressed. A weekly MO-TRAYL writing group provided a forum in which to share drafts, debate analytical questions and conundrums, and compare notes across fieldsites and samples. Details on the analysis conducted for each empirical chapter can be found in chapters 5-7.

Table 4.2. Ethnographic activities with participants

	Name	Hamburg			Time spent together in Ghana[4]	Pages participant file[5]
		Observations[1]	Classroom Obsv[2]	Interviews[3]		
1	Nana	-	18	1	-	172
2	Mary	-	-	3	-	30
3	Austin	15	2	6	-	150
4	Esra	5	-	3	2 meetings in Kumasi & Accra (2018)	81
5	Blessing	10	-	3	-	56
6	Akosua	21	-	3	1 meeting in Accra (2019)	100
7	Marjorie	21	-	4	1 meeting in Accra (2018)	100
8	Lucy	11	-	2	-	71
9	Phillip	11	-	1	-	33
10	Rebecca	7	-	1	-	29
11	Vera	1	-	1	-	12
12	Angela	3	-	2	-	29
13	Kingsley	11	2	4	-	106
14	Emma	4	-	2	-	33
15	Ahoufe	18	-	4	4 meetings in Kumasi & Accra, 9 days at family house in Kumasi (2019)	146
16	Ella	19	1	2	19 days at family houses in Accra & Koforidua (2019)*	195
17	Kwaku	6	-	4	-	48
18	Isaac	1	-	2	-	26
19	Olivia	6	-	1	19 days at family houses in Accra & Koforidua (2019)*	47
20	Constance	3	-	1	-	11

General note: It is difficult – if not impossible – to quantify qualitative research. For example, a single observation could be a few minutes or several hours long and might involve one or more participants. Similarly, the quantity of fieldwork does not equate to its quality. For example, even brief encounters could be useful for building rapport or for gleaning important information, while a whole day spent with a participant sometimes yielded little usable 'data'. As such, this table gives a rough indication of the range of activities conducted and time spent with participants.

Legend: *Olivia and Ella are siblings. **1**. Indicates the number of days on which I observed the participant, ranging from a short meeting in a school cafeteria to an entire day spent together. Classroom observations are counted separately (see next column). Four observation days are counted for participants who attended the MO-TRAYL workshop Finding Your Voice (28 June to 1 July 2019). **2**. Indicates the number of times I observed the participant in class. A single observation often represents a half or full day, usually involving multiple subject areas and teachers. **3**. Indicates the number of interviews conducted, including semi-structured, mobility trajectory, and concentric circle network mapping interviews, where applicable. **4.** 'Meeting' indicates time spent with a participant with whom I was not lodging; 'days' indicates the length of my stay with a participant at their family home. **5**. Indicates the number of pages each participant's file contains, including fieldnotes, interview summaries, and other forms of data collected. Some notes are duplicated (e.g., observations that involved more than one participant) and other data are not counted here (e.g., mobility trajectory map, other PDF documents). As such, this figure should be interpreted as an indicative, not precise, amount of data collected on each participant.

4.5 Ethics

Professional guidelines for researchers set out general principles to serve as the ethical 'bumper rails' of research. It is, however, up to researchers to put those principles into practice in the specific contexts in which they work. The American Anthropological Association's (2012) Code of Ethics explains that, while ethical guidelines can be helpful tools, 'The individual anthropologist must be willing to make carefully considered ethical choices and be prepared to make clear the assumptions, facts and considerations on which those choices are based.' This section explains the assumptions, facts, and considerations on which I made decisions regarding informed consent, positionality, and reciprocity. Many of my reflections pertain to the particularities of working with migrant youth.

4.5.1 Informed consent

Informed consent is a core tenet of anthropological ethical codes. It involves researchers doing their utmost to ensure that people voluntarily participate in research and understand – as far as possible – its objectives, methods, potential impacts, and their own rights and responsibilities (American Anthropological Association 2012). The MO-TRAYL team designed various strategies for obtaining informed consent from participants and key informants,[44] which I adapted to my fieldwork.

I did not ask participants to sign written consent forms. Rather, they gave verbal consent during our initial conversation, during which I gave them a brochure about the MO-TRAYL project (Appendices D.I, D.II). I documented participants' verbal consent using a Researcher Oral Consent Form (Appendix D.III). The MO-TRAYL team deemed that participants 15 years and above were old enough to provide their own consent and did not need parental consent, in line with European Union regulations (https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2014/child-participation-research), other professional standards (Williams 2006; Spriggs 2010; Farrimond 2013), and our youth-centric approach (see Section 4.2.1). This approach was approved by Maastricht University's ethics board. As an additional safeguard, I asked participants under 18 to inform their parents about their involvement in the research. I obtained written parental consent for the one participant who was 14 at the time of his first involvement in the research (but turned 15 during fieldwork).

The decision to seek verbal consent from participants was based on several factors. First, written forms could make the research appear school-like, especially for those participants I accessed through schools (Martorell-Faus 2020). Second, forms can resemble official

[44] I received approval for my research project from the Ethical Review Committee Inner City (ERCIC) of Maastricht University on 23 November 2017 (reference number ERCIC_053_15_11_2017).

paperwork, which can be intimidating for people with negative experiences with state institutions, such as those with a migration background (Düvell et al. 2010). Third, a written form inaccurately frames consent as a single instance.

Informed consent, rather, is a process involving ongoing negotiation and dialogue with participants (Cutliffe and Ramcharan 2002; Swartz 2011; American Anthropological Association 2012). I sought consent throughout the research, by checking participants' willingness to engage in each activity (e.g., interviews) and commenting on the usefulness of time spent together for my research. Approaching consent as a process also implied being sensitive to indirect signals, including body language, noncommittal responses to meeting invitations, or not replying to messages and phone calls. I initially interpreted the latter as a clear indication that a young person no longer wanted to participate; however, over time I learned it was worth being patient and sometimes trying 'just one more time.' Rapport-building was not a linear process with all participants but sometimes fluctuated (O'Reilly 2012); I often misinterpreted seemingly terse online messages, largely because of my own ignorance about young people's digital communication practices (Gershon 2010); and it was important to give room to young people's busy schedules and changing feelings and interests. Three participants ultimately did not respond to contact after completing between 1 and 3 interviews. However, one young woman invited me to her 18th birthday party and did an interview after months of no contact, and another commonly rescheduled meetings multiple times (the record was five) but was ultimately one of my most involved participants.

Informed consent also aims to ensure that participants understand what the research involves. However, 'the line between being "informed" and "uninformed" is unclear' (Fine 1993: 277), given participants' own frames of reference and the evolving nature of what the research is about. Academic research – particularly ethnography – and the concept of a PhD were foreign to many of my participants. This depended on their educational backgrounds, but also on their exposure to different parts of the research over time and in various contexts. Some participants seemed disinterested in the research but were nevertheless happy to help me out by participating. Others, however, were very curious about both my research topic and the idea of academic research. These participants asked many questions, generating conversations that deepened their understanding of the project. Completed mobility trajectory maps helped them understand what I meant by transnational youth mobility, and participants who attended the MO-TRAYL storytelling workshop came to understand the project in its broader context (MO-TRAYL 2020: 75-76; see Section 4.5.3).

I approached informed consent with key informants somewhat differently. Young people's parents, siblings, and friends also provided verbal consent; however, I approached this more informally than with participants. The primary concern was to ensure that they understood that I was a researcher and that our conversations and time together constituted data-

collection activities, and to verify they had no objections to this. I used written consent forms, however, with key informants from institutional settings, like teachers and education officials (Appendices D.IV, D.V). This was for two main reasons. First, in cases of one-off interviews, approaching consent as a process was not possible, and a consent form clarified important information about the research and the parameters of their participation. Second, institutional actors' familiarity with bureaucracy meant that forms did not intimidate them and in fact seemed to reassure them of the project's legitimacy.

4.5.2 Positionality

Positionality has traditionally been framed as an insider-outsider dichotomy. Recently, however, migration scholars have re-conceptualised positionality as a continuum (Carling et al. 2014) and as continually negotiated and produced through the interactions between a researcher and her participants (Kusow 2003). Implicit in discussions of researchers' insider-outsider status is an assumption that 'inside' creates rapport and access, while 'outside' engenders distrust and erects barriers. However, I found that, while certain ways in which I was positioned as an 'insider' were useful for building rapport with my participants, some of the factors that marked me as an 'outsider' were equally useful for developing reciprocal and positive relationships with young people in the field (Orellana 2016: 33).

As a white researcher, in terms of race and ethnicity, I was visibly an 'outsider' in relation to my participants. After explaining my research to potential participants, a common response was: 'Why Ghana?'[45] This question was often delivered with a sense of curiosity but sometimes also suspicion. Similarly, despite being a migrant myself (both in my country of residence, The Netherlands, and of research, Germany), I am not a *racialized* migrant in the Global North; my whiteness renders my migration background largely invisible (Rühlmann and McMonagle 2019). Despite my attempts to be alert to and ask about young people's experiences of racism, participants shared little with me in this realm. Several glossed over the topic or insisted that they rarely encountered racism. While this may be true, it is also possible that my positionality limited my ability to access and understand the role of race and racism in my participants' lives.

However, my 'outsider' status had benefits, too: the 'Why Ghana?' question gave me a chance to further explain my research interests. My eagerness to learn some phrases in Twi, Ghana's *lingua franca*, endeared me to my participants' older relatives (Swartz 2011: 52). And my relative ignorance about Ghanaian history and culture allowed me to ask the 'stupid

[45] Of the three MO-TRAYL PhD researchers who conducted fieldwork in European countries, two of us are white and one has Ghanaian roots (as well as a white Dutch and Surinamese background). The other white researcher also was frequently asked 'Why Ghana?' in her fieldsite, while the Ghanaian-background researcher was almost never asked this question (personal communication with Gladys Akom Ankobrey and Sarah Anschütz, January 2022).

questions' that prompted participants to make their implicit knowledge explicit. Furthermore, my whiteness made me an 'insider' for some key informants. Teachers I interviewed felt comfortable to share their thoughts and questions about the influence of 'Ghanaian culture' on their students' performance in ways they might not have if I were not white.

In other, less visible ways, I was also an 'insider'. My own transnational family life – growing up with an Australian father and English mother, and now living in the Netherlands with my Portuguese husband – helped me connect with participants on several occasions, whether discussing the challenges of long-distance relationships, empathising about missing distant family members, or laughing about queuing in different passport lines to our parents at the airport. The most important way in which I was positioned as an 'insider', however, was a product of the fieldwork process itself: my trips to Ghana.

While my trips to Ghana were designed to collect data about young people's mobility, they had additional benefits for my research in Hamburg. First, my trips to Ghana served as a litmus test of my commitment to the Ghanaian community. Participants and others appreciated that I had invested the time, money, and effort in travelling to Ghana and 'getting to know their culture.' One participant, who was serious and aloof when we met, was much friendlier after my first trip to Ghana. One participant's mother, who had ignored me during my house visits in Hamburg, gave me a bear hug when I arrived at Accra Airport to stay with the family. Adults I had never spoken to at church asked me about my trips to Ghana after hearing about them on the grapevine.

Second, the experiences and knowledge I gained through my trips to Ghana functioned as a kind of currency in Hamburg. My trips were an instant conversation starter, with young people curious to hear my thoughts about the country and eager to compare notes. To my surprise, some participants who had not spent much time in Ghana themselves saw me as an 'expert' on the country, asking me what it is like to ride in *trotros* (public minivans) or for gift ideas for friends back in Hamburg. (Wherever possible, I tried to position my participants as the experts by, for example, asking how to greet their grandmother in Twi, or having them correct my German.) Perhaps the biggest point of interest in my trips to Ghana was about food. Several participants asked me what I ate in Ghana, and they often announced proudly to others that I was 'half-Ghanaian' because I liked local cuisine.

Beyond our different national backgrounds, the most notable difference between my participants and me was our age gap. They were between 15 and 25 years, and I turned 33 during fieldwork. While I am sure that my age precluded me from gaining access to certain areas and activities of my participants' lives, it was ultimately less of an obstacle than I anticipated to accessing their homes, churches, and spare time. My age seemed to be just one

more detail of my generally unusual presence. The area in which my age and 'adult' status had the biggest impact and required the most management was in my fieldwork in schools.

The challenges of conducting ethnographic research in schools have been well documented (Russell 2005; Jaspers and Meeuwis 2013; van de Weerd 2020). School hierarchies are delineated along age-related lines: young people are students, and adults are staff (Hemmings 2009). My age automatically allocated me to the latter group: teachers I did not know greeted me in the hallways, and young people insisted I must know all their teachers, though I often did not. Some participants I met through schools called me *Sie*, the formal personal pronoun in German. In some cases, they switched to the informal *du* as we got to know each other. I was positioned in the classroom as a teacher by both students and staff – not ideal for gaining access to young people's personal lives. While I aimed to sit at the blurrier edge of the 'teacher' spectrum, sometimes this was impossible. For example, one day, a teacher asked me to supervise art class alone while she had an urgent parent meeting. Reluctantly, I agreed. Within minutes, the class descended into chaos: students started yelling, drawing on the blackboard, and play-fighting. I found myself sternly (and unsuccessfully) instructing them to calm down and clean their desks before leaving. While it was a useful exercise in empathising with the challenges of teaching, it also confirmed my 'teacher' status to the students.

Fortunately, such instances were rare, and I employed several strategies to carve out a third space for myself at school – what Mandell (1988) calls the 'least-adult' role. First, in the classroom, I actively avoided disciplining students (van de Weerd 2020: 62). I also tried to engage in students' playfulness, for example, by joining in a competition to see who could make their pen wobble the best (my decades of experience paid off; my pen was by far the wobbliest). Second, I made sure to always describe myself in vague ways that did not identify me as a teacher – for example, as being there to 'help out' and 'spend time' with the class. Third, wherever possible, I spent break times in student spaces. So, rather than retreat to the staffroom, I sat in the cafeteria with a coffee and my notebook, which – over time – produced many relationship-building and data-collection moments. Finally, I moved research activities like interviews with participants I knew through schools to other settings, like nearby cafés, when possible (Martorell-Faus 2020).

4.5.3 Reciprocity

The core tenet of research ethical codes is 'do no harm' (American Anthropological Association 2012). One may wonder, however, whether it is possible to conduct research in a way that does good (Swartz 2011). Here I outline four modes of reciprocity I engaged in through my research. First, certain data-collection activities 'gave back' to participants. I gave participants a copy of their final mobility trajectory map (Section 4.4.1), which some

highly valued (see also Martorell-Faus 2020: 65). Further, several participants commented that they found our interviews 'interesting' or 'really fun.' Some indicated that their participation prompted them to reflect on their lives in new ways, while others appeared to appreciate having someone listen to their stories. Some teachers similarly expressed appreciation for the chance to reflect on their professional practice – a luxury in their busy schedules.

Second, my relationships with some participants were characterised by mutual curiosity. Young people's questions fell into two broad categories: research and personal. Research questions ranged from what jobs I could get after my PhD, to how many pages my thesis had to be, to what I would do with 'all this' data. Some young people asked about my emerging findings or to compare my experiences as a white foreigner in Germany and Ghana. Personal questions covered everything from where I have travelled and how I learned German, to whether I want to have kids. I always answered their questions, both because I often felt young people were indirectly seeking advice, ideas, and new reference points, but also to make myself vulnerable in ways the research also asked of them (Swartz 2011: 56).

Third, various participants identified practical ways in which I could help them, leveraging aspects of my positionality that were useful to them, such as my level of education and native English language skills – often, the very things that marked me as an 'outsider'. At least eight participants asked for my help at various points throughout fieldwork, including writing a recommendation letter, editing texts in English, helping write school reports, and reviewing an important presentation. One participant who loved to draw asked me to buy them art supplies; other participants I visited in Ghana asked me to help them transport excess baggage. I always provided such help: it was a small way to reciprocate their contributions to my research, and the time spent together on such activities was valuable for the research.

Finally, the MO-TRAYL team designed a way to explicitly 'give back' to our participants. In June 2019 we held a creative storytelling workshop called Finding Your Voice in Maastricht for 11 participants from the three European fieldsites, including 5 from Hamburg. The workshop included an all-expenses-paid, 4-day trip to a luxurious hotel, where participants received training in creative writing, podcasting, and interviewing skills with a renowned Ghanaian author, Franka Maria Andoh, and the MO-TRAYL researchers. In 2020 a book was produced featuring the participants' stories about growing up transnationally. All participants received a hard copy, and many expressed their pride and delight at being published authors.[46]

[46] All the participants' stories, podcasts, interviews, and a downloadable version of the book are available at motrayl.com/stories/youth-workshop. The *Finding Your Voice* workshop and publication won the 2021 Valorisation Prize of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASoS) at Maastricht University.

4.6 Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed the methodological underpinnings of my research. I have reflected on the most important and innovative aspects of my research design and methodology as it relates to conducting youth-centric, multi-sited and mobility-focused research on the transnational mobility of migrant youth, within a collaborative framework. It is worth highlighting that the linear format of written text can retrospectively impose a sense of order on what is essentially a chaotic process. There is, however, 'method in the madness.' In fact, I contend that the chaos of ethnographic fieldwork – and the insecurity, confusion, and dead-ends it inevitably entails – is crucial to its value as a scientific methodology. By allowing fieldwork to unfold organically and progressively align with the realities of participants' lives, ethnography enables researchers to continually reshape their research in ways that – ideally – lead to outcomes that are relevant both to their participants and society at large.

Chapter 5.

Changing relationships to the country of origin through transnational mobility: migrant youth's visits to Ghana

This chapter is a slightly revised version of the following publication:
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5.1 Introduction

Young people with a migration background comprise up to half the youth population in major European cities (OECD/European Union 2015: 231), constituting a significant demographic with global ties beyond their countries of residence. Second-generation transnationalism literature explores migrant youth's various practices that connect their countries of origin and residence, such as the sending and receiving of remittances; political activism; religious, cultural, and linguistic practices (Levitt and Waters 2002; Levitt 2009; Haikkola 2011); and the use of information and communications technologies to stay in touch with friends and family abroad (Madianou and Miller 2011). This literature emphasizes transnational activities from within the country of residence, paying less attention to young people's physical mobility (Kibria 2002; Smith 2002). As such, the material, imaginative, and virtual mobilities of migrant youth have been well researched, while less is known about their physical mobility, including to and from their or their parents' country of origin and the effects this mobility has on their lives. Yet recent research suggests that migrant youth's physical mobility is an empirically and theoretically important phenomenon. Approximately half of migrant youth in several European countries travel to their or their parents' country of origin at least annually (Schimmer and van Tubergen 2014) and many have diverse transnational mobility patterns, travelling to visit family and for education, among other reasons (van Geel and Mazzucato 2018). Building on second-generation transnationalism, second-generation returns literature has shown how and why migrant youth travel to and from their or their parents' country of origin (King et al. 2011; Vathi and King 2011) and that visits affect their sense of belonging (Binaisa 2011; McMichael et al. 2017).

However, migrant youth's physical mobility is not only understudied, it is also unique. Mobilities research shows that physical travel is qualitatively different to other mobilities, comprising embodied, sensorial experiences that cannot be substituted by other transnational practices (Urry 2002). Yet the ways in which the embodied experience of physical mobility shapes migrant youth's changing relationships to the country of origin remain unstudied.

Given the centrality of embodiment to the experience of physical mobility, methodology makes an important difference to how migrant youth's mobility is studied. Both second-generation transnationalism and returns literatures largely investigate country-of-origin visits retrospectively from the country of residence, making it difficult to generate nuanced and dynamic accounts of how physical travel shapes changing relationships with the country of origin. The mobilities turn (Sheller and Urry 2006) spurred a more processual approach to migrant mobility, viewing it as a dynamic process to be studied *as it happens* (Schapendonk 2012). Emerging research on transnational youth mobilities asks how often, why, and in what ways migrant youth are physically mobile, and what this mobility means for their lives (Mazzucato 2015; Robertson et al. 2018). Fundamental to this research is a focus on youth

mobility trajectories, that is, their physical moves in time and space and their concomitant family constellations (van Geel and Mazzucato 2018). A mobility trajectories approach enables researchers to account for what transpires *during* mobility, including its sensorial, embodied, and emotional aspects, and for how mobility experiences change migrant youth's relationships to the country of origin over time and space.

This paper draws on 14 months of mobile ethnographic fieldwork with 20 transnationally mobile young people of Ghanaian background living in Hamburg, Germany. We focus explicitly on physical mobility to analyse how visits to Ghana change migrant youth's relationships to the country of origin over time (across several visits) and space (between different places within one visit). 'Migrant youth' include young people aged 15-25 who either migrated internationally themselves or whose parents did. 'Relationships to the country of origin' encompass young people's changing feelings about travelling to the country where they or their parents were born, and the relationships, resources, and opportunities they associate with it. While second-generation returns literature often refers to 'return visits' to a 'homeland', 'home country' or simply 'home', we speak instead of 'visits' to the 'country of origin', be it theirs or their parents'. This is because, while migrant youth often have strong attachments to the country of origin, they do not necessarily consider it a home, nor are their visits there always perceived as a 'return', especially for those visiting for the first time. 'Mobility' thus refers to young people's physical mobility, specifically, their visits to Ghana. To explore this question, we employ an expanded version of Urry's (2002) typology of proximity, whose three 'bases of co-presence' – *face-to-face, face-the-place*, and *face-the-moment* proximity – provide a starting point to analyse the embodied aspects of mobility and understand how the interlinked people, places, and moments that constitute these mobility experiences shape young people's changing relationships to Ghana over time and space. At the start of the century and the advent of the digital age, Urry argued that '[t]he global world appears to require that whatever virtual and imaginative connections occur between people, moments of co-presence are also necessary' (2002: 264). Nearly twenty years on, we return to Urry's typology of proximity to argue for a renewed research focus on physical mobility and its effects on the transnational lives of migrant youth.

5.2 Migrant youth transnationalism, mobility, and visits to the country of origin

5.2.1 Viewing mobility from afar: second-generation transnationalism and returns

The literature on second-generation transnationalism, although some studies also include first and 1.5 generations, has shown that migrant youth, like adult migrants, engage in diverse transnational practices and build varied relationships with their country of origin. Much of this literature has focused on transnational practices within the country of residence, such as language use, maintenance of cultural and religious practices, and participation in

organisations linked to the country of origin. Visits to the country of origin are discussed rarely and only alongside transnational activities in the country of residence. Due to the limited attention given to physical mobility in this literature, the country of origin is often represented in broad brushstrokes as a monolithic, static entity, to which young people either feel a sense of belonging or which reinforces their identification with the country of residence (Kibria 2002; Levitt 2002; Smith 2002; Louie 2006; Levitt 2009).

The mobilities turn prompted transnational migration scholars to look beyond transnational practices within the country of residence and focus specifically on people's movements. Recent research on second-generation returns focuses on physical mobility as a shaping force of relationships to the country of origin among migrant youth, often also including first and 1.5 generations. While this literature addresses varied return mobilities, including permanent relocation to the country of origin, we focus on the studies that address country-of-origin visits. Such visits help migrant youth shape their identities and sense of belonging to different countries and cultures, learn about their heritage, and establish and maintain family relationships transnationally (Conway et al. 2009; Binaisa 2011; Vathi and King 2011; McMichael et al. 2017).

The second-generation transnationalism and return literatures mostly represent visits as maintaining a stable relationship to a monolithic country of origin – an anchor of unchanging family relationships, cultural heritage, and personal identity within the dynamic fluidity of a life based elsewhere and a turbulent life stage. For example, Conway, Potter and Bernard describe country-of-origin visits as 'short-term exercises in which much stays the same and little dislocation or little change in circumstances occurs' (2009: 266). As such, changes and complexities in relationships to the country of origin have been oversimplified and the role of visits in shaping these changes, understudied.

Where changes in migrant youth's relationships to the country of origin have been addressed, they have often been accounted for by macro-level changes in the country of origin or residence, or by generalised life stages. Van Liempt (2011) shows how political shifts, including in migration policy, can change how welcome migrant youth feel when visiting countries that have been 'home' in the past. Smith (2002) found that the transnational engagements, including visits, of the Mexican-American second generation peaked during their adolescence, then waned as adult responsibilities increased. Other researchers have argued that country-of-origin visits are experienced differently at different life stages (Gardner and Mand 2012; Zeitlyn 2015), either finding that interest increases during adolescence (Levitt 2002) or decreases with age (King et al. 2011; Vathi and King 2011). These studies rarely point to what actually transpires during visits to cause such changes.

Similarly, various studies document mixed feelings about country-of-origin visits, particularly around identity and belonging (Kibria 2002; Mason 2004; Louie 2006; Vathi and King 2011; Zeitlyn 2015; McMichael et al. 2017). However, such complexity has been attributed to differences *between* (groups of) young people rather than to complexity and change in individuals' experiences. For example, McMichael et al. (2017) show that country-of-origin visits can foster a sense of belonging within family networks for some refugee youth and alienation from a national community for others, yet they do not show these conflicting feelings within individuals. Vathi and King (2011) note that, for Albanian-background youth living in the United Kingdom, Greece and Italy, gender roles in Albania led to boys and girls holding different associations with their visits there. What remains to be explored is which details of young people's mobility experiences prompt changes and mixed feelings, and when, how, and why such changes occur. As such, a gap exists in our knowledge of how transnational mobility changes migrant youth's relationships to the country of origin, and what transpires during mobility to produce changes over time (across several visits) and space (between different places within one visit).

5.2.2 Viewing mobility up-close: mobility trajectories research

The mobilities turn engendered a processual approach to mobility that focuses on what occurs during the movement of people, objects, and ideas (Urry 2002; Sheller and Urry 2006). While the mobilities paradigm originally focused on everyday, local mobilities, transnational migration research on mobility trajectories applied this processual approach to migrant mobilities. In doing so, it moved beyond a view of mobility from afar to instead explore the texture of mobility experiences up-close, including the 'turbulence' and non-linear components of the migration trajectory (Schapendonk 2012; Wissink et al. 2017). Mazzucato (2015) developed the concept of 'youth mobility trajectories', meaning young people's physical moves in time and space and their concomitant family constellations, to study not just the migration move itself but also other forms of mobility, including visits and changes of residence. Van Geel and Mazzucato proposed a typology of transnational youth mobility trajectories, arguing that engaging with the complexity and diversity of such trajectories brings 'analyses closer to the lived experience of mobile youth' (2018: 2158). The authors advocate for processual studies of migrant youth mobility, as 'more research is […] needed on the different kinds of moves that young people engage in, *what transpires during these moves*, and how this shapes their transnational lives' (Mazzucato and van Geel 2022: 204, our emphasis). We build on these studies of youth mobility trajectories by exploring the diversity and meaning of migrant youth's experiences *during* mobility and how these change their relationships to the country of origin over time and space.

5.2.3 The importance of method

A significant difference between static and processual representations of mobility is methodological. Most second-generation transnationalism and returns studies conduct research in the *country of residence* about mobility to the *country of origin*. They often rely on retrospective interviews about past mobility (Kibria 2002; Levitt 2002; van Liempt 2011; Vathi and King 2011), sometimes several years later (Louie 2006; Binaisa 2011; King et al. 2011), or use participatory arts to conjure past mobility experiences (Gardner and Mand 2012). Some scholars value research in the country of origin, but not necessarily during the mobility studied. For example, second-generation returns studies occasionally conduct interviews about past visits with migrant youth who later relocated to the country of origin, but not during such visits (Conway et al. 2009; Binaisa 2011; King et al. 2011). Similarly, while Levitt argues that understanding the second generation's transnational orientations, including their physical mobility, requires 'long-term ethnographic research in the source and destination countries' (2009: 1225), her descriptions of mobility rely on retrospective interviews with migrants, while her research in countries of origin is conducted with their families. Rare exceptions are Zeitlyn's (2015) and Bolognani's (2014) studies of country-of-origin visits by second-generation British Bangladeshis and British Pakistanis, respectively. However, both studies focus on single visits rather than contextualising visits within broader mobility trajectories. In sum, these literatures' methods are characterized by physical and temporal distance from the actual mobility experiences studied, hindering nuanced representations of the country of origin and of how mobility experiences change relationships to it over time and space.

By contrast, 'mobile methods' rely on conducting processual research *during* mobility (Sheller and Urry 2006: 217). Mobile methods were developed to research 'local' and transport forms of mobility, such as cycling, car-driving, and navigating neighbourhoods and cities (Büscher and Urry 2009; Fincham et al. 2010) and have been brought into transnational migration research through the use of 'trajectory ethnographies' (Schapendonk and Steel 2014; van Geel and Mazzucato 2018). For example, Schapendonk (2012) followed migrants' journeys through phone calls, emails, and visits *en route*. Van Geel and Mazzucato (2020) mapped young people's mobility trajectories and accompanied their visits to Ghana to understand how mobility shaped their educational resilience in The Netherlands.

5.2.4 Unpacking mobility experiences: people, places, and moments

Urry's seminal article on 'Mobility and Proximity' addressed 'why travel takes place' (2002: 255). In exploring four types of travel – virtual, imaginative, material, and corporeal – Urry highlighted the embodied proximity with people, places, and moments that physical (or corporeal) mobility enables, which cannot be fully replaced by other forms of travel.

Processual mobile methods provide access to these 'fleeting, multi-sensory, distributed, mobile and multiple' meanings of mobility as it unfolds (Büscher and Urry 2009: 103; Sheller and Urry 2006; Cheung Judge et al. 2020).

Some second-generation transnationalism and returns studies acknowledge that country-of-origin visits are 'significantly experiential' (Conway et al. 2009: 257; Gardner and Mand 2012). Yet their temporal and spatial distance from the studied mobility limits researchers' ability to adequately capture 'the centrality of material and bodily experiences of encounters with places' (McMichael et al. 2017: 385), resulting in general descriptions, for example, that 'the food was too spicy, the weather too hot, and the living conditions unhealthy' (ibid: 394).

Urry (2002) recognized that the embodiment of physical travel comprises proximate encounters with people, places, and moments (see also Conradson and McKay 2007). In this paper, we draw on Urry's (2002) typology of proximity to explore the factors that constitute migrant youth's mobility experiences and thus shape their changing relationships to Ghana. Urry outlines three types of proximity that occur during physical travel and make it necessary or desirable: *face-to-face*, *face-the-place*, and *face-the-moment* proximity. *Face-to-face* emphasises the richly layered in-person interactions during mobility that maintain and shape social relationships. Drawing on Boden and Molotch's (1994) analysis of 'thick' co-presence, Urry says such interactions include 'not just words, but indexical expressions, facial gestures, body language, status, voice intonation, pregnant silences, past histories, anticipated conversations and actions, turn-taking practices and so on' (2002: 259). *Face-the-place* acknowledges the importance of specific locations encountered during mobility, including their embodied and sensorial elements: 'to meet at a particular house, say, of one's childhood or visit a particular restaurant or walk along a certain river valley […]. It is only then that we know what a place is really like' (261). *Face-the-moment* emphasises the often-obligatory attendance at planned and formal key life events like weddings, funerals, and religious celebrations as 'a further kind of travel to place, where timing is everything' (262).

Urry's typology of proximity is not foreign to research on migration, having been employed to retrospectively study how physical mobility shapes migrants' relationships to friends and family in the country of origin (Janta et al. 2015; King and Lulle 2015). While Urry's typology has often been applied to understand the *motivations* for physical mobility, we use his typology to explore *what transpires during* young people's visits to Ghana and how the specific and shifting factors that constitute these mobility experiences change their relationships to Ghana over time (across several visits) and space (between different places within one visit). In applying this typology specifically to migrant youth's visits to the country of origin, a number of necessary modifications emerged from our data and are outlined in the analysis and discussion below.

5.3 Research setting and methods

This ethnographic study is part of the MO-TRAYL project (Mobility Trajectories of Young Lives: Life chances of transnational youth in Global South and North) led by Mazzucato (2015). The project investigates the role of transnational mobility in the lives of Ghanaian-background youth in cities in Germany, Belgium, The Netherlands, and Ghana, and was approved by Maastricht University's Ethics Committee.[47] This paper relates to the German case study in Hamburg, for which the first author conducted fieldwork. The second author is the project's Principal Investigator. The authors collaboratively conducted data analysis and wrote the paper, drawing on insights and approaches developed through the MO-TRAYL team's collaborative praxis.

Hamburg is home to roughly one fifth of Germany's Ghanaian community, which dates back to the educational migrants of the 1950s and 1960s and is the second-largest in continental Europe (Nieswand 2008; Mörath 2015). Approximately 13,200 people of Ghanaian background, including those who migrated from Ghana or have at least one parent who did, were registered in Hamburg in 2017 (Statistikamt Nord 2018).

Fieldwork included 12 months in Hamburg and 2 months in Ghana in 2018 and 2019. Twenty research participants (14 female and 6 male) aged 15-25 were recruited through high schools, Ghanaian churches, youth groups, and snowball sampling. Informed consent was obtained processually by reminding participants of the research aims throughout fieldwork and regularly re-confirming their willingness to participate.

Participants were selected based on the following criteria: they (1) are of Ghanaian background, with both of their parents born in Ghana, regardless of their own birthplace (12 were born in Germany and 8 in Ghana); (2) currently reside in Hamburg; (3) attend(ed) secondary school in Hamburg; and (4) have spent time in Ghana, ranging from a single weeks-long visit to several years of residence and schooling. The 20 participants had together made 29 visits to Ghana, ranging from no visits (for 6 of the 8 Ghanaian-born participants) to five visits each. Visits were primarily to see family and friends, but sometimes also included vocational education or tourism. By including youth of migrant background with diverse mobility trajectories – rather than categorising them as 'first generation' or 'second generation' – we focus on the nature and impact of diverse youth mobility experiences. Our methods further highlight the diversity of experiences by contextualising mobility within our participants' particular life stage.

[47] Maastricht University's Ethical Review Committee Inner City, reference number ERCIC_053_15_11_2017.

Data for this paper were collected by combining 'traditional' ethnographic research methods like participant observation and interviews with 'mobile methods' (see Merriman 2014 on the benefits of a mixed approach). First, the mobility of all 20 participants was tracked through *mobility trajectory mapping* (Mazzucato 2015; van Geel and Mazzucato 2018), which builds on early techniques to capture demographic events within their socio-economic contexts (Antoine et al. 1987) that have been adapted for use within large-scale quantitative migration surveys (Beauchemin 2012). Mobility trajectory mapping systematically collects information on a participant's geographical moves in time and space (including short trips and changes of residence and caregivers, both nationally and internationally), schools attended, and the location of important relatives, resulting in a visualisation of their mobility and educational trajectory (Mazzucato et al. forthcoming; see Figures 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3). These maps were constructed over the course of fieldwork with participants and informed interviews about their various mobility experiences. Second, we *followed mobility to Ghana in real-time* by accompanying trips physically and following them digitally, both of which are rare in research. Participants' visits were accompanied physically from one to 19 days and followed digitally mostly through WhatsApp messages and voice memos, which enabled us to gather impressions of and ask questions about visits as they unfolded, rather than relying on retrospective accounts weeks, months, or even years later. Six female participants visited Ghana during fieldwork, all of whom were followed physically and digitally to different degrees. Third, we conducted *before-and-after interviews* with these six participants, meaning we spoke with them before and after visits to Ghana to document the anticipated and actual impacts of these trips on their relationships to the country.

The three cases presented below were chosen because they represent a broad range of mobility trajectories between Ghana and Germany, and their experience of visits to Ghana encompass the variety of dynamics we observed across our entire sample. Further, we used all three mobile methods with them, generating rich data on the topic to exemplify these diverse dynamics. While these methods are ideally used together, the nature of ethnographic research means this is not always possible, and each of the methods enables the collection of relevant data about young people's mobility experiences and changing relationships to their country of origin.

It is important to acknowledge that mobile methods can shape the very mobility being studied or influence its effects (Boas et al. 2021). For example, physically accompanying participants' visits to Ghana as a 'guest' may have influenced the activities undertaken and places visited; and the reflection required by before-and-after interviews could potentially have heightened how participants experienced and recollected a visit to Ghana. Similarly, the potential influence of researchers' positionality must be acknowledged. The fieldwork researcher is a white woman in her thirties, who grew up transnationally mobile between Australia and Britain and is herself a migrant in The Netherlands. As such, she does not share

participants' age nor national backgrounds, but does share the experience of being transnationally mobile and maintaining transnational networks.

5.4 How visits shape changing relationships to Ghana

Although we address each type of proximity from Urry's (2002) typology separately, our analysis shows that they constitute a nested typology in which each type is interwoven with the others. That is, what is experienced (the *moment*) has a lot to do with the environment (the *place*) in which and the people (the *face*) with whom it is experienced. In each sub-section below, we also introduce modifications to each type of proximity that emerged during our analysis. First, we introduce the participants whose mobility we discuss in detail. Participants chose their own pseudonyms.

Akosua

> Akosua (19) was born in Hamburg. At age 5, she lived with her maternal grandmother in Kumasi, Ghana, for 18 months – a time she has vague but unpleasant memories of. Akosua has since made five summer trips to Ghana between the ages of 14 and 19, always staying with her mother, who lives between Hamburg and Ghana's capital, Accra, where she runs a small business. Akosua describes her four first teenage trips as boring: she felt restricted to her mother's house and shop with limited social contact and 'nothing to do.' She is more positive about her most-recent trip, during which she attended a make-up school full-time for six weeks, got to know her young neighbours, and visited a music festival with friends from Hamburg who also spent their summers in Ghana. During this trip, Ghana opened up to Akosua, and she is now considering returning there to do an FSJ (*Freiwilliges Soziales Jahr*), a voluntary service year for German students, to 'get to know Ghana in another way.' Before this trip, Akosua and I completed her mobility trajectory map and discussed her expectations for the visit. We were in Ghana at the same time and sent each other WhatsApp voice memos every few days. We met in person at Accra Airport on the night we both flew back to Europe. A few weeks later, we conducted a follow-up interview in Hamburg.

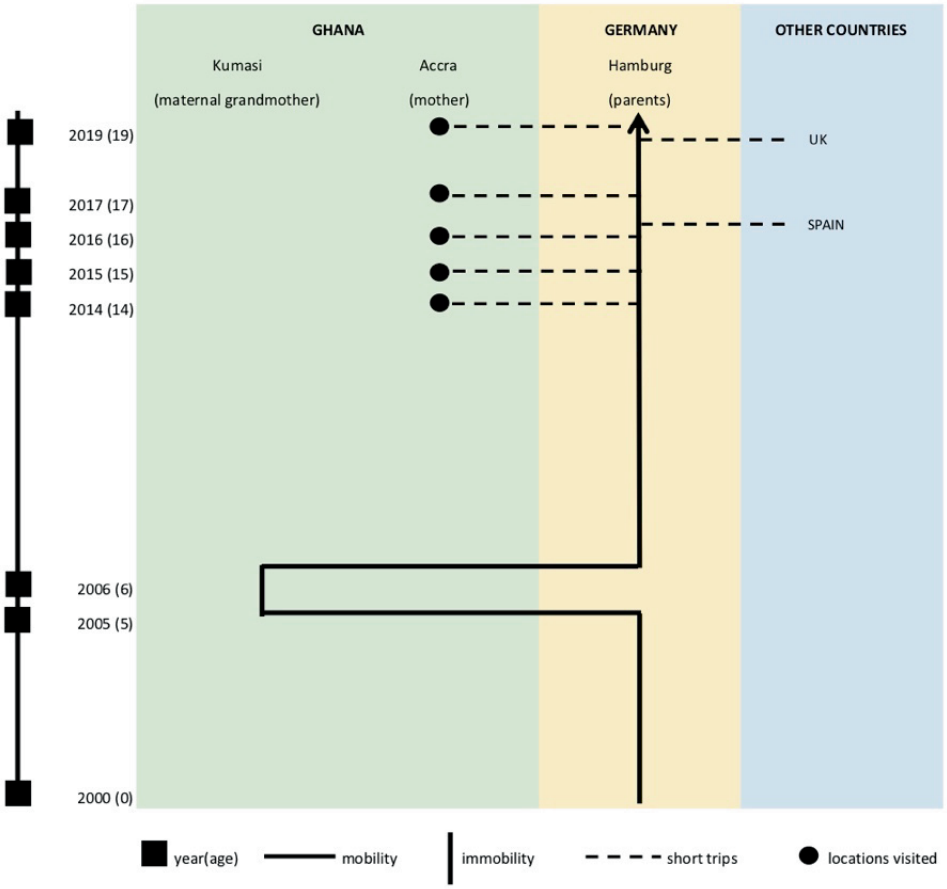


Figure 5.1. Akosua's mobility trajectory

Esra

Esra (19) was born in Hamburg and lives with her mother and two sisters. Esra has visited family in Italy a few times and made her first trip to Ghana when she was 17. Before the trip, Esra's image of Ghana consisted of tropical weather and bumper-to-bumper traffic, gleaned from her mother's stories of home. She did not know what to expect beyond visiting tourist landmarks and her parents' hometown and meeting family. During the trip with her mother and sisters, she stayed in relatives' homes in Accra and Kumasi and visited smaller towns of family significance. Having completed her mobility trajectory map and discussed her expectations before her trip, Esra and I stayed in touch while she was in Ghana through WhatsApp messages and occasional phone calls. I also spent an afternoon with Esra at her aunt's house in Kumasi and ran into her and her cousins at a shopping mall in Accra the following week. Months later, we conducted a follow-up interview in Hamburg.

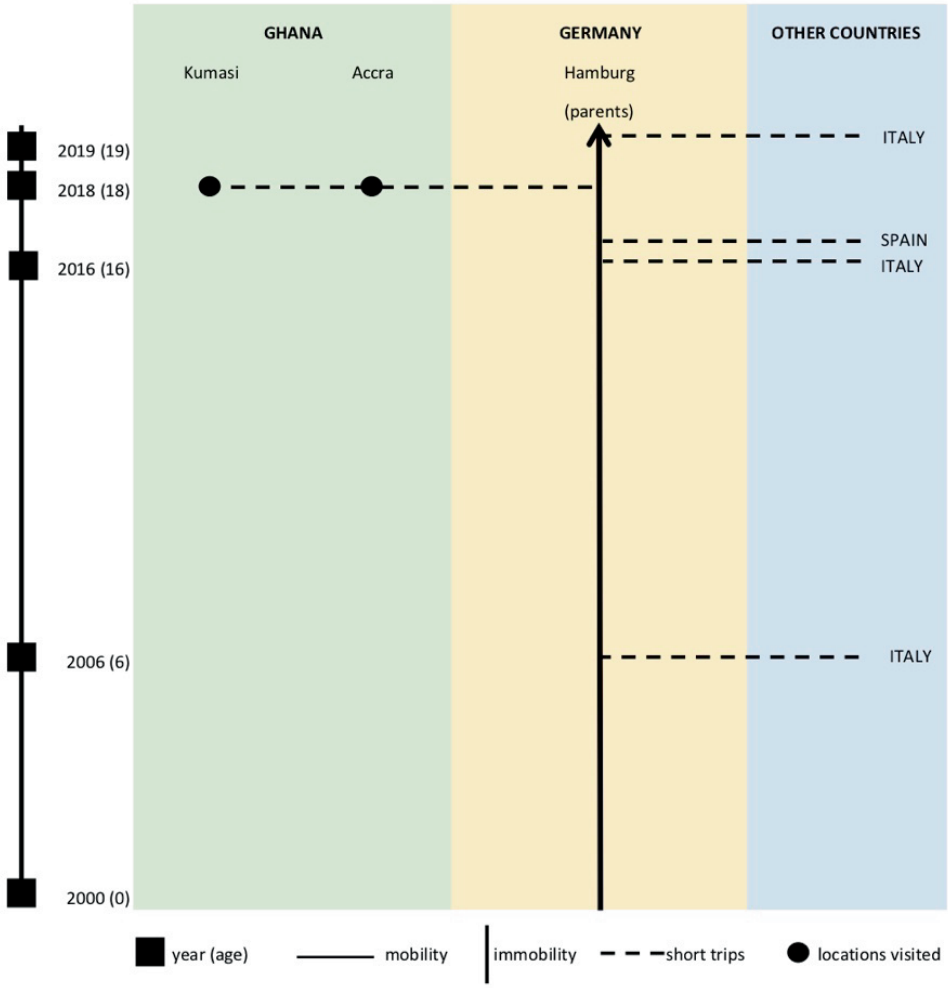


Figure 5.2. Esra's mobility trajectory

Note: The year/age axis in trajectory maps indicates the age participants turned in the calendar year when a move occurred. The age reported in the text may differ slightly if a trip occurred before their birthday.

Ella

Ella (20) was born in Hamburg but moved to Ghana before her first birthday. Aged 8, she spent a year in Hamburg, then returned to Ghana until she was 15. In Ghana, Ella attended school in Accra, but spent the holidays in Koforidua with her paternal grandmother, with whom she grew very close. Ella's summer trip to Ghana aged 19 was her first visit in four years. During the trip with her mother and siblings, she stayed in relatives' homes in Accra and Koforidua, visited her old school, and

caught up with many relatives and friends. The trip was a mixed experience for Ella, including happy reunions and outings as well as painful conflicts and frustrations. I mapped Ella's mobility slowly throughout fieldwork. I accompanied her 5-week trip to Ghana physically for 19 days and followed it digitally through WhatsApp the rest of the time. We had many conversations about her expectations and plans for the trip beforehand and conducted a follow-up interview a month after returning to Hamburg.

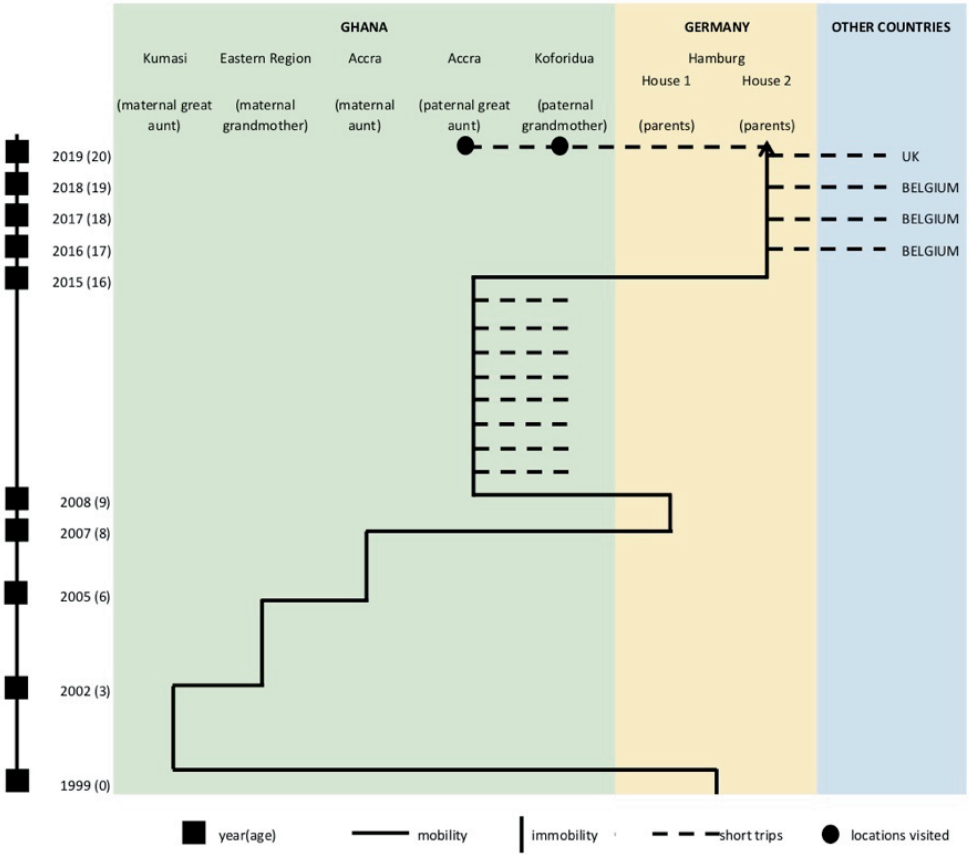


Figure 5.3. Ella's mobility trajectory

5.4.1 Face-to-face: changing relationships

We consider face-to-face proximity to include not only the maintenance of existing relationships with people residing in the country of origin, as outlined by Urry (2002), but also the beginning of new relationships, the deterioration of existing relationships, and the renewal of relationships from the country of residence in the country of origin. These types

of face-to-face proximity all play a role in migrant youth's visits and changing relationships to Ghana over time and space. We demonstrate each type of face-to-face proximity – the maintenance, beginning, deterioration, and renewal of relationships – with examples from our data below.

Akosua's relationship to Ghana shifted over the course of various visits (see Figure 5.1). From the negative memories of living with her grandmother as a child, to the boredom and isolation of her earlier teenage trips, to the companionship and independence that characterised her recent visit, Ghana has been many things to Akosua. These changes are largely due to the changing relationships that populated Akosua's visits to Ghana as she grew up. These changes were not caused by a shift in existing relationships with people in Ghana, but rather by the beginning of relationships with other young people in her neighbourhood and at the make-up school. Through conversations with her new friends, Akosua gained connection, a sense of common experience, and new perspective. She found Ghanaians:

> […] to be really nice, very, very curious. […] And even when they have little, they are happy. [I]n Ghana, I like that everyone has the same skin colour, and that you just feel at home, because everyone knows the same struggles, [like] with your hair.

The beginning of new relationships can also occur when distant family networks are brought to life through mobility. During Esra's first trip to Ghana at age 17 (see Figure 5.2), she developed relationships with aunts, uncles, and cousins whom she had previously only known from photos and phone calls. When I visited Esra at her aunt's house in Kumasi, she and her sisters spoke excitedly about the prospect of returning to Ghana the following summer. Months later in Hamburg, Esra spoke of her relationship to Ghana now being closely connected to her newfound family relationships there, so much so that she had decided to postpone returning to Ghana because many relatives had since left to study abroad. 'We wanted to go to Ghana again this year, but… it's much more exciting when the whole family is there.' The temporary suspension of the possibility of face-to-face proximity led to a different relationship and (temporarily) less mobility to Ghana.

Face-to-face proximity in Ghana is not only with local Ghanaians, but also consists of the renewal of relationships from the country of residence in the country of origin. Akosua's newly positive feelings about Ghana also came from spending time with Ghanaian-background friends from Hamburg who were similarly spending their summers in the country. One highlight of Akosua's trip was attending a beach music festival on the outskirts of Accra with two friends from Hamburg. With them, she rubbed shoulders with Ghanaian artists, danced in thick crowds, and posted glamorous selfies on social media. Far from the social isolation she had felt in Ghana on previous trips, despite staying in touch with friends

in Hamburg through social media, Akosua now gained closeness, comfort, and confidence through face-to-face social interactions, which gave her insights into various aspects of life as a young woman in Ghana.

The intense co-presence experienced during visits to Ghana can also lead to the deterioration of relationships. Ella (20) was born in Germany but spent 14 years living in Ghana (see Figure 5.3). Her paternal grandmother was one of her main caregivers there. Since moving to Germany at age 15, Ella stayed in regular contact with her grandmother and their close connection was central to Ella's relationship to Ghana. Before her 2019 visit, she told me, 'What I've missed the most in Ghana is, I think, my family, especially my grandmother.' At a birthday party in Hamburg before the trip, I chatted with Ella and her friend Irene. Speaking of trips to Ghana, Irene screwed up her nose and shook her head: she did not want to go back to Ghana. Ella explained to me, 'It depends on who you are with in Ghana. If she had stayed with *my* grandmother, she would want to go back.'

During her trip, however, Ella's relationship with her grandmother deteriorated drastically. Both Ella and her grandmother had changed in the four years since their previous face-to-face contact. Ella was no longer the 15-year-old who had lived there previously, but rather a 19-year-old with four years of experience as a teenager in Germany. Her grandmother's age (73) made her more dependent on younger relatives, and Ella felt that her supposed 'menopause' was making her more irritable. Her grandmother regularly sat in a chair by the living-room doorway, her feet resting in a bucket of warm water, wearing sunglasses to protect her recently operated eyes. From this position, she would call out to the youngsters of the household – 'Ella!' 'Richmond!' 'Grace!' – telling them to fetch her eye drops, prepare the yams for dinner, or fold her washing. Ella resented her grandmother's expectations that she resume her former roles of cooking, cleaning, and following orders. I regularly observed her rolling her eyes and muttering under her breath. After yet another disparaging comment, I asked Ella, 'Weren't you looking forward to seeing your grandmother?' She replied, 'Yeah, but now it's all gone, now it's a nightmare.' Months later, Ella reported that she barely spoke to her grandmother anymore.

- With my grandmother now, I feel more distant, […] I don't call her personally because I really had enough [during the visit].

- Did you used to call her personally?

- Of course! Like three, four times [a week]. She even told me the other time, 'You don't call me anymore'. I was just quiet and said nothing.

While Ella's 'virtual travel' (Urry 2002) through regular phone calls with her grandmother had maintained their close relationship during four years of distance, their face-to-face encounters during her physical mobility prompted a significant change to it. The damage to their relationship was so severe that, when planning her next trip to Ghana more than a year later, Ella did not inform her grandmother to avoid having to visit her.

Other existing relationships, however, were maintained by Ella's visit, as in Urry's (2002) original formulation of face-to-face proximity. She relished the opportunity to spend time with her long-distance boyfriend, cousins, and old classmates, including at a wedding, highlighting how face-to-face encounters are facilitated during face-the-moment proximity. These varied experiences point to the shifting terrain of Ella's relationship to Ghana and the multiple meanings the country holds for her. As such, Ella's desire to be mobile to Ghana remained consistent, but the reasons for this – the elements that constitute her relationship to Ghana – shifted over time and (as we see below) space.

5.4.2 Face-the-place: changing contexts

As discussed above, much research on migrant youth's visits depicts a monolithic country of origin. By contrast, *face-the-place* proximity refers to the specific locations visited during mobility, such as a 'particular restaurant' or 'certain river valley' (Urry 2002: 261). Our data show that broader types of spaces are also important in migrant youth's experience of place during visits to the country of origin. These broader contexts are made up of various specific places, which together embody certain associations that shape migrant youth's relationships to Ghana across space. We illustrate each type of face-the-place proximity – specific places and broader spaces – with examples from our data below.

Akosua's relationship to Ghana changed not only due to the people she spent time with on her trips, as shown above, but also the changing places that formed the background of her visits. In fact, these two elements were intimately connected. On her earlier trips, Akosua had felt restricted to her mother's shop and house in Accra, limiting her opportunities to build face-to-face social relationships. However, on her most recent trip, her age (19) expanded the places that constituted Akosua's Ghana, bringing her into contact with new people. At the make-up school she attended in Accra, she met other young women her age with similar interests; she attended a music festival at a popular local beach with friends from Hamburg; and she befriended other young people in her neighbourhood. The specific places that Akosua 'faced' during this trip changed what Ghana meant for her, consequently changing her relationship to the country. Places were no longer boring and limited, but diverse and multiple: these professional, recreational, and communal spaces gave her new windows onto various facets of Ghana and the possibilities they offered her; for example, the opportunity to volunteer and 'get to know Ghana in another way.'

Ella's worsening relationship with her grandmother was also inseparable from the physical environment in which it played out, which contrasted to other spaces she visited in Ghana. However, in Ella's case, we see that specific places together formed broader spaces that held contrasting associations for her: the two cities of Accra, the nation's bustling capital of 2.5 million residents, and Koforidua, a quiet, green city 90 minutes away. In Accra, Ella stayed in the house of her young, entrepreneurial uncle and was driven around in the family 4-Wheel-Drive by her 'cool' cousin, Kobi, her 'favourite person on this trip'. In Accra, Ella seemed confident, playful, and independent. She spent her time visiting family and friends, shopping, and going to the mall, cinema, and hotel pools – the objective was 'to chill, relax and lead my best life'. In Koforidua, by contrast, she commonly complained of being bored and frustrated. Exacerbating this tension was the family's nervousness about Ella 'roaming' in public, due to a recent spate of kidnappings. Consequently, she was forbidden to leave the house alone and her days were filled with long waits for a ride into town, or repetitive visits between her grandmother's home, the market, and church. The city as a whole came to represent Ella's frustration, boredom, and lack of independence. Despite her initial enthusiasm to travel there, Ella soon tired of Koforidua and wanted to return to Accra. Her relationships, especially with her grandmother, foregrounded her face-the-place proximity during this trip. Lounging on her bed in Koforidua one hot afternoon, Ella whispered, 'Laura, I'm pissed, everyone in this house is disturbing me, I want to go back.' 'To where?' 'Accra… I'm not enjoying Ghana.' The frustrations of Koforidua came to symbolise Ella's experience of and relationship to Ghana while she was there, though she acknowledged that, with a change of place, Ghana would become something different yet again.

The experience of place for Esra, who had imagined Ghana as tropical and congested, was defined by the different meanings that public and private spaces came to hold during her first visit. In public among strangers, the naturally shy Esra felt constantly observed and very uncomfortable. On a visit to her parents' rural hometown, she recalled people lining up to watch their car arrive. 'I felt like Beyoncé', she grimaced, 'It was so uncomfortable, really weird.' Her reception in public spaces – of admiration, but distance – emphasised Esra's feelings of foreignness among local Ghanaians. I observed this when I visited her in Ghana's second major city, Kumasi. As we strolled through the neighbourhood, Esra walked with her hands in her pockets, shoulders hunched, and her head down, avoiding eye contact with curious pedestrians. I asked her if she felt stared at right now. 'Yeah, a bit,' she replied, explaining that she coped with her discomfort by avoiding eye contact with people on the street.

However, in private spaces, like relatives' homes, Ghana took on a different meaning. In such spaces, Esra felt comfortable and connected to family. On my visit to her aunt's house, Esra showed me photos and paintings of her relatives on the living-room walls and introduced me to several people (translating fluently between German and Twi). Back in

Hamburg, Esra reflected on how visiting private family-related places – and their interconnections with family relationships – had shaped the meaning of Ghana for her:

> The focus of this trip was really the family, that I understood a few things… I could see what the foundations of the family were, […] Before I was like, 'Whatever, I know my mum comes from Ghana', that was it. But now I know where my mother was in Ghana, where my father was in Ghana […] And it's more real [in person] than when you hear [about] it. I think that's what I brought: no longer these open questions; now it's like, okay, I have my answers, everything's good.

Far from being a monolithic country, Esra's Ghana was composed of various public and private spaces, representing different aspects of her relationship to the country.

5.4.3 Face-the-moment: changing events

The places that constituted participants' visits to Ghana were not only backdrops to relationships but were also the stages on which impactful moments of their mobility played out. The original formulation of *face-the-moment* proximity refers to planned, formal, and 'live' events at which travellers' presence is specifically timed to meet a familial or social obligation, like weddings, funerals, and religious celebrations. We found that two other types of 'moment' also shape our participants' relationships to Ghana: planned but informal events and unanticipated encounters. These three types of key moments – planned and formal, planned but informal, and unanticipated – are intricately interwoven with people and places. Each type is explained with an example from our data below.

The first type of key moment is the planned, formal event that Urry (2002) describes. During her trip, Ella attended the wedding of Blessing, whom Ella considered a 'sister' because she worked for years in Ella's grandmother's household. Ella's participation in the wedding allowed her to rekindle relationships and fulfil social obligations. Blessing asked Ella to be a bridesmaid and to manage the gift table, tasks Ella interpreted as a great responsibility and sign of trust. Before her trip to Ghana, Ella offered to buy Blessing's bridal shoes in Hamburg. At the wedding itself, I observed Ella reconnect with the other bridesmaids, whom she knew from childhood, and receive social recognition of her generosity (for paying for a drinks stand at the wedding reception), her VIP status (as a bridesmaid), and her own romantic relationship (another bridesmaid teased, 'Who will be the next bride, Ella?'). Not only did this event provide the opportunity to *maintain* social relationships and fulfil social obligations (Urry 2002), but it also represented *change* in Ella's relationship to Ghana, because she could demonstrate her maturity to her social network by now fulfilling these obligations independent of her parents. Back in Hamburg, Ella reflected on how 'the comment that people gave me [in Ghana] was, […] I've really changed into a woman. […] People said I've grown, I've become more independent, more serious with life.' Planned and

formal events like Blessing's wedding gave Ella the platform to show that her relationship to Ghana had changed over time: she had left Ghana a girl and returned a woman.

Esra's visit to her parents' hometown exemplifies the second type of key moment: planned but informal events. When I visited Esra in Ghana, she and her two sisters vividly described this visit they had made days earlier. They had seen their parents' family houses and school, met their parents' old classmates, and visited the graves of their father (who died when Esra was a young child) and other relatives. Esra moved closer on the couch to show me photos of the graves on her phone, including that of her great-grandmother Esra, for whom she was named. The sisters chatted animatedly about the mix of poor local and rich migrant houses, their efforts to clear overgrown shrubs from the graves, and the fact that villagers still recognised their mother after so many years. Esra's understanding of her family history had a strong connection to place and relationships (as shown above), and was exemplified by this visit to her parents' hometown, a planned but informal event that crystallised these meanings of Ghana.

The third and final type of key moment is unanticipated encounters. Although such moments are unplanned and unpredictable, they can nevertheless shape young people's relationships to Ghana in significant ways. A key moment on Akosua's trip, which she described to me weeks later in Hamburg, provides an instructive example. While sharing a taxi one day, Akosua and her mother bickered over Akosua's desire for more independence. Much to Akosua's shock, their driver suddenly intervened.

> All of a sudden, the taxi driver – who we didn't know – yells at me, 'Be quiet! Be quiet! You are so disrespectful! Shut up!' I was like, 'Huh?' I didn't understand it. The taxi driver [said]: 'Foreign kids are so rude! Disrespectful! No respect!'
>
> Addressing Akosua's mother, the driver continued:
>
> 'Madam, […] I know how you feel, I'm also a father, I have seven kids, and it's so hard to let them go. Don't let them out, don't give them the chance!'

Akosua described her shock: 'I was sad, I cried, I didn't say anything. […] For the next two days, I cried.' This example demonstrates how the constellation of shifting people, places, and moments can change migrant youth's relationships to Ghana across space during a single visit. Places like the make-up school and her relationships with neighbours, classmates, and friends from Hamburg represented parts of Ghana where Akosua gained a newfound confidence and independence. Impactful moments in other contexts, however, like this unanticipated encounter with the taxi driver, represented a side of Ghana where Akosua's confidence was shaken and her independence far more limited.

5.5 Discussion and conclusion

In this paper, we have studied the visits to Ghana of Ghanaian-background youth living in Germany. In doing so, we have shown that migrant youth's relationships to their or their parents' country of origin are not static and singular, but rather changing and multiple, due to their diverse mobility experiences over time (across several visits) and space (between different places within one visit). By engaging with migrant youth's mobility experiences processually, we gain a deeper understanding of how transnational mobility shapes their lives in dynamic and evolving ways. Here, we discuss two main conclusions and contributions of our study – the first theoretical and the second methodological – before concluding.

Our theoretical contribution regards the importance of the various 'moving parts' of mobility experiences and how they influence migrant youth's relationships to the country of origin. In much literature on second-generation transnationalism and returns, meanings of mobility are depicted in relation to a monolithic country of origin. However, migrant youth's visits to Ghana are made up of relationships with specific people, time spent in particular places, and experiences of certain moments. Together, the shifting factors that constitute mobility experiences change the meanings of such trips and thus change migrant youth's relationships to the country of origin over time and space.

When one begins to look at the details rather than at retrospective narratives of mobility, the reality can seem overwhelmingly messy. Urry's (2002) typology of proximity provides the framework for our analysis, untangling experiences of lived mobility into discrete parts. His three 'bases of co-presence' – *face-to-face*, *face-the-place* and *face-the-moment* proximity – provide windows onto the interconnected relationships, locations and events that together make up the sensorial, embodied, and emotional experiences of mobility that shape its changing meanings. In applying Urry's typology of proximity to our data on migrant youth's visits to Ghana, three further articulations of the typology emerged.

First, we show that people, places, and moments are made up of and embedded within each other. Urry (2002) described these three bases of co-presence separately, while Sheller and Urry (2006) theorized the 'complex relationality' between them (see also Mason 2004; Hannam et al. 2006). In our study of young people's mobility trajectories, we show empirically how this complex relationality shapes migrant youth's changing relationships with the country of origin over time and space. Relationships play out in specific places and are composed of particular moments; places are populated by people and set the stage for events; and encounters include certain people meeting in precise locations. Especially when we consider the embodied aspects of mobility, we see that people, places, and moments become inseparable. For example, the experience of a deteriorating relationship is infused with memories of the place in which the relationship was embedded and the particular

moments that composed the fall-out. As such, Urry's (2002) typology of proximity is useful not as separate bases of co-presence, but as a way to study the complex relationality of people, places, and moments encountered during mobility.

Second, while mobilities research has shown that places are dynamic and on the move (Adey 2006; Sheller and Urry 2006), we show that young people's relationships to the country of origin are also on the move because the factors that constitute their mobility change: people age, places transform, and events are unpredictable. Various studies have pointed to the dynamism of life stages to explain changes in migrant youth's relationships to the country of origin over time (Levitt 2002; Smith 2002; King et al. 2011). Yet equally important is the dynamism of the mobility experience itself, which interacts with the developing young person to produce changing relationships to the country of origin.

Third, we add new elements to each type of proximity. The original formulation of *face-to-face* focuses on the role of physical proximity in maintaining existing relationships with people in the place visited. We add the beginning and deterioration of relationships, and the renewal of relationships from the country of residence in the country of origin. These changes continually reshape the social fabric of young people's experiences of Ghana. Visits can provide opportunities for young people to establish new relationships; similarly, they can damage relationships: as described by Mason, visits can be socially 'risky business' because they can 'emphasise differences as much as generate shared understanding' (2004: 427). Finally, visits can provide a new context in which to connect with others from young people's transnational networks. While *face-the-place* originally refers to specific places visited, we show that broader spaces – for example, the contrasting environments of public and private spaces or of different cities – also hold particular associations for migrant youth and therefore shape important parts of their relationships to Ghana. Located between the specific locations of Urry's original typology (2002) and the monolithic depiction of countries of origin of much second-generation transnationalism and returns research, these broader spaces represent the different sides of Ghana that our participants experience and develop mixed feelings towards. While *face-the-moment* for Urry indicated planned and formal life events that 'cannot be "missed"' and which 'set up enormous demands for mobility at very specific moments' (2002: 262), we supplement them with planned but informal events and unanticipated encounters. So, beyond key life events like weddings and funerals, they also include experiences such as a personal pilgrimage to a meaningful place or an unexpected yet impactful confrontation. In the analysis above, we show that such moments play an important role in shaping our participants' changing relationships to Ghana. With these modifications, Urry's typology of proximity comes closer to capturing the ways in which the mobility experiences of migrant youth shape their changing relationships to the country of origin.

A mobility trajectories approach to the study of changing relationships to the country of origin also has important methodological implications. As described above, second-generation transnationalism and returns literatures have largely studied mobility from afar, relying mostly on research in the country of residence. These studies provide interesting insights into the role of mobility in migrant youth transnationalism, but their exclusion of or distance from mobility experiences tends to produce generalised depictions of both the country of origin and young people's mobility, flattening out differences across time and space and attributing change to macro-level contexts and life stages. While sharing a thematic interest in people's physical movement with mobilities research, these literatures largely do not employ mobile methods (D'Andrea et al. 2011).

Bridging this gap, the use of mobile methods within multi-sited ethnographic research allows us to study these changing and complex meanings up-close and enables 'a focus on embodied practices, sensations and the material aspects of mobilities' (Boas et al. 2021: 143). We employed three main techniques that combine traditional ethnographic methods of participant observation and interviews with mobile methods (Merriman 2014). These include mobility trajectory mapping, following mobility in real-time, and before-and-after interviewing. These methods enabled us to examine the nature and meaning of individual mobility experiences within broader mobility trajectories and how these changed over time and space, rather than collapsing several mobility experiences into one generalised narrative. They also allowed us to develop nuanced understandings of how visits shape changing relationships to the country of origin by capturing the meaning-making process in action and accessing sensorial, embodied, and emotional information that is likely to be glossed over in retrospective narratives.

One final point on the importance of studying youth mobility trajectories is pertinent. We have shown the importance of mobility experiences in shaping changing relationships to the country of origin for migrant youth with diverse mobility trajectories. The participants featured in this paper were all born in Germany and as such would be classified as 'second generation', but they have very different mobility trajectories: Ella lived for 14 years in Ghana and has made one visit to the country; Akosua lived for 18 months in Ghana and has visited five times; and Esra has made a single trip to Ghana. The visits of Akosua, Esra, and Ella all include shifting constellations of people, places, and moments that shape their changing relationships to Ghana over time and space in different ways. Looking beyond migrant-generation categories, and instead exploring the detail of young people's mobility experiences, brings us closer to understanding the diverse impacts of physical mobility among migrant youth.

The limitations of our study suggest fruitful avenues for future research. First, the participants who travelled to Ghana during the fieldwork period were all female. Further

research could explore how gender shapes migrant youth's mobility experiences and relationships to the country of origin (cf. Vathi and King 2011). Second, studies could investigate the consequences of transnational mobility experiences and changing relationships to the country of origin for the lives of migrant youth in their countries of residence, on which there exists very little research (van Geel and Mazzucato 2020).

While migrant youth engage in diverse mobilities that sustain virtual, imaginative, and material connections with their countries of origin, the embodied nature of physical mobility plays a unique role in shaping their relationships to the country of origin over time and space. Just as young people change as they grow up, so do their mobility experiences – the specific and shifting people, places, and moments that make up their visits to the country of origin. We argue that taking mobility seriously requires analytical and methodological approaches that make visible what transpires during physical mobility and how mobility experiences change both over time and space. Such processual approaches bring us closer to fully accounting for the role of mobility in the lives of transnational migrant youth.

Chapter 6.

Transnational cultural capital in migrant youth's school transitions: mobility trajectories between Ghana and Germany

This chapter is a slightly revised version of a single-authored paper that has been submitted to an international peer-reviewed journal and is currently under review.

6.1 Introduction

> I sat at the table with Nana (14), his parents and new teacher for his school intake interview in Hamburg. He looked relaxed and confident: chin up, hands resting in his lap, bright red trainers flat on the floor. Throughout the meeting, conducted mostly in English, Nana dropped some phrases in German, showing he had already learned the basics since migrating from Ghana three months earlier. His parents handed the teacher his passport, residence permit, and Ghanaian private-school report cards from a well-organised folder. When asked how many years he had studied English, Nana replied with a smile, 'all my life.' His mother added that she had been an English teacher for 23 years in Ghana. As the teacher completed some paperwork, Nana's father placed his hand on her arm to gently interrupt: 'I want to explain something to you. Nana means "king." I gave him this name because my father was a king in Ghana.'

Little of Nana's royal background was visible in his life in Germany. He shared a run-down apartment in a working-class neighbourhood with his parents and other relatives; his father received a small retirement pension and his mother was unemployed; and he attended a public high school in an ethnically diverse and low-income suburb. However, it is clear from this vignette that Nana's life in Hamburg is only part of the story. As I followed his transition to school in Hamburg for more than a year, I observed how the behaviours and attitudes Nana learned in Ghana helped him consistently perform at the top of his reception class and prepare for the mainstream academic track of secondary school.

Migrant youth's lives in the country of origin before migration are, however, rarely considered in research. Migrant youth studies have established that family and school contexts in the country of residence are important shaping forces in migrant youth's educational outcomes (Portes and Zhou 1993; Portes and MacLeod 1996; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Suárez-Orozco et al. 2009; Haller et al. 2011), but these same factors in the country of origin have not been studied. Where parents' pre-migration characteristics are considered, the effects on their children's education remain unexplained (Ichou 2014; Feliciano and Lanuza 2017). Similarly, qualitative research on how cultural capital shapes young people's education has focused on social structures and school systems within nation-states (Lareau and Weininger 2003; Dumais 2015), including studies on the role of cultural capital in the education of migrant youth (Berggren et al. 2020; Emery et al. 2020). This methodological nationalism (Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2003) leaves significant gaps in our knowledge of whether and how young people's cultural capital operates transnationally.

In this paper, I take a different approach by applying a mobility lens to the study of migrant youth's school transitions. This involves analysing young people's mobility trajectories, which refers to all their geographic moves over time and space and the concurrent family

constellations (van Geel and Mazzucato 2018). As such, a mobility lens involves paying attention to not only what occurs in the country of residence after migration, but also to young people's lives in the country of origin before migration. Viewing migrant youth's school transitions through a mobility lens enables me to consider whether and how experiences, relationships, and resources from one context might have impacts in another, thereby making visible how their cultural capital operates transnationally. The paper draws on 14 months of ethnographic research with seven young people who migrated from Ghana to Germany and entered secondary school in Hamburg as teenagers. I focus on their initial school transition, that is, the time during which they attended reception classes in Hamburg before joining mainstream classes. I analyse four types of embodied cultural capital they gained in Ghana and then used to navigate their school transitions in Germany: confidence, discipline, respect, and adaptability.

6.2 Understanding migrant youth's cultural capital through a mobility lens

6.2.1 Migrant youth and education

A rich literature on migrant youth has investigated the educational fortunes of foreign-born youth and native-born youth with migrant parents in their countries of residence. This literature has established the importance of family and school factors for migrant youth's educational performance and attainment (Kao and Tienda 1995; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Suárez-Orozco et al. 2009; Haller et al. 2011). This research has, however, traditionally focused on such factors only in the country of residence, where migrants are commonly disadvantaged. As such, high-achieving migrant youth are seen as being successful despite their low socioeconomic status in the country of residence (Haller et al. 2011), a perspective mirrored in policy literature on migrant youth's education (European Commission 2018; OECD 2018). The migrant youth literature has thus treated young people who migrate as 'blank slates' upon arrival in the country of residence and obscured resources that move with them from the country of origin (Mazzucato 2015).

However, some recent migrant youth studies have acknowledged that migrants' backgrounds and resources, including their cultural capital, 'are not adequately assessed by typical measures of socioeconomic status' (Feliciano and Lanuza 2017: 212; Feliciano 2006; Ichou 2014). These few quantitative studies have begun looking to migrant parents' characteristics in the country of origin to explain their children's educational attainment in the country of residence. Feliciano and Lanuza (2017) developed the concept of 'contextual attainment' to measure migrant parents' education levels within the country-of-origin context, thereby revealing parents' higher class backgrounds and increased access to resources in the country of origin compared to their status and resources in the country of residence. Meanwhile, Ichou found that, in France, migrant parents' level of education relative to non-migrants in

their countries of origin affects their children's educational attainment more than their socioeconomic status in France does, leading him to conclude that migrant youth's family backgrounds in the country of origin are their 'true starting point' (2014: 761).

These relationships between country-of-origin characteristics and migrant youth's educational fortunes in the country of residence, however, remain unexplained (Mazzucato 2015). As Ichou himself acknowledges, 'The data at hand do not allow one to directly identify the specific sociological *mechanisms* that account for' these effects (2014: 760, emphasis added). Similarly, while Feliciano and Lanuza (2017) show that cultural resources stemming from migrant parents' backgrounds in the country of origin shape their children's educational performance in the country of residence, they do not show *how* this effect occurs. Qualitative research in this field has similarly focused on migrant youth's lives within the country of residence. For example, Fernández-Kelly (2008) investigated the role of migrant parents' origin-country cultural capital in their children's schooling in the United States; migrant youth's own experiences in the country of origin were not analysed, despite the respondents all having lived there for several years. While these studies identify that resources from the country of origin affect migrant youth's education in the country of residence, they all focus on resources transmitted from migrant parents to their children, leaving a missing link in explanations of this effect. That is, they do not consider young people's own experiences in the country of origin and cannot explain how young people develop and use resources themselves over time and space.

6.2.2 Cultural capital and education

The literature on cultural capital and education provides a fruitful starting point to investigate the mechanisms that connect origin-country resources with migrant youth's school transitions in the country of residence. This scholarship explores how educational institutions reproduce social privilege and inequalities by rewarding students whose cultural capital aligns with schools' standards and values, while disadvantaging students who do not possess such capital (Lareau 2011). While cultural capital exists in three forms – institutional, objectified, and embodied (Bourdieu 1986) – much of this literature focuses on the role of embodied cultural capital in young people's schooling. Embodied cultural capital – which refers to 'long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body' (ibid: 47) – is particularly useful to understand how students negotiate the process of schooling because it captures the 'micro-interactional processes whereby individuals' strategic use of knowledge, skills and competence comes into contact with institutionalized standards of evaluation' (Lareau and Weininger 2003: 569). Furthermore, while institutionalised cultural capital (e.g., educational credentials) and objectified cultural capital (e.g., cultural goods and materials) are often not transnationally mobile, embodied cultural capital is – in the minds and bodies of migrants. As such, it provides an insightful window into how migrant youth's behaviours, attitudes,

and dispositions from the country of origin shape their school transitions in the country of residence.

While most studies of cultural capital and education have focused on non-migrant youth, some research explores embodied resources in migrant youth's schooling. Some of these studies focus on how parents transmit cultural capital from the country of origin to their children born in the country of residence. Coe and Shani (2015) show that Ghanaian migrants' parenting strategies in the United States draw on cultural capital from Ghana, which instils behaviours and attitudes in their children that are valued by American teachers. Carnicer (2017) analyses how Turkish migrant parents' high expectations and social mobility 'projects' contribute to their sons' successful educational pathways in Germany. Other research focuses specifically on the school transitions of newly arrived young people who have migrated themselves, showing how they accumulate cultural capital in the country of residence (Devine 2009; Hopkins et al. 2013) or draw on their ongoing transnational attachments and imaginaries in the classroom (Lightman 2015; Jaffe-Walter and Lee 2018). Some recent studies analyse how migrant youth use pre-migration cultural capital (Berggren et al. 2020; Emery et al. 2020). However, they do not explore migrant youth's lives prior to migration and *how* they accumulate cultural capital in their countries of origin. For instance, Emery et al. (2020) identify that embodied cultural capital – including a sense of entitlement to education and strategic knowledge – helps newly arrived students successfully navigate the Belgian school system; however, they do not explore *how* these students gain such capital prior to migration. Similarly, Jaffe-Walter and Lee (2018) focus on the ways in which newly arrived students' ongoing transnational attachments and identities are valued within the classroom, yet their pre-migration experiences remain invisible. Embodied cultural capital thus provides a way of exploring how migrant youth draw on mobile resources from the country of origin for their education in the country of residence. But differently to how it has been used in the literature thus far, I trace migrant youth's embodied cultural capital from its development in the country of origin to its use in the country of residence.

6.2.3 Transnational youth mobility

Enriching our understanding of how migrant youth navigate their school transitions can thus benefit from an approach that considers their lives here and there. A growing body of research considers migrant youth's lives transnationally, exploring the impact of experiences in both the countries of origin and residence and how the social environments, relationships, and resources from one context affect life in the other. Fürstenau (2005) shows through interviews with Portuguese-background youth in Germany how they obtain valuable resources like multilingualism and employment opportunities through their mobility between the countries of origin and residence. Carnicer and Fürstenau (2021) use a multi-sited ethnographic approach to reconstruct the opportunities afforded and constraints imposed by

different socioeconomic positions in Brazil on the education of young Brazilian migrants in Germany.

In this paper, I employ a mobility lens to study migrant youth's school transitions between the countries of origin and residence. I use the concept of 'youth mobility trajectories' (Mazzucato 2015; van Geel and Mazzucato 2018), which encompasses all geographic moves in time and space that a young person makes, both nationally and internationally, and their concurrent family constellations. Analysing mobility trajectories thus brings young people's lives in the country of origin into view, enabling researchers to analyse the experiences, relationships, and resources they gain before migrating to the country of residence. Emerging research on mobility trajectories is revealing the diverse mobility patterns of migrant youth and the significant effects mobility has on their lives. Recent studies have shown that, through their mobility trajectories, migrant youth build educational resilience (van Geel and Mazzucato 2020), gain social capital from peer relationships (see Chapter 7), shape changing relationships to the country of origin (see Chapter 5), engage in meaningful development activities (Akom Ankobrey et al. 2021), and experience personal development (Anschütz and Mazzucato 2022). The mobility lens thus enables me to study the *mechanisms* through which migrant youth gain embodied cultural capital prior to migration in the country of origin and translate and use it after migration in the country of residence. That is, it illuminates these processes over space and time.

6.3 Data and methods

This paper focuses on young Ghanaians living in Hamburg, Germany, and is one of the five projects of the Mobility Trajectories of Young Lives (MO-TRAYL) project about how transnational youth mobility affects the lives of young people of Ghanaian-background in Europe and Ghana (Mazzucato 2015). In this paper, I focus on seven young people (two female and five male) who moved from Ghana to Hamburg, where they entered the secondary education system between the ages of 14 and 17. While all seven were newly arrived migrant students, not all were new to Germany; one participant was born in Hamburg but spent most of her childhood in Ghana before returning to Hamburg aged 15. I selected these seven cases because I was able to collect detailed data on their backgrounds and education in both Ghana and Hamburg. All seven had attended prestigious schools in Ghana and were high-achieving students in both countries. This was the norm among my nine participants who had lived for several years in Ghana and among others I met in Hamburg with similar mobility trajectories. Teachers and city education officials I interviewed in Hamburg also perceived newly arrived Ghanaian students as generally arriving with high levels of education and academic capabilities. Therefore, while I cannot claim my sample is representative of newly arrived Ghanaian students in Hamburg, my participants are by no means anomalies.

I conducted multi-sited ethnographic fieldwork in Hamburg (12 months) and Ghana (2 months) in 2018 and 2019. In Hamburg, I volunteered in reception classes; observed participants at school; and interviewed participants' teachers. Outside of school, I spent time with participants in their homes, churches, and recreational spaces. I accompanied two of the seven participants featured in this paper on trips to Ghana and visited three participants' former schools there. These trips deepened my understanding of participants' educational experiences and family backgrounds in Ghana beyond what I could learn in Hamburg. Further, I conducted mobility trajectory mapping with all seven participants and concentric circle network mapping with all but one. Mobility trajectory mapping gathers detailed information on participants' mobility throughout their lives, including their places of residence, caregivers, and schools in the countries of origin and residence (Mazzucato et al. forthcoming). Concentric circle network mapping collects data on participants' transnational networks, including significant people in their extended family networks in the countries of origin and residence and elsewhere around the world.

I analysed my data iteratively during and after fieldwork. In the field, regular re-readings of my fieldnotes and transcripts spurred refinements of interview and observation topics. Following fieldwork, I analysed my data to identify themes related to embodied cultural capital and school transitions. These themes were then refined through back-and-forth engagement with relevant literatures during the writing process.

6.4 The transnational context

The Ghanaian school system continues to be based on the British colonial curriculum (Pinto 2009) and contains a mix of public and private schools, whose prestige and quality vary depending on the stage of schooling. The highest-quality Junior High Schools (JHS) tend to be fee-paying private or international schools, largely attended by students from middle- and upper-class backgrounds. The highest-quality Senior High Schools (SHS), however, are a select group of public schools, entry to which is decided through competitive exams. As such, the student bodies at top SHS tend to be more socioeconomically diverse. Ghanaian schools, especially boarding schools, are known for their strict discipline, competitive practices, and arduous study routines that aim to instil the importance of formal education and culturally important values like respect, hard work, and perseverance (Coe and Shani 2015; Abotsi 2020).

Education in Germany is administered at the state (*Länder*) level and is characterised by its early tracking of students into different secondary school types, which is blamed for perpetuating disadvantage among migration-background youth (Auernheimer 2005; Crul et al. 2012). In Hamburg, students enter either a *Stadtteilschule* or a *Gymnasium* in the fifth grade, based on teacher recommendation and parental choice. *Stadtteilschulen* are

neighbourhood high schools that offer transfer to the vocational track after the ninth or tenth grade, or continuation onto an academic track leading to the university-entrance qualification, the *Abitur*. *Gymnasien* are academically oriented schools that mainly prepare students for university. The students at *Stadtteilschulen* are generally more culturally and socioeconomically diverse than those attending *Gymnasien* (Auernheimer 2005; BSB 2019). Newly arrived students who do not speak German attend reception classes (*Internationale Vorbereitungsklasse*, or IVK) within mainstream secondary schools – usually *Stadtteilschulen.* Reception classes focus on teaching students German, but also include subjects such as Mathematics, English, and Social Sciences (Fürstenau 2017; Plöger and Barakos 2021). While most students attend IVK for one year, some remain in advanced IVK classes to complete the standard ninth- and tenth-grade examinations.

The seven young people featured in this paper had all attended prestigious schools in Ghana, usually a fee-paying primary school and JHS, followed by a highly rated public SHS. Many had attended boarding schools in Accra, Cape Coast, or Kumasi – places known for their high-quality educational institutions. They also belong to extended family networks rich in diverse resources, including economic capital, social status, and high levels of education (Budniok and Noll 2018). Not all families possessed all these resources – some participants' caregivers were not economically prosperous but were highly educated or held respected positions in the community, while others enjoyed various forms of privilege. Most of their parents had completed high school and some had attended university in Ghana, making them relatively highly educated within the Ghanaian context (Barro and Lee 2013),[48] while their extended family networks included engineers, civil servants, nurses, teachers, and local chiefs.

Hamburg is a highly diverse city home to Germany's largest Ghanaian community (Nieswand 2008; Mörath 2015). More than half of Hamburg's youth population was born outside Germany or to foreign-born parents (Statistikamt Nord 2021). Participants' families would, in Hamburg, all be considered working class based on their parents' income and occupational status. Three of the seven lived in single-parent households; three had at least one unemployed parent; and employed parents usually held low-wage jobs as cooks or cleaners, while two were undertaking vocational training for management positions in the service industry. At the time of fieldwork, all seven young Ghanaians in this study were attending or had attended IVK classes in Hamburg. Some transitioned to mainstream classes within a year, while others stayed in IVK classes to complete the standard ninth- or tenth-grade exams. They had all attended *Stadtteilschulen*, while the two female participants

[48] Most of my participants' parents would have attended secondary school and university in Ghana between 1990 and 2000. In this period, the proportion of the Ghanaian population 15 years and older that had completed secondary school ranged from 11 to 15 per cent. The proportion with any tertiary education ranged from 2 to 3.4 percent (Barro and Lee 2013).

subsequently or concurrently attended *Gymnasien*. All participants were thriving at school in Hamburg. This does not mean they faced no obstacles: many found learning German difficult and felt the strain of a new curriculum, while some experienced social isolation or unfair treatment by the odd teacher. But despite these challenges, they experienced overall successful transitions. By this, I mean that they described their school transitions in largely positive terms and obtained objectively good outcomes, often at the top of their cohorts. My own observations in participants' classes and my interactions with their teachers confirmed this interpretation. For all seven, the highest secondary school qualification, the *Abitur*, was either a foregone conclusion or remained a viable option. By the end of fieldwork, two had completed the *Abitur*; four were in the academic upper-secondary track (*Oberstufe*) which leads to the *Abitur*; and the teacher of the seventh, who was preparing for the ninth-grade exams, told me she was sure he 'will get the *Abitur* and go to university.'

6.5 Transnational cultural capital in young Ghanaians' school transitions

My data analysis revealed four types of embodied cultural capital that these young Ghanaians used to navigate their school transitions from Ghana to Hamburg: confidence, discipline, respect, and adaptability. Below, I analyse how these types of embodied cultural capital operate transnationally through these young Ghanaians' mobility trajectories. That is, I show how they accumulated this capital in Ghana and then translated and used this capital in their school transitions in Hamburg.

6.5.1 Confidence

> Kwaku (21) was raised in Ghana by his grandmother, during which time he attended 'one of the best' international schools in his hometown in the Eastern Region. He graduated from Junior High School with excellent grades and was admitted to one of Ghana's most prestigious Senior High Schools, a boys' boarding school in Kumasi whose manicured hedges and spacious compound I observed during my own visit there, and whose alumni include prominent Ghanaian academics, businesspeople, athletes, and politicians. Following his grandmother's death, Kwaku spent the school holidays with his aunt, whose husband was a successful mechanic.
>
> Before moving to Hamburg aged 17 to join his mother and siblings, Kwaku's mother told him that he would not achieve as highly as his German classmates. Kwaku confidently brushed off her warning. 'I was like, "No, I'm gonna pass them" and stuff.' Shortly after I met him four years after his migration, Kwaku obtained his *Abitur* and started an engineering degree, inspired by his uncle in Ghana. He told me that the transition between the Ghanaian and Hamburg school

> systems 'all depends on who you were in Ghana, […] on how you see yourself and what you want to achieve. […] If I could succeed there, I can succeed here.'

The young Ghanaians in this study all possessed enormous confidence in their academic abilities. This embodied cultural capital, which permeated their self-image and interactions with others, accompanied them throughout their mobility trajectories: in their family lives and school experiences in Ghana and in their school transitions in Hamburg. Confidence not only helped them get off to a positive start in Hamburg, as in Kwaku's case; it also helped them overcome obstacles they encountered along the way. Discussing the challenges of learning German in his first year of schooling in Hamburg, Kingsley (16) said, 'I know I am not unintelligent, I know I can do it, it's just a question of the language' – a sentiment echoed by several participants and their teachers. Rather than perceive challenges like learning German as reflections of their intelligence or abilities, participants framed them as external obstacles, which they believed themselves capable of overcoming thanks to the characteristics they possessed as members of resource-rich extended family networks and based on their own academic achievements in Ghana.

Ella (19), who in Hamburg recycled drinks containers from her mother's cleaning job to supplement family income, drew confidence from her prestigious extended family in Ghana, who were a 'big name' in her hometown. Her family's academic achievements served to reinforce Ella's own school successes and bolster her confidence. She recounted proudly how one of her favourite uncles, a university-educated high-school teacher, had told her upon seeing her final JHS exam results in Ghana, 'You have my head.' Like many participants, Ella's belonging to an accomplished extended family in Ghana built her confidence as being destined to 'follow in [her uncle's] footsteps,' wherever she lived.

The confidence of Nana, from the opening vignette, drew from his academic record in Ghana. Nana described himself as always having been 'very smart', usually ranked near the top of the class at the private international school he attended in his hometown near the capital, Accra. Fourteen months into Nana's schooling in Hamburg, he was confident about his prospects in the upcoming ninth-grade examinations (the ESA in their German acronym), which would determine whether he could transfer to a mainstream class and continue his secondary education. 'I know some students who have *schafft* ['achieved' in German] the ESA, so I'm like, "Okay, I can do it, if I just put in some effort." So far, I feel confident.' The effort that contributes to Nana's confidence constitutes the second type of embodied cultural capital analysed here: discipline.

6.5.2 Discipline

> Austin (17) grew up in Kumasi, Ghana's second-largest city, with his aunt. They made weekly visits to her husband, who worked in the Ashanti royal palace. When

> Austin was 13, they moved into a large 8-room house built by a relative living in France. Austin's mother, who had lived in Germany since he was 5 years old, sent money each semester for Austin to attend private schools in Ghana that 'only the rich people' attend. At one of his schools, which I visited in Ghana, painted slogans on the walls reminded students that 'Education is Worth More than Silver and Gold' and 'Excellence is Always a Choice.'
>
> When Austin was 14, he moved to Hamburg, where he lived with his mother, stepfather, and two younger siblings in a low-income neighbourhood and attended the local *Stadtteilschule*. Austin's IVK teacher told me that, 'From the beginning, he worked extremely hard. He was the student that "got it" and sat every afternoon to learn his vocab list.' After transitioning out of the IVK, the teacher followed his progress, noting that he 'can keep up with the tenth grade, but that's a result of his work ethic.' Austin explained his disciplined approach thus: 'The people who have "made it" are also human, so how did they do it? Through inspiration, through effort. Yeah, that's why I believe I can make it. But only when I work hard.'

Discipline is a key part of the embodied cultural capital that moves with young Ghanaians throughout their mobility trajectories. I use 'discipline' to refer to young people's hard work and perseverance, internalised from the strict rules, high standards, and clear hierarchies of their school and family environments in Ghana. Participants commonly described studying long hours and voluntarily taking on additional homework assignments for extra credit in Hamburg. They perceived this type of discipline as distinctly Ghanaian and uncommon yet valued in Hamburg schools, which my observations and teacher interviews confirmed.

Discipline is gained through the schooling culture in Ghana that promotes relentless studying and uses physical punishment. As a headmaster in Ghana told me matter-of-factly, 'Here, we beat children with the cane. There [in Europe], you cannot do it.' Various participants attributed their discipline to their schooling in Ghana. While several school staff in Ghana told me about young people being sent back to Ghana from abroad for lack of discipline, the young Ghanaians in my study took their discipline with them to Germany as a form of embodied cultural capital. I observed Kingsley's (16) discipline regularly: he often asked me to help him study at the public library on weekends; I even ran into him there unexpectedly. He recounted how the strict school standards in Ghana, including being caned for failing a test or arriving late, had shaped the discipline he employed during his school transition in Hamburg:

> Everything was about punishment […] I found it to be very important because it has now trained me to be someone very different. […] Anytime I have a presentation, I normally wake up earlier, maybe let's say, sometimes at 3,

> sometimes at 3:30, sometimes at 4, to learn [study] before I do anything. So it's the way I prepare […] that make[s] me able to do certain things extraordinary.

Discipline is also transmitted through young peoples' extended family networks. Isaac (21), who attended prestigious schools in Ghana until his move to Germany at age 16, credited his discipline to the influence of various educated and successful relatives. 'I got this mindset from my father,' who worked in politics and business, 'because he's like, "Wherever you are, you have to make it".' This influence also came from other relatives he lived with in Ghana, including his university-educated grandmother, who worked as an office manager, and studious and competitive cousins. Being surrounded by relatives who took education seriously and demonstrated hard work instilled this same discipline in the young Ghanaians in my study, who then drew on this capital in their school transitions. Like discipline, another type of embodied cultural capital formed part of a distinctly Ghanaian demeanour uncommon in Hamburg schools but highly valued by their German teachers: respect.

6.5.3 Respect

> Ahoufe (20) grew up between several households within her extended family and subsequently attended numerous schools in Ghana, including a well-known and highly reputed girls' school. Her extended family included a school headmaster, a mechanical engineer, and academically successful cousins who 'really 113nspire[e] me a lot.' Ahoufe adored school in Ghana. She often told me stories about boarding-school pranks with friends and the classroom antics of her favourite teachers. But this playfulness existed alongside 'beatings, marching, and punishment' that Ahoufe accepted as 'all part of the fun' of school in Ghana.
>
> Aged 16, Ahoufe migrated to Germany, where her parents work as a cook and cleaner and the family share an apartment in Hamburg's east, where the majority of youth have a migration background and mean incomes are below the city's average. At school in Hamburg, Ahoufe was struck by what she saw as students' disrespectful interactions with teachers. Teachers in Ghana, she said, 'have a limit for us. You can talk with them, laugh with them, but you can't cross that limit. And here it's like, most of the teachers and the students, I don't even see the difference because the students tell the teacher to shut up or something, then I'll be like, "You can't do this in Ghana." […] The relationship between the students and the teachers [in Hamburg], I see it to be kind of disrespecting, because of how I was being brought up in Ghana.'

Respect emerged repeatedly in my observations and interactions with young Ghanaians and their teachers in Hamburg, and it was enacted in two main aspects of their school transitions. First, they showed respect for their teachers. They accepted teachers' authority, never talked

back, and were polite and attentive. This was not the norm in student-teacher relationships in Hamburg, which were often characterised, both in teachers' commentaries and my own observations, by (sometimes mutual) disrespect. As such, my participants' respectful demeanour stood out and was highly appreciated by teachers. All the participants' teachers I spoke to enjoyed having these students in their classes and had developed warm feelings towards them. One of Ella's first IVK teachers in Hamburg remembered Ella as one of her best students ever, describing her as intelligent, sweet, and hardworking. Such positive relationships with teachers had been a consistent part of Ella's schooling experience throughout her mobility trajectory: she told me that, in Ghana, 'I was very good, very respectful to my teachers, and they always liked me.' This was confirmed when I accompanied Ella on a visit to one of her former schools in Ghana in 2019, where her former teachers showered her with praise for her academic achievements and good behaviour.

Second, young people showed respect for the learning environment. I observed my participants remind other students to remove their hat when entering class and turn down music on their phones, and counter classmates' cheers at the announcement of school-free days by exclaiming, 'No, school is good!' An IVK teacher told me how Nana briefly attended advanced English classes because of his strong knowledge of the language but found the attitude of the older students 'disrespectful' – a story Nana confirmed. In his first months of school in Hamburg, teachers often remarked on Nana's neat clothing as a marker of his respect for education, calling him 'a good college boy' and 'always dressed for Eton' (the famous elite boys' school in England). Nana's class teacher credited his respectful demeanour to his family's influence, noting that he was 'totally respectful' of his mother during parent-teacher meetings.

Teachers in Hamburg appreciated the ease of interactions with their Ghanaian students and the respect shown for their position and knowledge. Similarly, they perceived young Ghanaians' respect for the learning environment as a good influence on other students. However, young Ghanaians did not only show respect for the learning environment by transplanting their 'Ghanaian' demeanour into their new educational context; they also adapted to its specific requirements and standards.

6.5.4 Adaptability

> Kingsley's (16) main caregiver in Ghana was his grandmother. While she had limited financial resources, she was a respected local teacher and instilled in Kingsley the value of education. 'She always brought me up in a way and manner that I would be thirsty for success based on my background,' he told me. Members of his extended family network provided other resources. His aunt, a nurse, gave Kingsley her old university textbooks and paid for his private-school fees for a few

years. His JHS report card was full of top grades, which brought him wide social recognition. 'My name is still in the school,' he beamed.

Kingsley moved to Germany aged 15, where he lived with his unemployed mother and six German-born siblings. About six months into his schooling in Hamburg, I asked him how it differed to school in Ghana:

> Kingsley: In Ghana it doesn't concern how much you talk in class, you just have to write your examination very good and pass. But in Germany, I heard even if you are very intelligent […] you [can] fail your examination because you don't raise your hand so much in class. […] So I also try so much to raise my hand so many times in class. […]
>
> Laura: Has it become easier for you to do it?
>
> Kingsley: Yeah, [now] I just find my hand to be in the air, just like that [laughs].

His IVK teacher confirmed how quickly and easily Kingsley adapted to her class: 'Often [newly arrived migrant] students here are very undisciplined because they think there are no rules. I didn't have that at all with Kingsley.'

While participants brought with them typically 'Ghanaian' types of embodied cultural capital – such as confidence, discipline, and respect – they also actively adapted to the local pedagogical style in Hamburg. Almost all participants depicted Ghanaian classrooms as teacher-centred, with passive participation from students and an emphasis on rote learning and theoretical knowledge. By contrast, they perceived Hamburg classrooms as student-centred and focused on applied and practical learning. Many also pointed out, like Kingsley in the vignette above, that participation was assessed in Hamburg, meaning that their level of activity in class contributed to their results. As such, in order to succeed in this new environment, they had to adapt to its different standards.

Various participants described their adaptations to the pedagogical environments of their Hamburg classrooms as conscious and quick. Kwaku told me that he 'integrated very fast' by 'studying the behaviour' of his German schoolmates and adapting his own behaviour accordingly. As he put it: 'When you go to Rome, you do what the Romans do.' Participants' teachers also depicted young Ghanaians' adaptability in positive terms. An IVK teacher of both Nana and Austin described them as having 'zero problems' adapting to her classroom. Austin was 'extremely cautious' when he arrived, 'starting every sentence with "Yes,

ma'am" or "No, ma'am".' But 'after a few weeks, he got it out of his system' and actively participated in her class.

These young Ghanaians framed this seemingly easy adaptation to the different pedagogical norms encountered throughout their mobility trajectories as driven by their motivation or 'thirs[t] for success,' in Kingsley's words. Isaac (21) explained to me that adaptation was necessary and logical because, while the approach to education in each context differed, his underlying motivation did not. 'The thing is, when you set a target, […] then there's nothing that will actually swerve your target, because you are focused on it. I think when you are focused and determined, your personal attitude toward education won't change, no matter where you go.' While young people's target of being educated did not change throughout their mobility trajectory, they pursued this goal in ways that adapted to their new context to best ensure a successful school transition between Ghana and Hamburg.

6.6 Discussion and conclusion

In this paper, I have studied the school transitions of seven young people who migrated from Ghana to Hamburg, Germany, as teenagers. Despite their low socioeconomic status in Hamburg, all seven experienced successful school transitions, as indicated by their own perceptions, performance, and teacher evaluations. What explains this outcome? Through an analysis of their mobility trajectories, I have shown how migrant youth's embodied cultural capital operates transnationally: they accumulate cultural capital – including confidence, discipline, respect, and adaptability – through their educational environments and extended family networks in the country of origin and then translate and use this capital in their school transitions in the country of residence.

In contrast to existing research on migrant youth's school transitions, I show that, far from arriving as 'blank slates', newly arrived migrant youth possess embodied cultural capital that moves with them. While migrant youth research has shown that family and school factors in the country of residence are important (Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Haller et al. 2011), a mobility lens reveals that migrant youth's lives before migration also matter for their school transitions. In Ghana, these young people had access to quality education and resource-rich extended family networks. All seven attended good schools in Ghana, which immersed them in a competitive, disciplined, and high-achieving environment where education was greatly valued. Their extended family networks included not only their parents, many of whom were well educated by Ghanaian standards, but also uncles, aunts, grandparents, and cousins, who held esteemed professional positions, had significant financial resources, and modelled important values. Within these family and school contexts in Ghana, these seven migrant youth gained embodied cultural capital in the form of confidence, discipline, respect, and adaptability.

The analysis also revealed migrant youth's agency in translating and using their embodied cultural capital in their school transitions. This includes harnessing their discipline in the face of obstacles, maintaining their confidence when facing the unknown, and nurturing positive relationships through their respect for teachers and the school environment. But young people's agency is most visible in their adaptability. The young Ghanaians in this study consciously appraised what was required to succeed in their Hamburg classrooms, retaining and adapting elements of their embodied cultural capital for maximum academic benefit. The reviewed literatures have largely positioned young people as beneficiaries of their parents' capital (Lareau 2011; Ichou 2014; Feliciano and Lanuza 2017). Some recent research on migrant youth's school transitions has shown how young people themselves accumulate and use cultural capital, but only within the country of residence (Devine 2009; Berggren et al. 2020; Emery et al. 2020). Considering young people's mobility trajectories helps identify resources gained through their lives *there*, enabling research to investigate how young people agentically use or adapt such resources *here*. As such, a mobility lens reveals new aspects of migrant youth's agency as active brokers of their own transnational cultural capital.

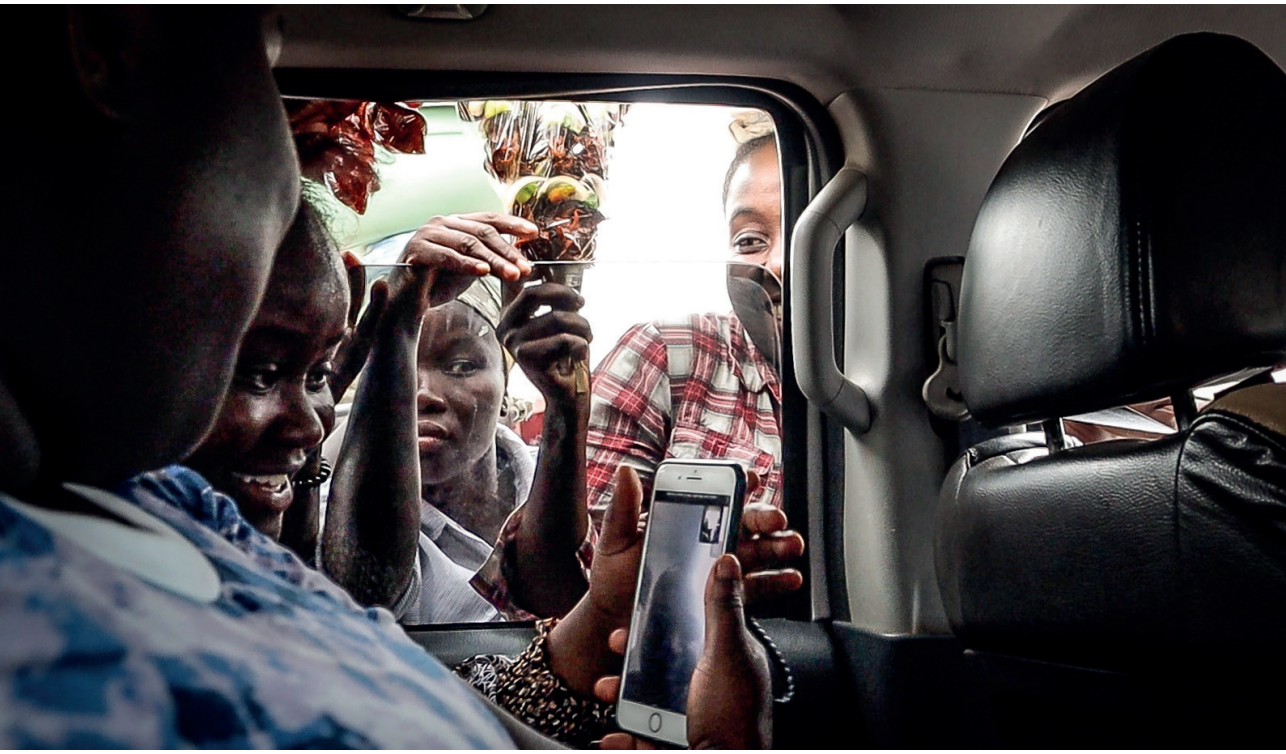
The young people in this study navigated not only different educational contexts but also different status positions. In Ghana, they all experienced a certain privilege and high status, including attending prestigious schools and belonging to resource-rich extended family networks. In Germany, by contrast, they all occupied lower socioeconomic positions, living in low-income neighbourhoods and in partially employed or low-wage households. Transnational migration research has long acknowledged that migrants often hold different social statuses in their countries of origin and residence (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004; Nieswand 2011). This is also true for Ghanaian migrants, who often occupy higher social-class positions in Ghana than in the countries they migrate to (Anarfi et al. 2003; Mazzucato et al. 2008; Noll 2020). A recent focus on social class in transnational migration research is revealing the fluidity, instability, and interaction of migrants' different social-class positions in their countries of origin and residence (Coe and Pauli 2020). Yet most research has focused on the social-class positions of adults, often in relation to their economic and employment status in different contexts. The ability of the young Ghanaians in this study to translate and use embodied cultural capital between contexts in which they are differently positioned suggests that the dynamics of social class in transnational education processes for migrant youth warrant further investigation.

Finally, focusing on migrant youth's school transitions through a mobility lens raises other questions that future research should address. First, it remains to be seen whether these young Ghanaians' embodied cultural capital is valued in other contexts they encounter as their trajectories continue, including higher education and the workforce. Second, while the successful school transitions of these seven participants were not anomalies in my research nor the Ghanaian community in Hamburg, I cannot say to what extent they are representative

of Ghanaian and other migrant youth in Hamburg or elsewhere. This paper shows how certain types of embodied cultural capital are successfully activated in a particular reception context. Future research should further investigate what combinations of embodied cultural capital and reception contexts produce such 'chemical reactions' that enable positive school transitions for diverse newly arrived migrant youth in various educational environments – an issue relevant to researchers, policymakers, education practitioners, and students themselves.

Chapter 7.

Transnational peer relationships as social capital: mobile migrant youth between Ghana and Germany



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7.1 Introduction

More than one fifth of youth in OECD countries now have a migration background (OECD 2015: 231). In some major European cities, like Hamburg, the majority of youth have a migration background (Statistikamt Nord 2018). Many migrant youth engage in various patterns of mobility between countries, through which they establish and maintain transnational networks, including with peers. Yet youth mobility has long been over-simplified, obscuring mechanisms that enable transnational peer relationships to thrive and support migrant youth. Traditional conceptions of migrant youth as having migrated themselves ('first generation') or having parents who migrated ('second generation') conceal their highly diverse mobility trajectories and the possibilities that these trajectories offer for building, maintaining, and benefitting from transnational peer relationships. Youth studies (Collins and Laursen 2004; Holland et al. 2007; Ryan 2000) have identified young people's peer relationships as a source of support, influence and, more generally, social capital. However, conceiving of youth – including migrant youth – as largely sedentary, they have focused almost exclusively on peers in young people's local environments. By contrast, transnational migration research (Glick Schiller et al. 1992; Madianou and Miller 2011; Baldassar and Merla 2014) has long acknowledged the durability and importance of relationships across borders. But this field has predominantly conceived of youth as immobile and in relationship only to adults (usually parents and caregivers), thereby excluding both migrant youth's own mobility and peer relationships from research on transnational networks.

There is, however, increasing consensus that transnational youth mobility is 'at the heart of contemporary social and political concerns' (Cheung Judge et al. 2020: 1), and new research agendas seek to adequately investigate increasingly mobile young lives (ibid.; Mazzucato 2015; Robertson et al. 2018). This paper brings youth studies and transnational migration research into dialogue to address the above-mentioned gaps by employing a mobility lens, which involves putting young people's mobility trajectories – their geographic moves in time and space and the resulting family constellations – at the centre of the research design (Mazzucato 2015). Through an investigation of mobility trajectories, we show that migrant youth gain social capital from their transnational peer relationships. 'Migrant youth' are defined as young people aged 15-25 who either migrated internationally themselves or whose parents did, and 'transnational peer relationships' as relationships with same-generation relatives, friends and romantic partners that are maintained transnationally, that is, between two or more countries. While peer relationships can exist between young people in the same location who are nevertheless involved in 'transnational social fields' (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004), these essentially local relationships are not our focus. Rather, we argue for an expansion of the conception of peer relationships to include those built and maintained through transnational mobility in order to generate a more comprehensive understanding of

migrant youth's support systems and the valuable social capital that transnational peer relationships provide.

The paper draws on 14 months of ethnographic, multi-sited fieldwork in Germany and Ghana with 20 young people of Ghanaian background. In the following section, we review the relevant literature on peer relationships, social capital, and youth mobility. We then describe our methods and sample, before presenting our data and analysis of two types of social capital gained through transnational peer relationships. The conclusion addresses implications for research on transnational migrant youth.

7.2 Transnational peer relationships and social capital through a mobility lens

Youth studies and related fields have established the importance of peer relationships for young people. In adolescence, peers become increasingly influential, rivalling parents as the main providers of support (Collins and Laursen 2004). Peer relationships are positive influences during periods of change (Smith and Skrbiš 2016), educational transitions (Keay et al. 2015), and for academic attainment (Studsrød and Bru 2011). They also support adolescents' social and academic development (Pernice-Duca 2010; Wentzel et al. 2010; Mariano et al. 2011).

Resources provided through young people's peer relationships are commonly conceptualised as social capital. Original definitions of social capital (Bourdieu 1986; Coleman 1988; Putnam 1995) have been critiqued for being adult-centric, by presuming that young people passively gain social capital from their parents (Morrow 1999; Abada and Tenkorang 2009). Youth studies research, much of it published in this journal, has shown that young people also generate social capital through their own networks, including peers (Holland et al. 2007; Chesters and Smith 2015). While social capital is a somewhat-elusive concept, covering aspects as varied as 'sociability, social networks, social support, trust, reciprocity, and community and civic engagement' (Morrow 1999: 744), it remains useful for capturing the ways in which young people actively build, invest in, and benefit from social relationships. We employ Holland, Reynolds and Weller's definition of social capital as 'encompass[ing] the values that people hold and the resources that they can access' through social relationships (2007: 98).

Young people's social capital has generally been studied as 'embedded spatially, culturally and temporally in the locality where they reside' (Raffo and Reeves 2000: 154). As such, the literature on peer-generated social capital focuses almost exclusively on local peers. Even studies that include migrant youth tend to overlook resources accessed through their mobility and transnational peers (Holland et al. 2007; Lee and Lam 2016; Ryan et al. 2019). For example, Holland, Reynolds and Weller's (2007) discussion of the role of diasporic and

transnational networks in Caribbean youth's social capital in the United Kingdom focuses largely on the role of local family networks and 'black neighbourhoods', without discussing young people's own transnational mobility or peer relationships. Ryan et al. (2019) likewise focus on migrant youth who receive peer support, but only from local peers in Britain.

Transnational migration research, however, has long acknowledged the importance of relationships beyond the nation-state (Glick Schiller et al. 1992). Transnational family studies have investigated how migrant families employ various practices to 'do family' across distance (Mazzucato 2013; Baldassar and Merla 2014). Migrant parents provide financial and material support by sending remittances to their families back home, primarily for their children's education (Parreñas 2005; Dreby 2007; Schmalzbauer 2008). Information and communications technologies (ICTs) enable migrant parents to emotionally support their children, both through direct conversation in phone calls and text messages, and through 'co-presence', whereby families spend time together online using social media and video calls (Madianou and Miller 2011; Baldassar 2016). Migrant parents' intermittent visits back home also sustain family relationships and ensure the flow of resources (Fresnoza-Flot 2009; Haagsman and Mazzucato 2014). Yet these studies mostly conceive of the resources migrant youth receive from transnational networks as provided by adults (particularly parents and caregivers), not peers. Furthermore, the youth in transnational family studies are usually those 'left behind' when their parents migrate (Dreby 2007; Schmalzbauer 2008), not transnationally mobile youth.

We address these gaps in the literature by studying how peer-generated social capital works in a transnational context. We do so by analysing two main forms of young people's social capital found in the youth studies and transnational migration literatures, respectively. The first is educational motivation, which peers provide through two mechanisms: emotional support and role modelling. Peers are important sources of emotional support for young people (Mariano et al. 2011; Ryan et al. 2019), including migrant youth (Hollands et al. 2007; Pernice-Duca 2010). Beyond helping them navigate the changes and challenges of adolescence, emotional support also provides educational motivation to young people (Ryan et al. 2019; Wentzel et al. 2010; Studsrød and Bru 2011). Studies have also documented peers' behaviours and values 'rubbing off' on young people, which we refer to as 'role modelling', specifically in relation to their educational engagement and performance. Studies have shown that young people adopt and are motivated by the academic behaviours and values of their peers, especially classmates (Ryan 2000; Wentzel et al. 2010; Ryan et al. 2019). These mechanisms also affect the educational outcomes of migrant youth (Lee and Lam 2016). We investigate three mechanisms through which migrant youth gain educational motivation from transnational peer relationships, including the two discussed here and a third that emerged in our data: competition.

The second form of peer-generated social capital, which relies explicitly on a transnational context, is dual frames of reference. Early theorisations showed how adult migrants' direct experience of their countries of origin and residence enabled them to compare various aspects of life between both contexts (Vertovec 2009). Recently, researchers have found that second-generation migrant youth gain dual frames of reference through parental transmission of family histories and cultural values from the country of origin (Franceschelli et al. 2017), especially to support educational attainment and aspirations (Fernández-Kelly 2008). Orupabo, Drange and Abrahamsen (2020) describe how dual frames of reference facilitate the educational attainment of migrant youth, because comparing local educational opportunities with those in their (parents') poorer country of origin makes them optimistic. Few researchers have looked beyond parental transmission to explore how migrant youth create dual frames of reference through their own mobility (Louie 2006; van Geel and Mazzucato 2020) and transnational networks (Haikkola 2011). While our study focuses on two countries, Germany and Ghana, we recognise that migrant youth's transnational networks often extend beyond the countries of origin and residence (ibid.; van Liempt 2011). As such, we refer to this type of social capital as 'transnational frames of reference' and analyse three ways in which migrant youth gain this capital through their transnational peer relationships, which we inductively found in our data: by comparing educational environments, job prospects, and socio-political contexts between Ghana and Germany.

This overlooking of migrant youth's own transnational relationships and the social capital they provide stems from an over-simplification of mobility across the social sciences. Categorisations such as 'first-' and 'second-generation' reduce migrant youth's mobility to a single migration event – either their own or their parents', respectively (Mazzucato 2015). Studies of migrant youth tend to ignore their ongoing mobility, either by using 'mobility' as a synonym for 'migration background' or by excluding the possibility that relationships maintained and resources accessed through transnational mobility can affect migrant youth's lives in the country of residence (e.g., Berggren et al. 2020). Further, while some studies argue that maintaining affinities with both countries of origin and residence leads to better outcomes for migrant youth, they rarely explore ongoing ties and mobility to the country of origin, instead focusing on the role of local ethnic communities (e.g., Holland et al. 2007; Abada and Tenkorang 2009). Therefore, transnational peer relationships have largely escaped the purview of this research, leaving rich sources of social capital unexplored.

Inspired by the 'mobilities turn', which encouraged social scientists to explore the role of mobility in wide-ranging phenomena (Sheller and Urry 2006), some emerging literatures do acknowledge the complexity, diversity, and impact of mobility experiences. Transnational migration studies on mobility trajectories explore migrants' ongoing movements and transnational activities beyond a single migration event (Schapendonk and Steel 2014). Relatedly, second-generation returns literature shows that migrant youth move between their

(parents') countries of origin and residence throughout their lives, including for permanent relocation (Wessendorf 2007; King and Christou 2011). Furthermore, an emerging research agenda around transnational youth mobility is illuminating how a mobility lens can enrich our understanding of previously obscure aspects of migrant youth's lives, including in transnational migration studies (Mazzucato 2015), youth studies (Robertson et al. 2018), and education sciences (Fürstenau 2005).

We operationalise a mobility lens through *youth mobility trajectories*, which refer to young people's geographic moves in time and space and the resulting family constellations, as well as what transpires during mobility (Mazzucato 2015). Researchers have begun to explore migrant youth's transnational mobility trajectories and networks (Haikkola 2011; van Geel and Mazzucato 2018), but with minimal investigation into the role of transnational peers and how they impact migrant youth's lives in the country of residence. We build on this literature by studying how migrant youth create, maintain, and benefit from transnational peer relationships through their mobility trajectories.

7.3 Research setting

This study is part of the Mobility Trajectories of Young Lives (MO-TRAYL) project, which studies the effects of transnational mobility on Ghanaian-background youth in Hamburg (Germany), Antwerp (Belgium), The Hague (The Netherlands), and various cities in Ghana and is led by the second author (Mazzucato 2015). The study was approved by Maastricht University's Ethics Committee. Between January 2018 and September 2019, the first author conducted onsite fieldwork for 12 months in Hamburg (Germany) and two months in Ghana, and online fieldwork throughout.

Mobility and migration are fundamental aspects of Ghanaian society, with adults and children moving internally and internationally for work, education, and family reasons (Coe 2012a). Relatedly, child 'fostering' is very common in Ghana, whereby children whose parents are abroad or elsewhere in Ghana circulate between various caregivers (ibid.; Poeze et al. 2017). Internationally, Germany hosts the second-largest Ghanaian population in continental Europe, and Hamburg is home to one-fifth of Germany's Ghanaian community (Mörath 2015). In 2017, Ghanaians were the tenth-largest group of migration background in the highly diverse city, where more than a third of the population and over half its youth have a migration background (Statistikamt Nord 2018).

7.3.1 Sample

The sample consisted of 20 young people living in Hamburg, aged 15-25. Sampling criteria included having a Ghanaian background (meaning both parents were born in Ghana; 12

participants were born in Germany and 8 in Ghana); having spent time in Ghana (this ranged from a single weeks-long visit to several years of residence); and attending or having attended secondary school in Hamburg (10 had also received schooling in Ghana). Participants living in various parts of Hamburg were recruited through high schools, Ghanaian churches and youth groups, and snowball sampling.

Although most participants belonged to the working class in Hamburg, their social-class positions in Ghana were often starkly different, in line with research indicating that migrants are rarely the poorest of the poor in their country of origin (Mazzucato et al. 2008; Noll 2020). In Hamburg, many participants lived in working-class neighbourhoods and their parents worked blue-collar jobs, like cooks and cleaners. However, in Ghana many parents had completed high school, some had gained tertiary or vocational qualifications, and several parents and relatives had (or still) worked in business, education, and the civil service. Participants' families were primarily from Ghana's second-largest city, Kumasi, though several also had links to the capital, Accra, and a few came from other regions. Several participants stayed in affluent neighbourhoods when in Ghana and were part of highly mobile social networks there. In Hamburg, most participants (had) attended comprehensive public schools, *Stadtteilschulen*, while six had also completed part of their schooling at more prestigious public schools, such as *Gymnasium* or those with alternative pedagogical approaches. Most participants with Ghanaian education had attended elite boarding and international schools in cities known for their educational institutions, such as Accra, Kumasi, and Cape Coast, or had amassed significant educational capital in Ghana because, for example, their caregiver was a teacher. Most participants' peers in Ghana shared similar social-class backgrounds, given they lived in the same neighbourhoods, were part of the same family networks, and attended the same schools.

7.3.2 Methods

Data were collected by the first author, principally through participant observation in young people' homes, schools, churches, and recreational spaces, and through interviews with participants, some of their parents and teachers (only with participants' explicit consent), and Ghanaian community leaders. In line with the project's focus on transnational youth mobility, mobility and educational trajectory mapping was conducted with all participants and concentric circle network mapping with 10 participants, using methods developed for the MO-TRAYL project (Mazzucato 2015; van Geel and Mazzucato 2018). Trajectory mapping systematically collects information on a participant's geographical moves in time and space (including short trips and changes of residence and caregivers), schools attended, and the location of important relatives, resulting in a visualisation of their mobility and educational trajectory (Mazzucato et al. forthcoming). In concentric circle mapping, members of participants' networks are placed in three concentric circles surrounding the

participant at the centre, relative to their importance. These methods revealed the prevalence and importance of transnational peer relationships, which we then explored ethnographically among the entire sample. Following fieldwork, we analysed participants' networks to identify the frequency and nature of transnational peer relationships, and we coded written data to uncover prominent themes related to transnational peer relationships, including educational motivation, transnational frames of reference, emotional support, sustaining relationships to Ghana, shaping each other's mobility, competition, and information sharing. We then refined our selection to those themes most prevalent among our sample and related to social capital: educational motivation and transnational frames of reference. Sub-themes such as emotional support and competition were subsumed within these larger ones. We explore these main two themes in the following sections.

7.4 Transnational peer relationships: three cases

In this section, three vignettes illustrate how migrant youth gain social capital from transnational peer relationships. We chose these three cases because they encompass the two types of social capital we analyse – educational motivation and transnational frames of reference – while showing that different combinations of factors can lead to them, including varied mobility trajectories ('first' and 'second' generation) and relationships with diverse peers (romantic partners, friends, and relatives), which are maintained in various ways (through ICTs and visits to Ghana).

Ella[49]

> Ella (19) was born in Germany to Ghanaian parents but spent much of her childhood in Ghana. She moved to Ghana before her first birthday, returned to Germany for a year at age 8, then continued her schooling in Ghana until she moved back to Germany aged 16. When Ella completed a network map of the people most important to her, one name stood out. 'Who supports you with school?' 'Michael.' 'And when you have problems with family?' 'Michael.' 'And how about making plans for the future?' 'Michael. Whoa, everything seems to be Michael!' she laughed.
>
> Ella and Michael (21) grew up as neighbours when Ella lived with her grandmother in Ghana. They had been a couple since Ella was 12 and maintained a long-distance relationship after Ella moved to Germany at 16. Despite this distance, Michael remained an important part of her support network. They spoke several times a day via WhatsApp. 'The person who invented video calls did so with me in mind,' she joked. Through this contact, they provided each other with emotional support,

[49] All names are pseudonyms.

encouragement, and advice. On Ella's first visit to Ghana in four years, her face-to-face contact with Michael was precious: 'For me the most important person to see … was Michael, of course. I felt much closer to him when I saw him, and coming back [to Germany], it was really helping because the distance was too much.' Shortly after Ella's trip, they began seeking a scholarship for Michael to pursue a business degree in Germany.

Ahoufe

Ahoufe (20) was born in Ghana and moved to Germany with her mother and sister when she was 16 to join her father. Despite struggling to learn German and finding her classmates standoffish, she was doing well at school and was one year away from completing a bilingual *Abitur* (high-school qualification). The first time I met Ahoufe, she regaled me with stories of the Ghanaian schools she had attended and mentioned a WhatsApp group with her old classmates, who were an ongoing source of educational motivation. 'When maybe you feel like quitting or you don't feel like continuing, they are always there to inspire and encourage you to go hard or learn harder.' Their direct encouragement was mixed with comforting co-presence through video-call study sessions. 'Sometimes the phone will be there, nobody will be talking, [but] everyone will be studying.'

Alongside regular contact online, Ahoufe also reconnected with many friends in person on her first return visit to Ghana. During these encounters, her friends, many of whom were now studying at university, 'all asked about school' and updated Ahoufe on their own studies. Before her trip, Ahoufe had wondered whether to transfer to a *Hochschule* (technical college) in Hamburg rather than complete the final year of high school to enter university. After returning to Germany, Ahoufe decided to complete her final year, after which she planned to apply for degrees in international economics law.

Isaac

Isaac (21) was born in Ghana. At age 3, his mother moved to Germany and Isaac lived with his grandmother and later his maternal aunt while moving around Ghana to attend prestigious schools. At 16, he joined his mother and two German-born younger siblings in Hamburg. Following his high-school graduation four years later, Isaac started a hospital internship he hoped would lead to medical school. He confidently explained how he had navigated the move between Ghanaian and German schooling so successfully:

> 'In Ghana, if you are not one of the best students, you go through a lot of stress with the family, problems with teachers, and even friends as well.

> So […], you try to study hard, to focus. […] But in Germany, it's just something you have to be willing to do.'

Isaac was proud he had not adopted this more-relaxed 'German' style of learning. In Ghana, Isaac's grandmother had been frustrated by his obsession with football and neglect of his studies. At age 13, he moved to his aunt's house, where four of his seven cousins – all born in the same year – lived. Living with and attending the same school as his studious cousins helped shift Isaac's focus from sport to school. 'The thing is, when you see that one is aiming higher and one is focusing more on studies, you actually think, "Okay, then I have to also give my best" […] That's where I had my inspiration from.' This dynamic was encouraged by a family competition, which awarded a prize to the highest-performing cousin each semester: one cousin won a PlayStation, while Isaac received a bicycle. Since moving to Germany, Isaac and his cousins remained 'sooo close.' They spoke several times a week through Facetime and WhatsApp, and he continued to track his progress against theirs.

> 'They are already in the university, […] studying together, learning hard. And me here, I'll be thinking, "Okay, I've had an opportunity to come to Germany, what can I make out of it?" So, I have to study and push harder, so I can also enter the university and also learn and give my best.'

7.5 Transnational peer relationships: an overlooked source of social capital

Beyond the relationships presented in these vignettes, and despite their invisibility in the literature, transnational peer relationships constituted significant proportions of our participants' networks. For example, of the 44 most-important people that Ella listed in her network map, 30 were peers, 20 of whom live in Ghana. Ahoufe listed 43 names; 35 were peers, 12 of whom live in Ghana. Of the 21 names Isaac listed, 18 were peers, 10 of whom live in Ghana. Drawing on the vignettes and additional cases from our sample, here we analyse two types of social capital our participants gained from their transnational relationships with peers in Ghana. The first – educational motivation – is commonly found in local peer relationships, but we find that it also occurs in transnational peer relationships. The second – transnational frames of reference – is unique to transnational peer relationships. We focus on these two types of social capital because they resonate with reviewed findings from the literature and were the most prominent and common types within our sample.

7.5.1 Educational motivation

Education was a huge priority for most participants, including those with and without schooling experience in Ghana. For participants with schooling experience in Ghana, they

internalised the value of education through their educated family networks and at prestigious schools, where they performed highly and built a self-image as intelligent and capable students. They brought these values and confidence with them to Germany, where many continued to excel academically despite the challenges educationally mobile migrant youth face, including learning new languages, adapting to different pedagogical environments, and adjusting to unfamiliar curricula. For participants who had only attended school in Germany, the value of education was transmitted through their parents and reinforced through their own mobility to Ghana, where they were exposed to the behaviours and values of their educationally ambitious peers. Far from turning to transnational peers out of loneliness (Haikkola 2011), our participants also received educational support from peers in Hamburg, including peers with Ghanaian and other migration backgrounds and 'native' German students. As the influence of local peers has been established in the literature, we focus on the role of Ghana-based peers. Throughout their educational trajectories, our participants' transnational peer relationships provided educational motivation through three main mechanisms: emotional support, role modelling, and competition. While emotional support and role modelling are documented in the literature on local peer relationships, competition emerged as a third mechanism in our data.

For those facing educational challenges in Hamburg, the emotional support from transnational peer relationships was a great motivator, inspiring them to overcome obstacles by keeping sight of bigger objectives – receiving a good-quality education and pursuing tertiary study. Ahoufe's transition to schooling in Germany was challenging. 'In the beginning, it wasn't actually easy […] I found a lot of difficulties learning the language.' But she was encouraged to persevere by friends in Ghana, whose support consisted of direct verbal motivations and supportive company online, like the video-call study sessions described above.

Emotional support also motivated young people during difficult periods of educational decision-making. Ella's boyfriend, Michael, provided important emotional support when she reached an educational crossroads. Dissatisfied with her results after a recent move to a *Gymnasium*, Ella pondered whether to complete the final high-school exams, the *Abitur*, or move to a vocational track where she could earn money while gaining medical-assistant qualifications. During this stressful period, Ella and Michael spoke several times a day. Ella trusted Michael's intimate knowledge of her academic abilities, personal qualities, and career goals to help her weigh her options: 'He's one of the reasons why I never gave up doing what I wanted to do or what I wanted to become in the future.'

A second mechanism producing educational motivation was Ghana-based peers' role modelling of positive educational behaviours. For participants with schooling experience in Ghana, the educational behaviours and values they had absorbed during that time continued

to be modelled by their peers there. In contrast to the existing literature, this role modelling did not depend on local peers (Ryan 2000; Wentzel et al. 2010; Ryan et al. 2019), nor was the transmission of educational values reliant purely on parents (Fernández-Kelly 2008; Franceschelli et al. 2017). Like Isaac, many participants felt that 'Ghanaian' educational values – including a strong commitment to education, rigorous study ethic, and polite deference to teachers – were not common or expected in their German schools but nevertheless remained useful for their education in Germany.

Other participants described being motivated by older peers in Ghana who expressed interest in their schooling in Germany. Ahoufe described a peer who had been 'kind of a teacher to me' in Ghana as an ongoing source of educational motivation, through the emotional support she felt through his direct encouragements and the role modelling of his own good example. Having finished his Bachelor in Ghana, he would soon start a Master program in Europe.

> He's one person who always calls me and asks me about my school and always tells me […] this opportunity I have [to study in Germany], I should grab it and make good use of it. […] That's the advice he always gives me: keep going, learn very hard, because education is like the best thing […] ever.

Finally, participants described finding educational motivation from peers in Ghana through competition. Despite being in different education systems, young people competed with their peers' progress abroad. Isaac insisted the competitive dynamic with his cousins, established while living and studying together in Ghana, 'hasn't changed.' Due to Isaac's year in a compulsory preparation class (*Internationale Vorbereitungsklasse*) upon arrival in Hamburg and the longer secondary-school trajectory in Germany, Isaac now felt 'behind' his cousins: when he graduated high school in Hamburg, they were already at university in Ghana. Rather than comparing himself only to his current classmates in Hamburg (Wentzel et al. 2010), Isaac was motivated by a desire to match his cousins' progress in Ghana and enter university, just like them.

7.5.2 Transnational frames of reference

Previous research has emphasised the creation of young people's transnational frames of reference through parental transmission (Fernández-Kelly 2008) or their own observations during mobility (Louie 2006). Here, we emphasise the relational creation of transnational frames of reference through conversation and comparison among transnational peers. Through these interactions, migrant youth gain new perspectives on their own situation, sometimes prompting new decisions or pathways. We also show that transnational frames of reference do not always portray the country of residence as superior, but rather foster an understanding of advantages and disadvantages in both countries of origin and residence. As such, migrant youth are also influenced by what they see as the positive aspects of their

Ghanaian peers' lives. We discuss three ways in which migrant youth gain transnational frames of reference through their transnational peer relationships: by comparing educational environments, job prospects, and socio-political contexts.

Comparing educational environments – including the facilities, pathways, and cultures of German and Ghanaian schooling – with peers was the most common way our participants gained transnational frames of reference. Ella's awareness of her boyfriend's and other peers' educational facilities in Ghana compelled her to make the most of her opportunities in Germany.

> I realise my friends in Ghana are all in the uni [or] in apprenticeships, doing something that they are going to benefit from. […] They are lacking a lot of things there, [but] even with the little they have, they are trying to get something great out of it. […] And if I have something great, I should make something *greater* out of it.

Even migrant youth who had only schooled in Germany compared educational environments with peers during their visits to Ghana, including the starting age, pathways, and curriculum in each country. From these interactions, they drew conclusions about the relative (dis)advantages of each system and their own position within a broader context. Marjorie (19) was born and raised in Hamburg and had made three visits to Ghana. On these visits, conversations with her cousins and siblings led her to admire the discipline and academic skills of Ghanaian students. She noted that the younger enrolment age in Ghana facilitated literacy earlier than in Germany, and that her same-age Ghanaian peers were ahead in Math and English, which she thought useful for people who wanted 'an international career.'

Participants' interactions with peers in Ghana also prompted deeper reflections on the schooling cultures of each country and how these shaped their own educational values. Kwaku (21), who completed 12 years of schooling in Ghana before moving to Germany, was in weekly contact with two former classmates who were now at university in Ghana:

> They think that the Ghana education system is more difficult than [the German system]. […] They think definitely it's not how people here learn, [that] we don't go through that stress – yeah, that's the key word: stress […] We all go through stress, but the main point is: what are you stressing for?

Kwaku perceived that the Ghanaian system emphasises theoretical learning through discipline and memorisation, while the German system emphasises creativity and applied learning. Both approaches require effort and create stress, but in different ways. By debating these differences with his peers in Ghana, Kwaku was able to consciously combine the best of both worlds. Ultimately, he found it useful to channel the strict discipline of his Ghanaian

peers towards more-practical applications of his learning in Germany that would be useful for his future career in aeronautical engineering, which he was now studying at university.

Comparing job prospects with peers was another way young people created transnational frames of reference. Several participants referred to their peers' situations in Ghana to explain that many university graduates there were unable to find work, due to corruption, a fragile economy, and a job market outpaced by high graduation rates. In the vignette, Isaac asked himself what he could make of the 'opportunity to come to Germany,' while his cousins continued studying in Ghana. Part of his sense of opportunity was his perceived advantage regarding employment:

> Here in Germany, […] we have job opportunities when we complete school. […] [But in Ghana] you can complete school, but you don't get a job to do. […] I think in Ghana, because the economy is not that strong, we go for corruption. When you have money, you attach it to your [university] results, and you'll be taken [accepted].

Ahoufe considered she had much better prospects for gaining full-time employment after university in Germany than her Ghanaian counterparts. She estimated that her part-time supermarket job in Hamburg during secondary school earned her double the income of many full-time positions in Ghana. Her friends in Ghana also actively reminded her of her opportunity: 'They always advise me, "Ahoufe, […] you know where you are coming from […] you need to, like, learn, and pass your exams, and get a better job to do over there [in Germany]".' Such input from peers in Ghana constructed a transnational frame of reference regarding job prospects, which reminded young people of their relatively good employment opportunities in Germany. As noted, most participants lived in working-class neighbourhoods of Hamburg, with parents working manual jobs. But, despite challenges faced in Hamburg, they felt optimistic about their chances compared to their peers in Ghana.

Finally, comparing socio-political contexts between Germany and Ghana with peers also nurtured transnational frames of reference. Akosua (19) was born and raised in Hamburg but lived in Ghana for 18 months between ages 5-6, and had visited Ghana five of the last six summers. On her most-recent visit, Akosua spent a lot of time with her 17-year-old female neighbour. Many of their conversations revolved around comparisons of life in Germany and Ghana. In response to her neighbour's question of whether Germany is a racist country, Akosua explained her ambivalence about life in each place:

> [Racism in Germany] is what I don't like, but it's so mixed with having much more freedom [than in Ghana]. [In Germany] you can really be independent, you have more freedom about education, […] and as a woman you have more chances than in Ghana to become something. [But in Ghana] I like that everyone has the same

> skin colour, and you just feel comfortable […] Everyone is somehow equal and understands each other.

Akosua returned to Hamburg from Ghana with a renewed ambition to exercise her independence and opportunities by moving out of her mother's home and studying social work at university. She also considered reconnecting to the solidarity she had felt in Ghana by volunteering there after her current vocational training. Her relationship with her neighbour in Ghana helped shape Akosua's transnational frames of reference by prompting her to reflect on the socio-political differences between Germany and Ghana, thereby helping her define how she wanted to capitalise on the opportunities and benefits of both countries. These examples show that transnational frames of reference are a form of social capital that extends beyond the local environment (cf. Raffo and Reeves 2000) and does not emerge from local peer relationships. Rather, this type of social capital inherently relies on engagement in transnational contexts and relationships with transnational peers.

7.6 Conclusion

In this paper, we have shown that transnational peer relationships with same-generation relatives, friends, and romantic partners constitute significant parts of migrant youth's support networks and provide social capital. In doing so, we have brought youth studies and transnational migration research into dialogue, by applying a mobility lens to the analysis of peer relationships. Focusing on migrant youth's mobility trajectories rather than on a single migration event enriches our understanding of how migrant youth are faring and what resources support their lives. Such a mobility lens removes the methodological nationalism (Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2003) of studies that consider only the local context and instead homes our attention to, first, how mobile migrant youth are, and second, what transpires through their mobility.

Young people's transnational peer relationships have previously been absent in the literature, both as important parts of young people's transnational networks and sources of their social capital. However, by mapping and analysing the transnational mobility and networks of migrant youth between Germany and Ghana, we could identify transnational peer relationships and investigate how migrant youth maintain and benefit from such relationships. Through this analysis, our key findings address these gaps and make the following contributions to the literature.

Our first key finding is that migrant youth build and maintain transnational peer relationships through their mobility trajectories. Migration and mobility are prevalent among Ghanaian-background youth (Coe 2012a; Poeze et al. 2017). As such, transnational peer relationships are not uncommon and deserve research attention. While parents and other adults remain

important in young people's transnational networks, relationships with peers are also highly significant. These relationships are maintained transnationally through the use of ICTs and visits to Ghana. While contact via ICTs was largely within participants' own control, their visits to Ghana were usually dependent on their parents' organisation and financing of such travels. As such, young people enacted constrained agency (Coe et al. 2011) in using their mobility to maintain such relationships. Migrant youth's mobility trajectories defy any simple categorisation based on place of birth or minority status in the country of residence (van Geel and Mazzucato 2018). Diverse types of mobility to Ghana support transnational peer relationships, including extended periods of residence in and short visits to the country. We find that extended time in Ghana tends to lead to peer relationships with a strong foundation of shared experience (in the same school, household, or neighbourhood), and which are maintained intensely over distance, as in the cases of Ella, Isaac, and Ahoufe. However, transnational peer relationships are also relevant to migrant youth who have never lived or schooled in Ghana but are nevertheless mobile, like Marjorie.

Our second key finding is that transnational peer relationships provide valuable social capital to migrant youth. This capital includes resources both similar to local peer relationships, such as educational motivation, and unique to transnational relationships, such as transnational frames of reference. The fact that emotional support from, role modelling by, and competition with transnational peers provide educational motivation shows that influences beyond the local context can benefit migrant youth's education in the country of residence. This has implications for what types of knowledge, support, and cultural capital are relevant and valued in national school systems (Berggren et al. 2020). Similarly, comparing educational environments, job prospects, and socio-political contexts with transnational peers can build transnational frames of reference that help migrant youth gain new perspectives on their own situation. These frames, which often value aspects of life in both countries, inform migrant youth's decisions about their education, careers, and future mobility.

Our ethnographic research approach enabled us to identify and analyse the importance of transnational peer relationships; however, it also entailed limitations that point to potentially fruitful avenues of future research. First, all our participants have secondary education in Hamburg and most of their parents have been educated to at least secondary level in Ghana. As such, our insights reflect a certain reality that may not be shared by those with different educational histories and family backgrounds. Second, Ghana's political stability and its relatively short distance from Germany make mobility between the two countries possible. It is unclear how transnational peer relationships are maintained by young people for whom mobility is difficult or impossible. Third, given our focus on young people living in Germany, we do not know whether the types of social capital analysed here are reciprocal for peers in the country of origin. This would involve asking: How do Ella's boyfriend, Isaac's cousins,

and Ahoufe's friends experience these relationships? Fourth, our participants' transnational networks included peers in various countries, not just Ghana (see also Haikkola 2011; van Liempt 2011). As defined above, transnational peer relationships can be maintained between two or more countries, hence an exploration of transnational peer relationships beyond the countries of origin and residence would clarify the role these relationships play in the lives of increasingly mobile youth. Fifth, we have highlighted positive impacts of transnational peer relationships because this reflects the dominant experience of our participants and their meaning-making about such relationships, especially in interviews (Warren 2011). We occasionally observed negative moments in these relationships, such as friends demanding gifts or money during visits to Ghana, leaving participants feeling used and angry. As such, potential negative components of transnational peer relationships – including jealousy, miscommunications, and conflict, as have been found in transnational parent-child relationships (Parreñas 2005; Dreby 2007; Madianou and Miller 2011) – could be further investigated. Finally, our sample was too small to disaggregate by gender, yet studies have consistently found gender differences in young people's peer relationships (Wentzel et al. 2010; Mariano et al. 2011). It would be instructive to explore whether gender shapes how migrant youth maintain and benefit from transnational peer relationships.

Overall, our findings show the need to expand the concept of peer relationships in order to build a more comprehensive understanding of the support systems of migrant youth and the valuable social capital that transnational peer relationships provide young people. Peers in Ghana are far from being 'out of sight, out of mind' for our participants in Germany. Instead, young people actively maintain transnational peer relationships through their mobility trajectories and draw on them in generating social capital. Only by updating our research agendas and approaches to reflect the role of transnational mobility in contemporary life can we adequately account for vital sources of social capital that shape the lives of migrant youth.

Chapter 8.

Conclusions

8.1 Introduction

> As Ahoufe and I boarded the bus to church, she asked whether I had booked my trip to Ghana yet. I told her my travel dates, and we realised we would return to Europe on the same day. 'Maybe we will meet each other at Accra airport!' she said excitedly. When we arrived at church, Ella came to greet us, dressed smartly for youth service. I complimented her on her beautiful dress – blue and gold diamonds on a white background. 'Thanks,' she smiled. 'My mum brought it back for me from Ghana last year.' Later, as we stood in the church foyer after the service, I asked Ella if she knew any young people in the Ghanaian community in Hamburg who had never been to Ghana. 'Why?' she asked, 'Do you need one [for the research]?' 'No,' I said, 'I was just wondering, because I haven't met any myself.' She replied as we watched the youth congregation file out in front of us: 'Everyone's been [to Ghana] at least once.'

This thesis has analysed the transnational mobility trajectories of young people with a Ghanaian migration background who live in Hamburg, Germany. It has shown that young people's transnational mobility trajectories are diverse and complex, and – as alluded to by Ella in the vignette – that mobility is both common in and central to migrant youth's lives. Furthermore, the study has demonstrated that mobility has profound impacts on young people's lives, including the contexts and relationships it brings young people into contact with, and the resources they gain through their experiences in the country of origin, which shape their lives in the country of residence.

The main research question of this thesis is: *How do young people of Ghanaian background living in Hamburg, Germany, experience their transnational mobility over time and space, and how does mobility affect their lives?* Three sub-questions dissect this main question into discrete parts, each addressed by one of the empirical chapters:

1. How do young people's mobility experiences in the form of visits shape their changing relationships to the country of origin over time and space? (Chapter 5)
2. How do young people gain resources in the country of origin and then translate and use these resources to navigate their school transitions in the country of residence following an international move? (Chapter 6)
3. How do young people build and maintain transnational peer relationships through their mobility trajectories? Which resources do they obtain from these relationships, and what effects do these resources have on their lives in the country of residence? (Chapter 7)

While the main research question was intentionally broad to allow for an ethnographic approach, the sub-questions reflect the specific topics that emerged as relevant and fruitful

during fieldwork and which together answer the main research question. To answer these research questions, I conducted 14 months of youth-centric, multi-sited, mobile ethnographic fieldwork with 20 young people of Ghanaian background in Hamburg and on their travels to Ghana in 2018 and 2019. The sample included 14 female and 6 male participants aged 15-25. While 8 were born in Ghana and 12 in Germany, all had experienced some form of mobility between the two countries, including 14 changes of residence and 29 short visits. Data collection involved participant observation and interviews with participants and other key informants, but also the use of various mobile and other methods that documented young people's mobility patterns, experiences, and effects over time and space.

The following sections summarise the thesis' empirical findings (Section 8.2), outline its main theoretical and methodological contributions (Section 8.3), and highlight potential future research directions emanating from this study's results and limitations (Section 8.4).

8.2 Main empirical findings

The three empirical chapters in this thesis each answer one of the research sub-questions and contribute to answering the main research question. They cover various aspects of young people's mobility trajectories, including various types of mobility experiences, and diverse relationships, contexts, and resources obtained and activated through mobility.

Chapter 5 asks *how young people's mobility experiences in the form of visits shape their changing relationships to the country of origin over time and space*. Using a modified version of Urry's (2002) typology of proximity (face-to-face, face-the-place, face-the-moment), the chapter studies mobility up-close, in real-time, and through the changing constellations of people, places, and moments that make up young people's visits to Ghana throughout their mobility trajectories. The chapter shows the value of using a youth-centric and mobile methodology that enables researchers to investigate the specific details that make up young people's mobility experiences, and of adopting a mobility trajectories lens to investigate such experiences throughout young people's lives. The findings challenge the often-static representation in research of the country of origin and migrant youth's feelings towards it by revealing that migrant youth experience and articulate their relationships to the country of origin in changing, complex ways based on mobility experiences that also change over time and space.

Chapters 6 and 7 apply the embodied and processual approach fleshed out in Chapter 5 to explore how migrant youth's experiences in the country of origin throughout their mobility trajectories shape life in the country of residence. They do so by studying the contexts inhabited and relationships nurtured in Ghana, which provide resources that are applied to life in Germany. Chapter 6 investigates *how young people gain resources in the country of*

origin and then translate and use these resources to navigate their school transitions in the country of residence following an international move. In the chapter, I analyse young people's resources through the prism of 'embodied cultural capital' and employ a mobility trajectories lens. The analysis reveals how young people gain four types of embodied cultural capital – confidence, discipline, respect, and adaptability – through their educational environments and extended family networks in Ghana and then use these resources to successfully navigate their school transitions in Hamburg. Their successful transitions reflect a 'chemical reaction' between the resources young people possess and the recognition and value afforded these resources in their specific reception context. By looking at factors beyond the country of residence and by employing a youth-centric perspective, the chapter contributes to explaining previously unexplored mechanisms that shape migrant youth's school transitions, including their experiences in the country of origin and their agentic accumulation, translation, and use of embodied cultural capital as a transnational resource.

Chapter 7 analyses *how young people build and maintain transnational peer relationships through their mobility trajectories, which resources they obtain from these relationships, and what effects these resources have on their lives in the country of residence*. The chapter combines the mobility types highlighted in the previous two empirical chapters by considering how transnational peer relationships are established and maintained through young people's periods of residence in and visits to Ghana, as well as through the use of ICTs during periods of immobility. In the chapter, I use the concept of 'social capital' to analyse the resources migrant youth obtain from their relationships with other young people in Ghana. These resources, including educational motivation and transnational frames of reference, affect young people's lives in the country of residence by shaping their education and plans for the future. By adopting a mobility trajectories lens that focuses on young people's own transnational movements and relationships, the chapter advances our understanding of migrant youth's support systems and the resources they provide, thereby moving beyond adult-centric views of transnational networks and methodologically nationalistic views of young people's peer relationships.

8.3 Theoretical and methodological contributions

Bringing the findings of the empirical chapters together, this thesis answers the main research question of how young people experience their transnational mobility over time and space and how it affects their lives. In doing so, the thesis makes five key contributions to the literature on transnational youth mobility and other bodies of research with which it engages. These relate to: transnational youth mobility trajectories; transnational resources; young people's agency; transnational social positioning; and my youth-centric, mobile methodology. This section explains those contributions by drawing together the threads of the empirical chapters and connecting them to the relevant literatures.

8.3.1 Transnational youth mobility trajectories

This thesis has demonstrated that migrant youth's transnational mobility has been neglected in research to date but is a crucial piece of the puzzle for understanding the lives of the increasing proportion of young people with a migration background. The concept of 'youth mobility trajectories', which includes all geographic moves young people make and the changing family constellations that accompany them (Mazzucato 2015; van Geel and Mazzucato 2018), allowed me to study their mobility in a thorough and nuanced way. In other words, it allowed me to focus on young people's individual mobility experiences as well as their broader patterns of mobility, and the effects mobility has on their lives. The mobility trajectories of the research participants featured in the empirical chapters show the diversity and complexity of these mobility patterns, including short visits to Ghana (highlighted in Chapter 5), periods of residence in the country (highlighted in Chapter 6), and a combination of these (highlighted in Chapter 7).

Gathering information on all mobility experiences throughout young people's trajectories – including their timing, duration, purpose, and location – creates a comprehensive picture of the topography of their transnational lives. This achieves two things. First, it brings migrant youth's experiences in the country of origin into the picture, countering the methodological nationalism of much research on migrant youth and emphasising the importance of a transnational lens for understanding their lives. Second, by considering experiences in both the country of origin and the country of residence and analysing them over time and space, youth mobility trajectories allow researchers to study mobility's cumulative effects and dynamics; that is, how experiences in the country of origin shape young people's lives in the country of residence. For example, the confidence, discipline, respect, and adaptability young people built through their schooling and family relationships in Ghana smoothed their school transitions to a new education system in Hamburg (Chapter 6), and young people's relationships with peers during period of residence in and visits to Ghana gave them educational motivation, directly affecting their schooling in Germany (Chapter 7).

Youth mobility trajectories are relevant to various bodies of literature. First and foremost, the concept contributes to the field of transnational migration research. While this field's fundamental premise is that migrants' lives are lived across countries, it has neglected migrants' – especially young people's – mobility between them. Young people's mobility has largely been overlooked, studied alongside sedentary transnational practices, or conceived in simplistic ways. Youth mobility trajectories show that migrant youth *are* mobile, that they have unfolding patterns of multi-directional mobility, and that mobility shapes their lives.

Youth mobility trajectories contribute to mobility studies in two ways. First, mobility studies, like transnational migration research, have largely been adult-centric; and second, studies of migrant mobility have largely focused on migration trajectories. My thesis addresses both gaps by contributing knowledge on both the mobility of young people with a migration background, and by showing the diversity of their mobility patterns and experiences beyond international migrations, including visits and back-and-forth periods of residence.

Finally, youth mobility trajectories have the potential to contribute to literatures relating to the contexts, relationships, and resources in young people's lives. Both youth studies and literature on cultural capital and education are, by and large, methodologically nationalistic. The concept of youth mobility trajectories highlights that young people's transnational relationships and experiences outside their country of residence also provide valuable resources. Exploring these processes beyond young people's local environments can enrich research in various areas that aim to better understand and account for their lives.

8.3.2 Transnational resources

This thesis has shown that one of the main ways in which mobility shapes the life of migrant youth is through the resources that move with them throughout their mobility trajectories. Much research on migrant youth takes a methodologically nationalistic view of the resources available to them, focusing on their family, school, and community contexts in the country of residence (Portes and Zhou 1993; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Suárez-Orozco et al. 2009; Haller et al. 2011). Transnational migration research acknowledges the availability of resources for migrant youth through transnational social fields, but largely focuses on resources parents transmit to their children in the country of residence, such as origin-country cultural values (Fernández-Kelly 2008; Coe and Shani 2015) and transnational frames of reference (Franceschelli et al. 2017; Orupabo et al. 2020). By adopting a mobility trajectories lens and taking a youth-centric approach, this thesis shows that migrant youth also gain resources first-hand through their own transnational mobility. These resources include various forms of embodied cultural capital, like confidence, respect, discipline, and adaptability (Chapter 6); social capital, such as educational motivation and transnational frames of reference (Chapter 7); and young people's changing relationships with the country of origin, comprised of the social relationships, resources, and opportunities they associate with it (Chapter 5).

Furthermore, the empirical chapters demonstrate how these resources operate transnationally – that is, how resources gained in one country are translated to and used within another. This finding adds empirical weight to the theoretical importance of using a transnational mobility lens in research on the lives of migrant youth by showing that the contexts in which they develop resources extend far beyond the boundaries of their country of residence and are

accessed through their mobility trajectories. The main context in which young people's transnational resources were employed to great benefit was in their education. Newcomers to Hamburg employed embodied cultural capital from Ghana in their school transitions to great effect (Chapter 6), while many participants' schooling benefited from the educational motivation provided by peers in Ghana and the transnational frames of reference facilitated by these transnational relationships, which helped them compare the educational structures, facilities, approaches, and opportunities between Ghana and Germany (Chapter 7). Transnational resources were also valuable for their future planning. The transnational frames of reference facilitated by relationships with peers in Ghana (Chapter 7) and gained through their visits to the country (Chapter 5) gave young people a sense of perspective of their employment prospects in Germany and Ghana and the benefits and disadvantages of life in each country, informing their thinking about their future mobility to and from Ghana.

This finding contributes to various bodies of literature. As noted, migrant youth studies and transnational migration research tend to focus on young people's lives – and thus the resources available to them – in just one country. A transnational mobility lens reveals that migrant youth also access resources first-hand through their own mobility trajectories to and from the country of origin (Fürstenau 2005). This finding is also relevant to second-generation returns literature because it shows that migrant youth's experiences during visits to the country of origin shape not only their sense of identification and belonging (Kibria 2002; Smith 2002; Levitt 2002, 2009; Louie 2006;) but also various aspects of their lives in the country of residence.

Furthermore, cultural capital and education research and youth studies conceptualise of young people's resources as operating purely within local environments or national systems. Responding to calls to make concepts like cultural capital more useful for the transnational context (Coe and Shani 2015) and for culturally diverse populations (Carter 2003), this thesis shows that migrant youth's experiences in places beyond their country of residence should also be acknowledged as important sources of young people's resources. Finally, this finding shows that the beneficial educational resources gained through youth mobility are not limited to international higher education students or to students of transnationally mobile educational programs and providers (Waters 2006; Kesper-Biermann et al. 2018; Waters and Leung 2017), but also to migrant youth in secondary schooling.

8.3.3 Young people's agency

A further contribution of this thesis regards migrant youth's agency, which is crucial to the viability of their transnational resources and thus to how transnational mobility shapes their lives. The agency of the participants in this study enabled them to translate and use their transnational resources between the country of origin and the country of residence. They

actively pursued opportunities, invested in or retreated from relationships, and interpreted the meaning of their visits to Ghana (Chapter 5). Their agency is visible in all forms of embodied cultural capital they used in their school transitions, but is most evident in their adaptability, demonstrating their ability to evaluate the requirements for success in a new educational environment and selectively use their existing resources while adopting new behaviours (Chapter 6). Young people's transnational networks are also shaped by their agency; far from being dependent on their parents to mediate their transnational relationships, the participants in this study established, maintained, and employed resources from their own transnational peer relationships (Chapter 7).

This finding does not imply that adults are unimportant in the lives of migrant youth, nor does it suggest their agency is unfettered. Most young people in this study lived with one or both parents and were (at least partially) financially dependent on them. Most visited Ghana together with their families from Hamburg on trips paid for by their parents; they stayed in the homes of grandparents, aunts, and uncles in Ghana; and they fulfilled various familial obligations imposed by senior family members. As such, they expressed a 'constrained agency' (Coe et al. 2011) within their dependence on adults. Relationships with adults were important to them; parents, grandparents, and aunts and uncles featured prominently in young people's concentric circle network maps and in the narratives and observations of their daily lives in Hamburg and Ghana. The presence and influence of adults in the transnational mobility trajectories of my participants is also clear in the empirical chapters – including teachers, caregivers, and extended family members. However, such relationships and influences are well documented in the literature; this thesis instead highlights young people's agency as an important aspect of their transnational mobility and how it shapes their lives.

This finding is relevant to two main bodies of research. First, it contributes to transnational migration research, making clear that research needs to study the migration and mobility experiences of young people in their own right, not just in reference to and relationship with adults. Second, it contributes to the literature on cultural capital and education by showing that young people are not only beneficiaries of their parents' capital, but are active brokers of their own transnational resources, accumulating, translating, and using them strategically to shape their own pathways.

8.3.4 Young people's transnational social positioning

The final theoretical contribution of this thesis relates to the ways in which young people's transnational mobility trajectories help explain the dynamics of their diverse social positions between the countries of origin and residence. Transnational migration research has long acknowledged that migrants often hold higher social positions in their countries of origin than their countries of residence (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004; Nieswand 2011), which

also applies to many Ghanaian migrants (Anarfi et al. 2003; Mazzucato et al. 2008; Noll 2020). As discussed in the empirical chapters, this is also true of the participants in this study, who occupied low social-class positions in Hamburg but often came from relatively privileged backgrounds in Ghana. They stayed in affluent neighbourhoods during visits to Ghana and were part of highly mobile social networks there (Chapter 5); they attended prestigious schools and were part of resource-rich extended family networks in Ghana (Chapter 6); and their transnational peer relationships kept them connected to other young people from the same privileged schools, neighbourhoods, and families in Ghana (Chapter 7).

My findings regarding transnational resources help to identify the mechanisms at work in how migrant youth's different social positions in the countries of origin and residence are interconnected. As discussed above, young people's experiences and relationships in various contexts in Ghana provided them with valuable resources that moved with them throughout their transnational mobility trajectories (Section 8.3.2). These resources, accessed through their relatively high social-class positionings in Ghana, were then used to offset certain disadvantages of their lower social-class positions in Germany. As shown in the empirical chapters, young people gained embodied cultural capital in Ghana that smoothed their school transitions in Hamburg (Chapter 6), and they garnered social capital from their transnational peer relationships that benefited their education and future planning in Germany (Chapter 7).

This contribution is relevant to three bodies of research. First, recent literature in migrant youth studies has shown that parents' social-class backgrounds in the country of origin affect their children's outcomes in the country of residence, but these studies have been unable to explain the mechanisms behind such effects (Ichou 2014; Feliciano and Lanuza 2017). My thesis identifies a 'missing link' in this relationship. This study highlights that migrant youth themselves occupy social-class positions in the country of origin through their mobility trajectories. These social-class backgrounds then affect their lives through the transnational resources they gain in the country of origin and then use in the country of residence. In other words, one mechanism explaining the relationship between parents' social-class backgrounds in the country of origin and their children's outcomes in the country of residence is their children's own transnational mobility trajectories.

Second, this contribution is relevant to the emerging literature on social class and transnational migration (Coe and Pauli 2020) by adding to our understanding of how migrant youths' diverse social-class positions in the countries of origin and residence are connected through the resources that move with young people throughout their trajectories. This nascent literature has mostly considered the transnational social-class dynamics of adult migrants in relation to their employment and income. My study indicates that changing social-class positions experienced through mobility trajectories, and the related flow and impact of

resources between the country of origin and the country of residence, are also important for young people and in other areas of life, such as education.

Third, this finding contributes to research on cultural capital and education by showing the importance of adopting a transnational lens in the analysis of migrant youth's social-class backgrounds and the resources such backgrounds provide. Where this literature has considered migrant youth, it has focused almost exclusively on migrant populations who occupy low social-class positions in the country of residence, and on the resulting disadvantage inflicted by their 'lack' of the 'right' capital to succeed educationally. My thesis suggests that the dynamics of social class in the education of migrant youth are more complex. Understanding migrant youth's educational experiences and outcomes within the country of residence requires knowledge of their social positioning in their country of origin, to which they remain actively connected through their transnational mobility trajectories.

8.3.5 A youth-centric and mobile methodology

The theoretical insights from studying transnational youth mobility trajectories are only possible through a methodology that adequately captures the patterns, experiences, and effects of mobility. In this study, I used an innovative methodology that placed young people's own perspectives and experiences at the heart of the research and used mobile methods to capture various aspects of their mobility (Büscher and Urry 2009; Fincham et al. 2010). As noted throughout this thesis, research on youth transnationalism still relies heavily on adults' interpretations and actions. Furthermore, it tends to depict young people as immobile (Dreby 2007; Schmalzbauer 2008; Levitt 2009) or to use retrospective, single-sited research designs to study their past mobility (Louie 2006; King et al. 2011). This results in creating static representations of their mobility or overlooking it entirely (Mazzucato and van Geel 2022).

Three techniques used in this research represent a palette of youth-centric mobile methods, each with its own strengths. Mobility trajectory mapping captures young people's mobility over time and space throughout their lives, enabling researchers to both delve into specific mobility experiences and contextualise their mobility in a broader view of their mobility patterns. Following mobility in real-time, both physically and digitally, emphasises the sensorial, embodied, and emotional nature of mobility experiences and captures the specific people, places, and moments that constitute them. Finally, before-and-after interviewing documents the meaning-making process in action by tracing the anticipated and actual meanings and impacts of mobility. Other data-collection techniques complemented these mobile methods by revealing how mobility impacts various aspects of young people's lives, such as their social support networks (e.g., concentric circle network mapping) and their education in Hamburg (e.g., school-based ethnography).

What made these methods youth-centric was not the tools themselves but rather the way I used them. I employed these methods as part of my interested and respectful participation in young people's lives and approached their implementation with an open mind to allow young people's own interests and priorities to emerge. The approach's success was evident in young people's active participation, their invitations to accompany their travels to Ghana, and even in their enthusiasm to help recruit new participants – reflected in Ella's question in the vignette above.

Similarly, what makes these methods mobile is their ability to capture various aspects of mobility. Some of these methods imply a researcher being mobile herself, but others do not. Mobility trajectory mapping, following mobility digitally, and before-and-after interviews can be conducted in one site, while still being 'mobile methods.' Following mobility by physically accompanying young people's visits to Ghana, however, does involve multi-sited research. This method was key to capturing the embodied aspects of young people's unfolding mobility experiences. It also enabled me to achieve depth through breadth by deepening my research relationships, accessing mobility from various viewpoints, and involving different intensities and types of fieldwork. As such, mobile and multi-sited methods are intricately connected but not necessarily synonymous. Mobile methods are mobile because of their focus on mobility, whether mapped, narrated or followed.

While my methodology is particularly valuable to research on transnational youth mobility, it also contributes to other bodies of scholarship. I approached these methods in a youth-centric way, yet these same techniques could be applied to the study of the mobility of other groups, including adults. Similarly, these methods can contribute to bodies of research whose central focus is not mobility, but which would benefit from an increased acknowledgement of the role of mobility in young people's lives. For example, mobility trajectory mapping could be employed in youth studies and educational research to identify important actors, experiences, and places in young people's lives across various domains. Using these methods is not necessarily easy. Physically accompanying mobility, for example, is resource intensive; it takes significant time, money, and energy. Yet where it is possible to use youth-centric mobile methods, they add enormous value to research.

8.4 Limitations and avenues for future research

This thesis has employed a theoretically and methodologically innovative approach that draws together previously separate bodies of literature, enabling me to fill research gaps and generate new findings about the role and repercussions of mobility in the lives of migrant youth. However, much remains to be studied about this topic. Here I offer some suggestions for future research, based on this thesis' limitations and the need to extend its findings.

First, my sample was too small to disaggregate the findings based on participants' gender. Yet the literatures I draw on in this thesis suggest that gender may be an important variable in understanding migrant youth's mobility. For example, youth studies have found significant differences in young women's and young men's peer relationships (Mariano et al. 2011; Wentzel et al. 2010); second-generation returns literature has explored how gender roles in the country of origin shape migrant youth's activities and relationships during their trips there and consequently their feelings about the country (Vathi and King 2011). Future research could thus investigate the role of gender in migrant youth's accumulation and use of transnational resources, in how they experience their transnational social positioning, and in the forms and effects of their agency in different contexts. The topics of the empirical chapters could also be explored through a gender lens, including what role gender plays in young people's school transitions and transnational peer relationships.

Second, the dynamics identified in this thesis occurred in specific contexts. Future research could explore similar topics in other contexts, such as which combinations of embodied cultural capital from the origin country and reception contexts in the country of residence create positive 'chemical reactions' that support newly arrived migrant youth's school transitions, and how young people's transnational networks can be harnessed to contribute to their educational success. Understanding the ways in which transnational resources, social positioning, and youth agency operate transnationally for youth with diverse educational and family backgrounds across various origin and reception contexts would contribute to knowledge and policies that benefit young people with a migration background more broadly.

Furthermore, future research could further expand this thesis' focus on young people's mobility over time and space by conducting longitudinal studies and including the role of third countries. Longitudinal research could explore whether young people who experience positive school transitions continue to benefit from their transnational resources and exercise their agency when they enter higher education and the workforce, and how the form, importance and impact of their transnational peer relationships evolve over time. Studies could also investigate the role of third countries that feature in young people's mobility trajectories. Most of my participants' mobility trajectories included places beyond Ghana and Germany (see also Haikkola 2011; van Liempt 2011). While the role of third countries was beyond the scope of the thesis, it offers a promising vein of research to more fully understand the nature and impact of young people's transnational mobility beyond the countries of origin and residence.

This study benefitted from being part of the international research project, Mobility Trajectories of Young Lives (MO-TRAYL), led by my first supervisor (Mazzucato 2015). The team's collaborative praxis provided methodological, theoretical, and practical support

that enriched my research throughout the entire process. Comparing notes with my colleagues also served as a constant reminder of the importance of the reception context in determining the opportunities for and repercussions of transnational mobility among migrant youth. Such collaborative research contexts are rare, despite their clear benefits (Mazzucato 2009; Poeze et al. 2017). More collaborative research would lead to further insights on the nature and impacts of transnational youth mobility in various contexts and for diverse populations.

Finally, an issue that emerged in my fieldwork was beyond the scope of this study but represents a promising area for future research on transnational youth mobility trajectories. Most of my participants who resided in Ghana for several years before migrating to Germany had younger siblings who were born and raised in Germany. While many of these younger siblings had visited Ghana or lived there briefly, they did not have the same extensive schooling experience or strong family and peer relationships as their older siblings who had spent several years in the country. Research into the transnational mobility trajectories of siblings with a migration background – and the different transnational resources and social-class positions they consequently accumulate and occupy – would further elucidate the dynamics and effects of transnational youth mobility trajectories on the lives of migrant youth.

I close with the words of one of my participants, Isaac, that summarise the value of mobility in the lives of migrant youth: ‘When you are in one place, you don’t get the advantage to see a lot or know a lot. But there’s a whole lot in this world that you have to explore to find.’ The transnational youth mobility trajectories of migrant youth between Ghana and Germany are made up of rich, embodied experiences of different places, people, and moments over time and space. They give young people, in Isaac’s words, the advantage of knowing and seeing a lot, providing them with valuable transnational resources that shape their lives in profound ways. The spirit of Isaac’s quote also applies to those seeking to understand their experience: by exploring migrant youth’s transnational mobility trajectories, researchers, policymakers, teachers, and others can find answers to pressing questions about their lives.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Mobility Trajectory Mapping

I. Mobility trajectory mapping grid template

The grid was printed on three separate pages that could be laid next to each to form one long grid or completed one by one. Blank 'moves' and 'siblings' pages could be added in the event that a participant had more than 10 moves in their trajectory or more than 3 siblings.

MO-TRAYL mobility and education grid
name:
date:

		Place of Birth	Move 1	Move 2	Move 3	Education
	Country					
	City					
	Neighbourhood					
	Caregiver					
Year	Age					
2019						
2018						
2017						
2016						
2015						
2014						
2013						
2012						
2011						
2010						
2009						

	Move 4	Move 5	Move 6	Move 7	Move 8	Move 9	Move 10
Year							
2019							
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		Mother (location)	Father (location)	Sibling 1 (location)	Sibling 2 (location)	Sibling 3 (location)
	Name:					
	Age:					
	Sex:					
	Relationship:					
Year	Age					
2019						
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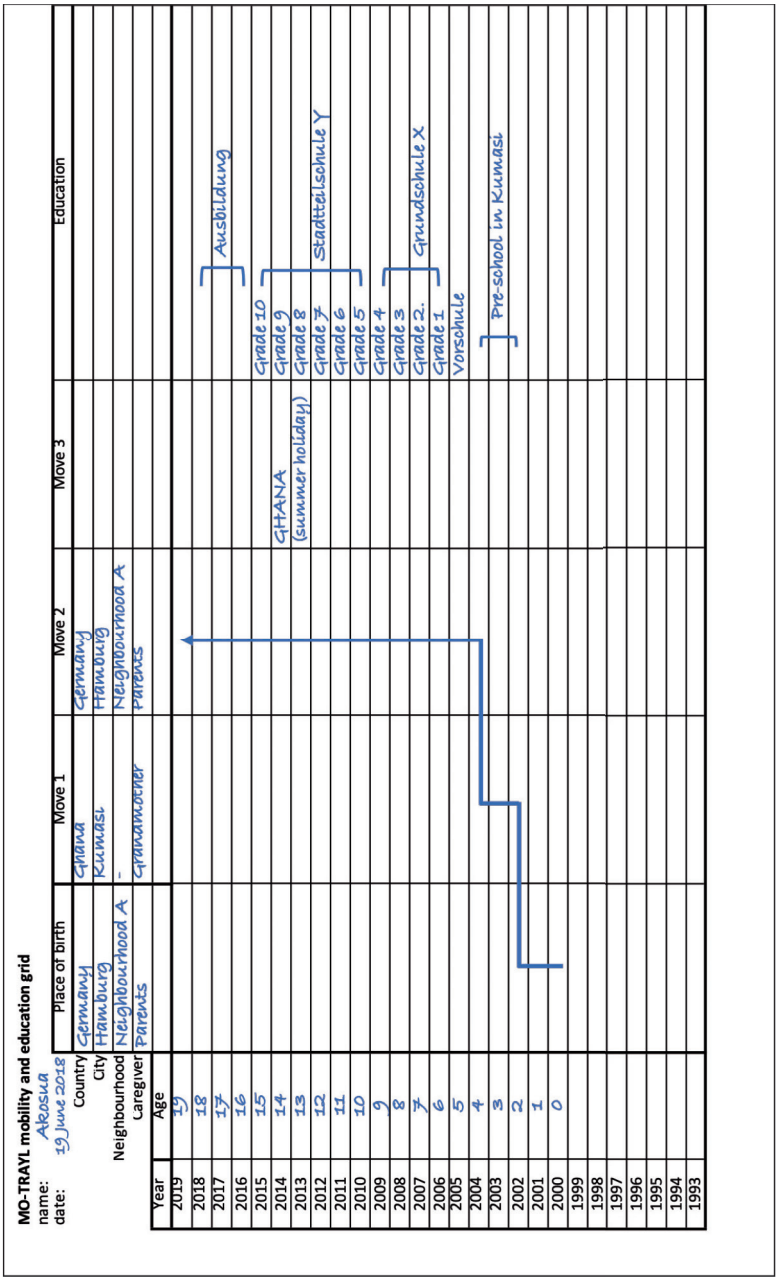
II. Sample completed mobility trajectory mapping grid

This sample mobility trajectory mapping grid shows the completed grid of Akosua, one of my participants. In order to preserve Akosua's anonymity and privacy, I have transposed the handwritten grid to a digital format, presented below. Akosua's final mobility trajectory map can be seen in Chapter 5 (Figure 5.1).



MO-TRAYL mobility and education grid

name: Akosua
date: 19 June 2018

	Place of birth	Move 1	Move 2	Move 3	Education
Country	Germany	Ghana	Germany		
City	Hamburg	Kumasi	Hamburg		
Neighbourhood	Neighbourhood A	-	Neighbourhood A		
Caregiver	Parents	Grandmother	Parents		
Year / Age					
2019 / 19					
2018 / 18					Ausbildung
2017 / 17					
2016 / 16					
2015 / 15					Grade 10
2014 / 14				GHANA	Grade 9
2013 / 13				(summer holiday)	Grade 8
2012 / 12					Grade 7 Stadtteilschule Y
2011 / 11					Grade 6
2010 / 10					Grade 5
2009 / 9					Grade 4
2008 / 8					Grade 3
2007 / 7					Grade 2. Grundschule X
2006 / 6					Grade 1
2005 / 5					Vorschule
2004 / 4					
2003 / 3					Pre-school in Kumasi
2002 / 2					
2001 / 1					
2000 / 0					
1999					
1998					
1997					
1996					
1995					
1994					
1993					

Year	Move 4	Move 5	Move 6	Move 7	Move 8	Move 9	Move 10
2019					GHANA (summer)		
2018							
2017			GHANA (summer)	SPAIN (class trip)			
2016		GHANA (summer)					
2015	GHANA (summer)						
2014							
2013							
2012							
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2005							
2004							
2003							
2002							
2001							
2000							
1999							
1998							
1997							
1996							
1995							
1994							
1993							

		Mother (location)	Father (location)	Sibling 1 (location)	Sibling 2 (location)	Sibling 3 (location)
Name:		XXX	XXX			
Age:		-	-			
Sex:		F	M			
Relationship:		mother	father			
Year	Age					
2019	19	Hamburg,				
2018	18	regular trips				
2017	17	to Ghana	Hamburg			
2016	16					
2015	15	(stepfather moved in)	Ghana			
2014	14					
2013	13	parents separated; father moved out				
2012	12					
2011	11					
2010	10					
2009	9					
2008	8					
2007	7					
2006	6	Hamburg	Hamburg			
2005	5					
2004	4					
2003	3					
2002	2					
2001	1					
2000	0					
1999						
1998						
1997						
1996						
1995						
1994						
1993						

III. Mobility trajectory mapping interview guide (English)

MO-TRAYL Youth Mobility and Educational Trajectory mapping questions

Using this grid, I would like you to join me to plot your moves, travels and schools over time. We will plot your moves and travels, your schools, and also the moves and travels of your biological parents and siblings. Let's start with when you were born and then turn to each move you have made since then.

I. Place of birth

a. In which year were you born?
b. Where were you living when you were born (i.e., neighbourhood, city and country)?
c. Who was your caregiver at the place that you were living when you were born? *(Caregiver refers to the person who takes care of you mostly when you are at home.)*

II. **Moves**. (To other places the participant has lived - for more than 3 months - beside place of birth).

(Include situations where the participant lived in more than one house in the same neighbourhood and city.)

a. Where did you next live (i.e., neighbourhood, city and country)?
b. In which year / at what age did you move to this place or house?
c. Who was your caregiver at this place or house? (*ask for name and relationship, write relationship code*)
d. How long (months or years) did you stay at this place or house?

Repeat questions until all moves covered, including current place of residence.

If the respondent attended a boarding school, probe for the place that they returned to at home when not at the boarding school. Here, you should record in your notebook the people that the respondent may say he or she visits during vacations when they don't go to their original home or place of residence. It is the latter home or place of residence that you indicate on the grid.

III. Short trips abroad. (Less than three months):

a. At what age or in which year did you make your first trip?
b. How long was this trip? (Months, weeks, days)
c. Where did you travel to? (Country, city, neighbourhood)
d. What was the purpose of that trip? (Choose from: family visit [FAM], study [STU], internship [INT], vacation [VAC], or other [OTH].)
e. Whom did you travel with? (*ask for name and relationship, write relationship code*)
f. Who did you live with on this trip? (*ask for name and relationship, write relationship code*)

Repeat questions for each subsequent trip abroad.

Use dotted lines to chart trips, and write the purpose for each indicated travel overseas. Details on 'other' purposes can be noted separately.

IV. Education trajectory.

(Start from present day and work backwards. Fill each cell of schooling years with the relevant school grade, e.g., PS1, JHS1, SHS1. Note each programme, profile, course studied at each stage of schooling.)

a. When did you start attending your first school (year vis-à-vis age)? What was the name of the school?
b. Where was this school located? (City, neighbourhood)
c. What type of school was it?
d. What level or class did you first enter in this school?
e. Did you ever attend any other school apart from your first school that you just told me about?

- Repeat questions for all subsequent schools until the current one.

- Boarding schools should be marked with '(B)' beside the school name and the location (city) of the school, if different to the residential location.
- Note the location of schools in the same city but different neighbourhood from place of residence.
- Once you have asked about the educational trajectory as a whole, ask questions 'f' to 'h' below.

f. Did you ever change a track in a school? If yes, when and in which school?

g. Did you ever change a profile in a school? If yes, when and in which school?
(Indicate a change in profile by writing P in a circle next to the time of the change.)

h. Did you ever repeat or skip a year in a school? If yes, when and in which school?
(For repeat, write the grade in the two relevant consecutive cells, and circle the repeated year cell. For skip, indicate S in a circle next to the following class.)

V. Family members' moves & locations. Now, I would like to ask you about all the places that your biological parents and each sibling lived from the time of your birth until now, as far as you know/remember.

a. Starting with your mother, can you tell me where she was living when you were born. From this place, where did she move to stay and when?

b. *(Repeat for all the places that the mother has lived until the current residence.)*

c. *Repeat for the father.*

d. *Repeat for each sibling (includes anyone considers a sibling, including half- or step-siblings).*

IV. Mobility trajectory mapping interview guide (German)

MO-TRAYL Fragen zur Mobilität- und Schullaufbahnkartierung von Jugendlichen

Mit dieser Vorlage, werden wir deine Reisen, Umzüge und Schulen kartieren und dokumentieren. Wir werden deine eigene Reisen und Umzüge dokumentieren, sowie die von deinen Eltern und Geschwistern. Lass uns mit der Zeitpunkt deiner Geburt anfangen, und dann nacheinander der Reihe nach jeden Umzug und jede Reise besprechen.

VI. Geburtsort

a. In welchem Jahr bist du geborn?

b. Wo wohntest du, als du geboren bist (i.e., Stadtteil, Stadt und Land)?

c. Wer war dein Betreuer, als du geboren bist? *(Betreuer heißt die Person, die meistens auf dich aufpasst und sich um dich kummert zu Hause.)*

VII. Umzüge und Länderwechsel. In welchen Orten hast du je gelebt, außer deinem Geburtsort (oder deinem ersten Haus), und einschlieβlich Situationen, wenn du in mehr als einem Haus in der selben Stadtteil order Stadt gewohnt hast? Lass uns mit dem ersten Umzug anfangen:

a. Wo war der nächste Ort, an dem du gewohnt hast (i.e., Stadtteil, Stadt und Land)?

b. In welchem Jahr bist du dahin umgezogen?

c. Wer war dein Betreuer in diesem Ort (oder Haus)?

d. Wie lange hast du da gewohnt?

Wiederhole diese Fragen für alle Umzüge, einschließlich den aktuelle Wohnort.

Wenn der Teilnehmer an einer Internatschule gewesen ist, frage nach dem Ort, wohin er/sie gefahren ist, wann er/sie nicht an der Schule war. Hier sollst du schreiben die Personen, die der Teilnehmer während den Ferien besucht hat, als er/sie nicht 'nach Hause' gegangen ist. Aber den Wohnort sollst du in der Vorlage einfügen.

VIII. Kurze Reisen im Ausland. Bist du je ins Ausland geflogen (gefahren) für weniger als 3 Monaten? *(Reisen im Ausland für mehr als 3 Monaten sind Umzüge und sollen in der Vorlage so eingefügt, siehe Abteilung II.)* Wenn ja:

a. Wie alt warst du, also du die erste Reise gemacht hast?

b. Wie lang (für wie viele Zeit war diese Reise)?

c. Wohin bist du gereist?

d. Warum hast du diese Reise gemacht? (Wähle: Familienbesuch, Studium, Praktikum, Urlaub, oder Andere.)

e. Mit wem bist du gereist?

f. Mit wem hast du gewohnt, auf dieser Reise?

Wiederhole die Fragen für jede Reise im Ausland. Mach eine gepunkte Linie, um diese Reise auf der Vorlage zu zeichnen, and schreibe den Zweck (warum) auf dieser Linie. Mehr Details über den Zweck einer Reise kannst du abseits notieren.

IX. Umzüge und Reisen von Verwandten. Jetzt, möchte ich dich fragen, wo deine Eltern und Geschwister gelebt habe, seitdem du geboren bist, soweit du es weisst oder dich erinnern kannst.

a. Wir fangen mit deiner Mutter an: Wo sie wohnte, als du geboren bist? Nachdem, wohin ist sie umgezogen und wann?

b. *Wiederhole für alle Orte, an den die Mutter gewohnt hat, einschließlich ihren aktuellen Wohnort.*

c. *Wiederhole für den Vater.*

d. *Wiederhole für die Geschwister (jeden, den der Teilnehmer für ein Geschwister hält, auch Halb- oder Stiefgeschwister).*

X. **Schullaufbahn**. Jetzt sprechen wir von den Schulen, in die du je gegangen bist. Wir fangen mit deiner ersten Schule an.

a. Wann hast du angefangen, in die Schule yu gehen? (Jahr und Alter)

b. Wo war diese Schule?

c. Was für eine Schule war sie?

d. In welcher Klasse hast du dort angefangen?

e. Bist du auch in einer anderen Schule gegangen, auβer dieser ersten Schule?

Wiederhole die Fragen für alle Schule, einschließlich die aktuelle Schule.

- Internatschulen sollen mit '(B)' gezeichnet werden, neben dem Namen der Schule und auch und dem Ort (Stadt) der Schule, wenn nicht in der selben Stadt wie der Wohnort.

- Schreib den Ort den Schulen, die in der selben Stadt als der Wohnort aber in einem anderen Stadtteil sind.

- Nachdem du über den Schullaufbahn insgesamt gefragt hast, stele die Fragen 'f' bis 'h' (unten).

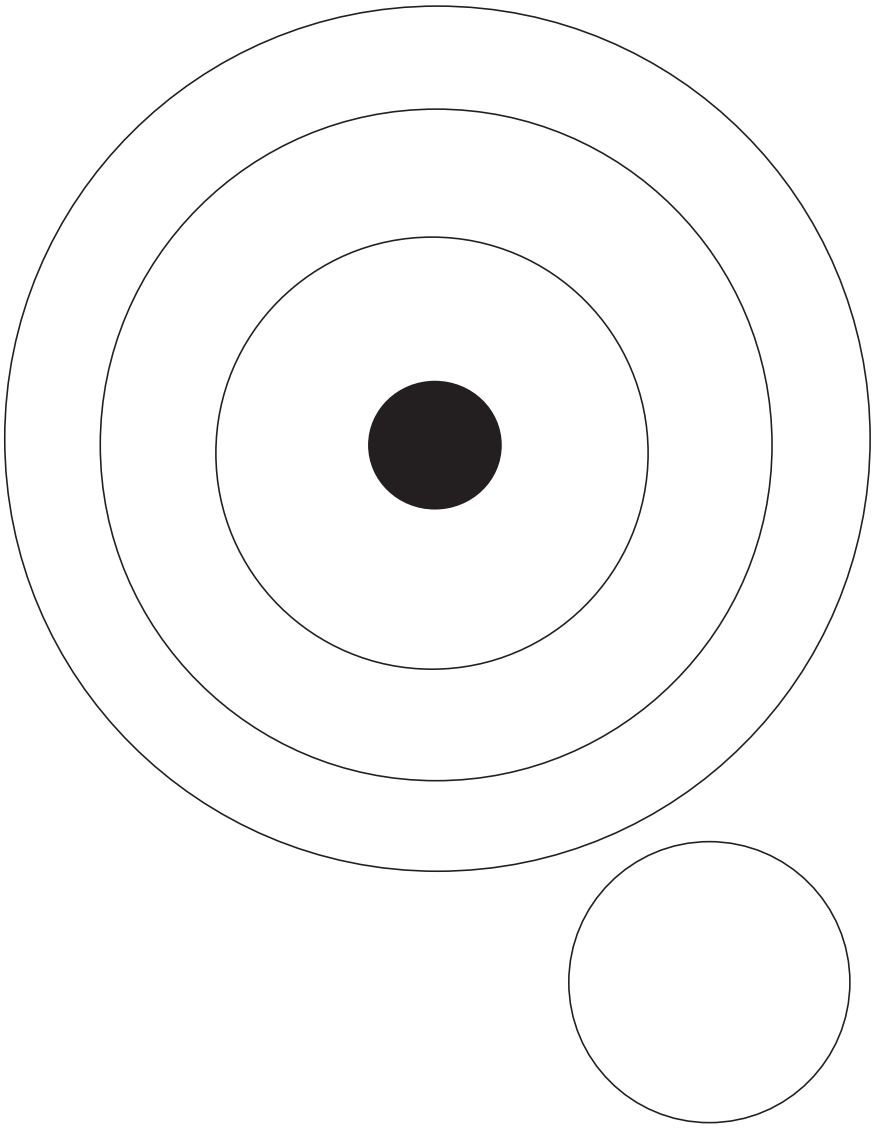
a. Hast du je die Schulform gewechselt? (NB: 'Abschulung' = von einem Gymnasium in eine Stadtteilschule gehen) Wenn ja, wann un in welcher Schule oder Klasse?

b. Hast du je deine Schulprofil gewechselt? Wenn ja, wann und in welcher Schule oder Klasse?

c. Hast du je eine Klasse wiederholt oder übersprungen? Wenn ja, wann und in welcher Schule oder Klasse?

Appendix B: Concentric Circle Network Mapping

I. <u>Concentric circle network mapping template</u>



II. Concentric circle interview guide (English and German)

MO-TRAYL Concentric Circle interview

Show the concentric circle template (see next page) to the participant and explain that the **ego** (i.e., the participant) is in the middle. Then, follow these steps:

1) EN: "***Write down the names of all of the people that are important to you on this sheet, inside these three circles. The more important they are to you, the closer to the centre they should be***."
DE: **"*Schreib hier in diesen 3 Kreisen alle Namen von Leuten, die dir wichtig sind. Je wichtiger sie sind, desto näher zum Zentrum sollst du ihren Namen schreiben***."

Don't define what 'important' means nor specify a time period.
If the participant does not know how to make sense of a (changing) relationship (e.g., when someone used to be important to the participant but suddenly lost contact with this person), he/she will still be encouraged to put the name in one of the three circles.
Note the name and location (country/region/city) of each person identified.

2) EN: "***Write down the names of people you have difficulties with or a difficult relationship with in the circle in the bottom right corner of the page***."
DE: "***In diesem Kreis hier unten, schrieb die Namen von Leuten mit den du Probleme hast oder eine schweirige Beziehung hast***."
Note the name and location (country/region/city) of each person identified.

3) After arranging the names according to importance in ego's life, the researcher uses the following probing questions to gain information (gender, age, relationship to ego) about the names in the circle and elicit more names in specific areas of interest.

Differentiate between names added in response to the general question and probing questions.
Take separate notes about participants' reasoning/explanations (of placement of names) and responses to probing questions.

Probing questions (English):

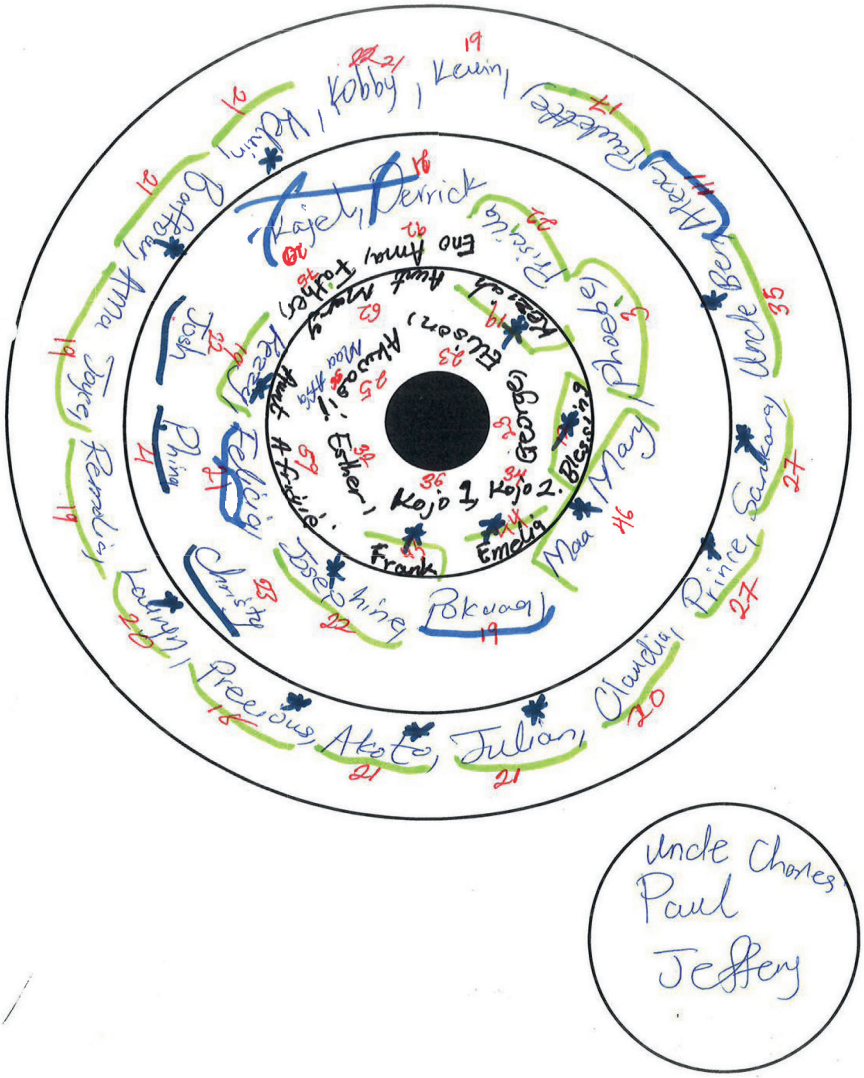
Mobility trajectory	**Resilience**	**Aspirations**	**Educational trajectory**
1) How do you stay in touch with people who live far away? (*Go in-depth on a few examples*) 2) How often are you in touch with them? 3) Who do you stay in touch with most? Why? 4) Have you seen/visited them? If yes, when/why? 5) Impact of GH trips on relationships w/ people in Hamburg (e.g., friends seen in Ghana)	Who do you go to for support/how do you get support about: - school - family - friends - the future, and - choices after school? (*Address these different categories one by one and colour-code them*)	Can you tell me about someone you admire/ a role model? What do you admire about them? Why? (*Prompt to see if there is more than one*, and *prompt for known people if ego mentions unknown people, e.g., celebrities*)	1) Who do you go to for help with your homework? (*Prompt to see if there is > one.)* 2) Who gives you advice/ guidance related to your education/career? 3) Who attends your meetings with your teacher/mentor in school?

Probing questions (German):

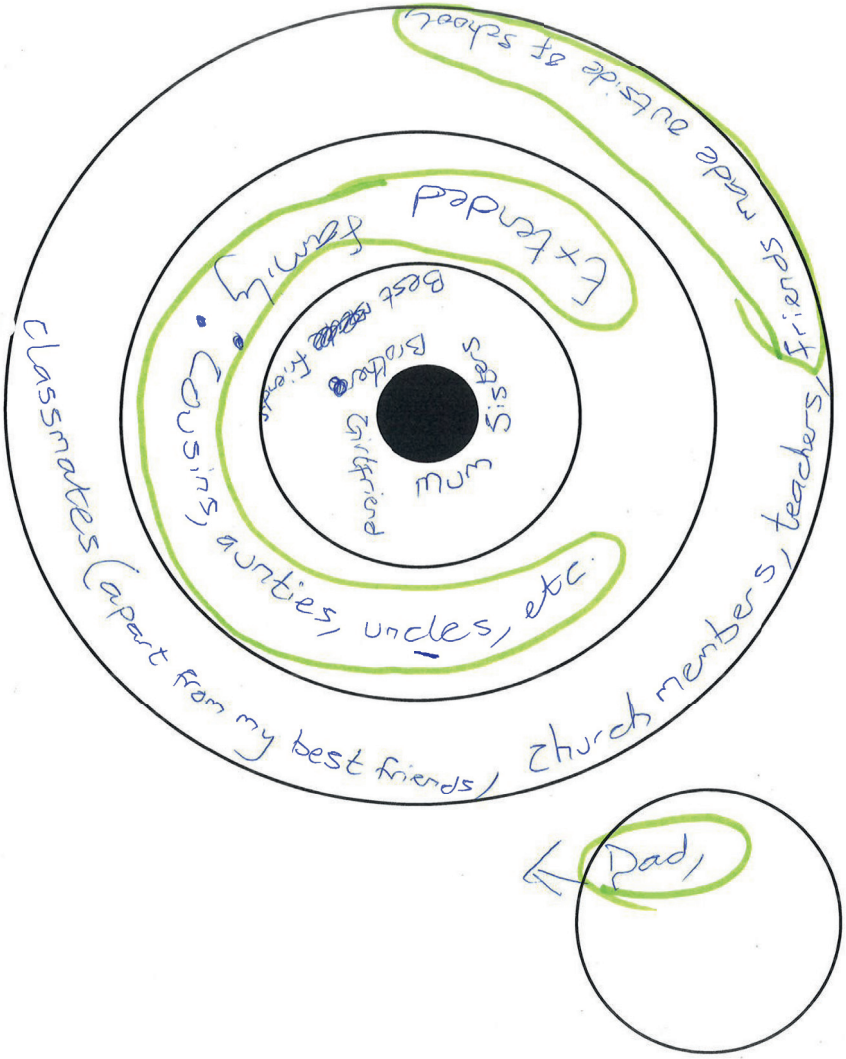
Die Mobilität	**Die Resilienz**	**Die Aspirationen**	**Die Bildungsgeschichte**
1) Wie bleibst du im Kontakt mit diesen Leuten? (*Go in-depth on a few examples*) 2) Wie oft? 3) Mit wem hast du den größten Kontakt? Warum? 4) Hast du sie besucht oder gesehen? Wenn ja, wann, wo und warum? 5) Welche Auswirkungen haben deine Reisen nach Ghana auf deine Beziehungen in Hamburg gehabt? (z.B., Freunden, die du in Ghana getroffen hast)	Wer unterschtüzt dich / wie kriegst du Unterschtützung für: - die Schule - Familie - Freunde - die Zukunft, und - deine Pläne für nach der Schule)? (*Address these different categories one by one and colour-code them*)	Kannst du mir von jemanden erzählen, den du bewunderst / der dich inspiriert / der ein Vorbild für dich ist? Was an ihn/sie bewunderst du? Warum? (*Prompt to see if there is more than one.*)	1) Wem fragst du für Hilfe / wer hilft dir mit deine Schularbeit / deinen Hausaufgaben? (*Prompt to see if there is > one.)* 2) Wer beratet dich über deine Bildung und deinen Beruf(spläne)? 3) Wer geht zu den Terminen / wer nimmt teil an den Terminen (mit deinen Lehrern) in der Schule?

III. Sample completed concentric circle network maps

Sample A is an example of a highly detailed concentric circle network map, in which the participant wrote the names of several people, fairly evenly distributed between the three concentric circles, in the first step. Three names were included in the separate circle for 'difficult relationships' during the second step. In the third step, ages were added in red, and locations were indicated by underlining names in green (Ghana), blue (Hamburg), and black (USA). Note: Participant pseudonyms are not indicated in order to prevent identification of real names in the concentric circle maps with ethnographic data presented in the thesis.



Sample B is an example of a less-detailed concentric circle network map, in which the participant wrote categories of people rather than specific names. The participant's mother, siblings, girlfriend and best friends are placed in the innermost circle; extended family occupy the middle circle; and classmates, church members, teachers, and friends made outside school make up the outermost circle. The participant's father is allocated to the separate circle for 'difficult relationships.' Those groups or individuals circled in green indicate that most or all people in the category reside in Ghana, while the uncircled groups or individuals largely consist of people in Hamburg.



Appendix C: Interview Topic Guide

I. General interview topic guide (English)

MO-TRAYL interview topic guide. *Make sure to first conduct a mobility and educational trajectory mapping interview in case of one-off interviews. Yet, always keep in mind that 'no-size-fits-all'.*

Mobility trajectory

(Moves in time and space, including place, year/age, family composition (e.g., transnational family arrangements) and resulting transnational linkages)

Questions:

Mobility experience (address each move or trip)

- How/ by whom was the decision to move/travel made?
- How did you feel about the decision to move/travel?
- Could you describe how you felt on the day of your move/trip? *Ask for recent or very significant moves*
- What were your expectations of your move/trip? To what extent were they met?
- Did/do you feel at home in the place you moved/travelled to? Why?
- What is your strongest memory of your move/trip?
- How do you look back on your move/trip? *Ask for more distant moves (time)*

In general:

- How do you generally feel about moving/ travelling?
- What is your favourite move or trip? Why?
- Which of the places you have lived in/travelled to would you like to visit again? Why?

Educational trajectory

(Pathway through education system, including place, year level, school type, qualifications, any skipped or repeated grades; grades/performance; interactions/experiences with teachers and peers. Take into account pre-schooling and experiences in different educational systems and schools, both primary and secondary.)

Questions:

School experience (address each school/track attended)

- Who decided what school/track you would attend?
- How was the decision about changing schools/tracks made? How do you feel about how this decision was made?
- How did you feel about changing schools / track?
- Was there someone who made you feel welcome in your new school/class?

School experience (address each phase of schooling)

- How do you feel you're doing in school?
- What are your teachers like? Are all your teachers like this? Which teachers are your favourite and why?
- Who do you (like to) hang out with? Why? Do you have a best friend at school?
- If you have ever experienced disruptions (e.g., repeating a school year), why did that happen?

In general

- How do you generally feel about school?

Resilience. (How participants (have) overcome difficult moments and obstacles (and what role transnational relationships and resources play in this)

Questions:

Specific moments

- Can you tell me about a time recently when you've had to face a challenge/difficulty/hurdle?
  - ➔ What was it about?
  - ➔ Who was involved?
  - ➔ How did you deal with it?
  - ➔ Looking back, would you have handled it the same way?
- Can you tell me about a recent achievement of yours / when you've achieved a goal?
  - ➔ What was the achievement/goal?
  - ➔ How did you achieve it?
  - ➔ Why was/is it important to you?

In general:

- ➔ What do you do in general to achieve your goals?
- ➔ Do you generally feel like you are able to achieve your goals?

Aspirations

(Plans for work/study; plans and hopes for relationships/ family/ place of residence; differentiate between expectations (realistic) and aspirations (ideal); actual choices/ transitions for those who make them during fieldwork. Take into account structural conditions.) [A = aspiration; E = expectation]

Questions:

Education

- What level of education would you like to achieve/complete? [A]
  - [if university] what would you like to study?
- What level of education would your parents (and your family in Ghana?) like you to achieve/complete? [A]
- What level of school do you think you will achieve/complete? [E]
- What level of education do your parents (and siblings, extended family, including in Ghana?) have? *Tailor this to who has come up in the (Concentric Circle) interview as important.*

The future (general)

- (If still in school) what would you like to do when you finish secondary school?
- Do you think about what you would like your life to be like in 5, 10 years? [A]
  - [If yes] Can you describe it to me? (*prompt for work, family, relationships, location, etc*.)
  - [If no] Why not?
- What do you think your life will be like in 5, 10 years (or at the age of 30)? [E]
- How would your parents/caregiver feel about this imagined future? *Tailor this to who has come up in the interview as important.*
- Do you feel optimistic and positive or negative and worried about the future? Why?

Role models

- Can you tell me about someone you admire/a role model? What do you admire about them / why?
- What do you think makes someone successful?

II. General interview topic guide (German)

MO-TRAYL Interviewleitfaden

Sorg dafür, dass du immer erst eine 'Tabelle über Umzüge, Reisen und Bildung' machst, im Fall von einmalige Interviews. Aber denke auch daran, dass es keine Einheitsgröße gibt.

Mobilitätsverlauf

(Umzüge und Länderwechsel in der Zeit und Raum, einschließlich Ort, Jahr, Alter, Familienzusammenstellung und resultierende transnationelle Verbindungen.)

Fragen:

Mobilitätserfahrung (für jeden Umzug oder Reise)

- Wer hat entscheidet, um den Umzug oder die Reise zu machen?
- Wie hast du dich über den Umzug oder die Reise gefühlt?
- Kannst du mir beschreiben, wie du dich gefühlt hast, am Tag des Umzuges oder der Reise? *Frage nach kürzliche oder wichtige Umzüge oder Reisen*.
- Was hast du vom Umzug oder von der Reise erwartet? War deine Erwartungen erfüllt?
- Fühlst du dich / Hast du dich dort, wo du hingezogen/hingereist bist, zu Hause gefühlt? Warum (nicht)?
- Was ist die stärkste Erinnerung von diesem Umzug oder dieser Reise?
- Wie blickst du zurück auf diesen Umzug oder auf diese Reise? *Frage für ferne Umzüge oder Reisen.*

Generell:

- Was ist generell deine Meinung zum Umziehen/Reisen? / Was hältst du vom Umziehen/Reisen?
- Was war deine Lieblingsreise oder Lieblingsumzug? Warum?
- Von allen Orten, die du besucht hast oder in den du gelebt hast, welchen würdest du nochmal besuchen? Warum?

Schullaufbahn / Bildungsgeschichte

(Weg durch das Bildungssystem, einschließlich Ort, Klasse, Schulform, Qualifizierungen, wiederholte oder übersprungene Klassen; Noten, Erfahrungen und Beziehungen mit Lehrern und anderen Schülern. Berücksichtige auch Kindergarten und Erfahrungen in verschiedenen Bildungssystemen und Schulen, einschließlich die Primar- und Sekundarausbildung.)

Fragen:

Schulerfahrungen (frage nach jeder Schule und Schulform)

- Wer hat entschiedet, in welche Schule / Schulform du gehen würdest?
- Wie ist diese Entscheidung getroffen? Was meinst du davon, wie diese Entscheidung getroffen ist?
- Wie hast du dich gefühlt, als du die Schulform gewechselt hast?
- Gab es jemanden, der dich wilkommen fühlen in deiner neuen Schule / Klasse gemacht hat?

Schulerfahrungen (frage nach jede Phase)

- Wie geht es dir in der Schule (Gefühle, Noten, usw.)?
- Wie sind deine Lehrer? Sind alle deine Lehrer so? Welche Lehrer magst du am besten und warum?

- Mit wem hängst du gerne rum / verbringst du gerne deine Zeit? / Wer sind deine Freunden in der Schule? Hast du eine(n) beste(n) Freund(in) in der Schule?
- Hast du je Unterbrechungen / Störungen in deinem Schullaufbahn gelebt? (z.B. eine Klasse wiederholt)? Wenn ja, wieso ist das passiert?

Generell

- Was ist deine Meinung zu Schule? Wie findest du die Schule?

Resilienz (Widerstandsfähigkeit)

(Wie Teilnehmer schwierige Situationen und Hindernisse überwinden (haben), und was transnationelle Beziehungen und Resourcen damit zu tun haben.)

Fragen:

Spezifische Situationen

- Kannst du mir eine Situation beschreiben, die vor kurzem passiert ist, in der du mit einer Herausforderung, einer Schwierigkeit oder einem Hindernis umgehen musstest?
  - ➔ Worum ging es?
  - ➔ Wer hat daran teilgenommen?
  - ➔ Wie hast du diese Situation behandelt?
  - ➔ Wenn du zurückblickst, würdest du es nochmal gleich behandeln?
  - ➔ Kannst du mir von einer kürzlichen Zeit erzählen, als du ein Ziel erreicht hast?
  - ➔ Was war dein Ziel /deine Erreichung?
  - ➔ Wie hast du es erreicht?
  - ➔ Warum war es dir wichtig?

Generell:

- ➔ Was machst du normalerweise / im Allgemeinen, um deine Ziele zu erreichen?
- ➔ Fühlst / glaubst du, dass du normalerweise deine Ziele erreichen kannst?

Aspirationen / Ziele

(Pläne für nach der Schule / für die Arbeit; Pläne und Hoffnungen für Beziehungen, Wohnort, Familien; differenziere zwischen Erwartungen (realistisch) und Aspirationen (ideal); einschließlich bestimmte Entscheidungen und Übergänge für die, sie diese Entscheidungen treffen und Übergänge erleben während der Feldforschung. Berücksichtige strukturelle Bedingungen.) [A = Aspiration; E = Erwartung]

Fragen:

Bildung

- Welches Bildungsniveau willst du erreichen / absolvieren? [A]
  - [wenn Universität] was möchtest du studieren?
- Welches Bildungsniveau wollen deine Eltern, dass du erreichst (und deine Familie in Ghana?) [A]
- Welches Bildungsniveau glaubst du, dass du erreichen / absolvieren wirst? [E]
- Welches Bildungsniveau haben deine Eltern (und Geschwister, Großfamilie, auch in Ghana)? *Pass diese Frage an die Personen, die im Concentric Circles Interview genannt wurden, an.*

Die Zukunft (generell)

- (wenn noch in der Schule) Was möchtest du machen, wenn du mit der Schule fertig bist?
- Denkst du darüber nach, wie dein Leben ist in 5 oder 10 Jahren aussehen sollte/könnte? / Was wünschst du dir füre dein Leben? [A]

    - [wenn ja] Kannst du es mir beschreiben? (*Frage nach Arbeit, Familien, Beziehungen, Wohnort, usw.*)
    - [wenn nein] Warum nicht?
- Was glaubst du: wie wird dein Leben in 5 oder 10 Jahren her sein (oder wenn du 30 bist)? [E]
- Was würden deine Eltern (dein Betreuer) von dieser vorgestellten Zukunft denken? *Pass diese Frage an die Personen, die als wichtig im Concentric Circles genannt wurden, an.*
- Bist du optimistisch und positiv oder pessimistich und besorgt im Bezug auf die Zukunft? Warum?

Vorbilder

- Kannst du mir von jemandem erzählen, den du bewunderst oder der ein Vorbild für dich ist? Was bewunderst du an ihn/sie, und warum?
- Deiner Meinung nach, was macht jemanden erfolgreich?

Appendix D: Communication and Consent

I. Participant information brochure (English)

Who can be involved?

I will be doing this research with young people who:

- have a Ghanaian background*.
- are 15-25 years old.
- have some experience traveling between Ghana and Europe.
- are attending or have finished school.

* For this project, 'Ghanaian background' means both your parents were born in Ghana.

MO-TRAYL

MO-TRAYL has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (grant agreement No 682982)

For more information:

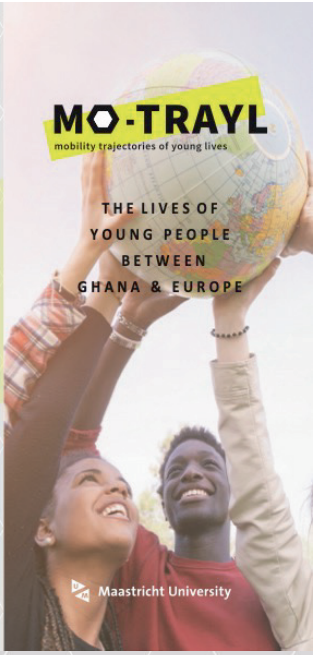
If you are you interested in participating in this research or have any questions, please contact me.

I am a researcher at Maastricht University (the Netherlands) and will be doing the case study in Hamburg, Germany, in 2018-2019.

Laura Ogden
+49 177 743 9297
l.ogden@maastrichtuniversity.nl

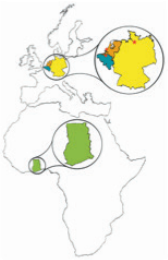
You can also find more information about MO-TRAYL at **www.motrayl.com**

Maastricht University



MO-TRAYL is a five-year project (2017-2021) that aims to understand how growing up between Ghana and Europe shapes young people's lives.

My research forms part of this project and focuses on young people of Ghanaian background in **Hamburg**, Germany. I will explore how youth experience growing up with attachments to more than one country. This includes how traveling to and from Ghana affects young people's relationships with family and friends, their schooling and what they choose to do after school. In order to learn more about this, I will listen to young people's views and stories.



Why is your story important?

Many young people today are part of families that live across two or more countries, either because they migrated themselves or at least one of their parents did. Some young people travel back to Ghana for study, holidays or family visits. But not much is known about young people's travels and moves between countries. Yet, many educators and policymakers assume that mobility is bad for young people's education. For example, some education policies prohibit traveling throughout the school year.

Alongside my research, other researchers focus on the lives of youth of Ghanaian background in Belgium, the Netherlands and Ghana. We hope that our research projects will help schools and policy makers to better understand the effects of international experience on young people's lives.

How will I learn about your story?

I will talk to young people about their travels to and from Ghana, relationships with family and friends, education and what they plan to do after school. I will also spend time with them to learn what their day-to-day life is like.

What about your privacy?

Participation in this research is always voluntary and you can opt out at anytime. Your name and contact information will be kept private and not shared with others.

II. Participant information brochure (German)

Wer kann mitmachen?

Ich werde dieses Projekt mit jungen Menschen durchführen, die:

- Ghanaischer Herkunft sind*.
- 15-25 Jahre alt sind.
- Erfahrung haben mit Reisen nach oder aus Ghana.
- Eine Schule besuchen oder besucht haben.

* „Ghanaische Herkunft" bedeutet in diesem Projekt, dass beide deiner Eltern in Ghana geboren sind.

MO-TRAYL

MO-TRAYL has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (grant agreement No 682982)

Für mehr Informationen:

Wenn du daran interessiert bist, an dieser Forschung teilzunehmen, oder wenn du Fragen hast, kannst du mich immer kontaktieren.

Ich bin eine Wissenschaftlerin an der Universität Maastricht (Niederlande) und verantwortlich für die Fallstudie in Hamburg, Deutschland, die in 2018 und 2019 durchgeführt wird.

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Mehr Informationen über MO-TRAYL findest du außerdem unter **www.motrayl.com**

Maastricht University

MO-TRAYL ist ein fünfjähriges Projekt (2017-2021), dessen Ziel es ist zu verstehen, wie das Aufwachsen zwischen Ghana und Europa das Leben junger Menschen prägt.

Meine Forschung ist Teil dieses Projektes und konzentriert sich auf junge Menschen ghanaischer Herkunft in **Hamburg**, Deutschland. Ich werde erkunden, wie junge Menschen das Erwachsenwerden erleben, wenn sie Verbindungen zu mehr als einem Land haben. Dies umfasst auch, wie Reisen nach und aus Ghana das Leben junger Menschen beeinflusst: Ihre Beziehungen mit Familie und Freunden, ihre Schullaufbahn, sowie ihre Entscheidungen für die Zukunft. Um mehr darüber zu erfahren, werde ich den Ansichten und Erzählungen junger Menschen zuhören.

Warum ist deine Geschichte wichtig?

Viele junge Menschen wachsen in einer Familie auf, die in zwei oder mehr Ländern lebt. Manche reisen nach Ghana um zu studieren, Urlaub zu machen oder Familie zu besuchen. Man weiß jedoch immer noch sehr wenig über die Reisen und Länderwechsel junger Menschen. Trotzdem gehen viele Lehrkräfte und Politiker davon aus, dass diese Wanderungsbewegungen für die Ausbildung junger Menschen schlecht sind. So verbieten z.B. manche Schulvorschriften das Reisen während des Schuljahres.

Neben meiner Forschung konzentrieren sich andere Wissenschaftlerinnen auf das Leben junger Menschen ghanaischer Herkunft in Belgien, in den Niederlanden und in Ghana. Wir erhoffen uns, dass unser Forschungsprojekt Schulen und Politikern helfen kann, besser zu verstehen, wie internationale Erfahrungen das Leben junger Menschen beeinflussen.

Wie werde ich mehr über deine Geschichte lernen?

Ich werde mit jungen Menschen über ihre Reisen nach und aus Ghana, ihre Beziehungen mit Freunden und Familie, ihre Schulausbildung und ihre Pläne für nach der Schule reden. Ich werde auch Zeit mit ihnen verbringen, um mehr darüber zu lernen wie ihr alltägliches Leben aussieht.

Was ist mit deiner Privatsphäre?

Die Teilnahme an dieser Forschung ist freiwillig und du kannst dich jederzeit dazu entscheiden, nicht mehr teilzunehmen. Dein Name und deine Kontaktdaten bleiben anonym und werden nicht mit anderen geteilt.

III. Researcher oral consent form

Maastricht University

RESEARCHER ORAL CONSENT FORM

MOBILITY TRAJECTORIES OF YOUNG LIVES PROJECT (MO-TRAYL)

I hereby acknowledge that the participant understands what this study is about and has given oral consent to the following (where applicable):

1. Taking part in the above research; ☐
2. The participant has received a copy of the project information sheet that explains the use of the data in this research; ☐
3. The participant has had the opportunity to ask questions about the study and has had time to think about his/her participation; ☐
4. The participant has been informed of the voluntary nature of his/her participation and his/her right to withdraw from the study without giving a reason; ☐
5. The participant has been informed that his/her name will not be used in the research, that data will be kept confidential and only shared with the research team, that data will be kept in accordance with data protection legislation and stored in a data archive only for the purposes of data verification and not made accessible for research by 3rd parties; ☐
6. The participant has been informed that if photos or videos will be taken during the course of the project in which he/she figures in the foreground, he/she will be asked for consent and should he/she prefer, his/her face (eyes) will be blurred on the video/photographs; ☐
7. The participant has been informed that he/she will not derive any monetary benefits from this research. ☐

Please tick against the appropriate box.

The respondent is:

Youth (between 15-17 years) ☐

Young Adult (above 18 years) ☐

Parent/Guardian ☐

_____ _____

Name and Signature of Researcher Date

Identification Code: _____ Language used: _____

IV. Key informants consent form (English)

Maastricht University

Declaration of Consent

for participation in interviews:

"Mobility Trajectories of Young Lives (MO-TRAYL)"

I have been informed of the study. I have read the written information. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study. I have been able to think about my participation in the study that is completely voluntary. I understand that I can choose whether or not to be part of this study. I understand that if there are any questions that I do not want to answer, I can say so at any point during the interview and those questions and answers will not be used as part of this study.

I understand that my name will not be used in any outputs (publications, reports), unless I specifically request otherwise. I understand that my data will be kept confidential and only shared with the research team. I understand that the data will be kept in accordance with data protection legislation and that it will be stored in a data archive for future use, also by other researchers, with identifying details removed.

I agree to participate in the study:

Name:

Position:

Date of birth:

Signature: Date:

The undersigned, responsible researcher, declares that the said person has been informed orally and in writing about the study mentioned above.

Name:

Function:

Signature: Date:

V. Key informants consent form (German)

Maastricht University

Einverständniserklärung
für die Teilnahme an einem Interview
im Rahmen des Projekts:

"Mobility Trajectories of Young Lives (MO-TRAYL)"

Ich wurde über dieses Forschungsprojekt informiert. Ich habe die schriftlichen Informationen gelesen. Ich hatte die Möglichkeit, Fragen zu stellen. Ich habe über meine Teilnahme am Interview nachdenken können und ich weiß, dass meine Teilnahme komplett freiwillig ist. Ich weiß, dass ich mich dafür eintscheiden kann, teilzunehmen oder nicht teilzunehmen. Ich weiß, dass ich Fragen nicht beantworten muss und dass ich zu jedem Moment im Interview sagen kann, dass ich will, dass meine Antwort zu einer spezifischen Frage nicht in der Studie veröffentlicht werden soll.

Ich weiß, dass mein Name nicht veröffentlicht wird, es sei denn, ich habe ausdrücklich etwas anderes verlangt. Ich weiß, dass meine Daten geheim gehalten werden und nur im Forschungsteam geteilt werden. Ich weiß, dass die Daten des Interviews entsprechend der Datenschutzrichtlinien in anonymisierter Form in einem Datenarchiv zur zukünftigen Verwendung, auch von anderen Forschern, gespeichert werden.

Ich stimme zu, an diesem Projekt teilzunehmen:

Name:

Beschäftigung:

Geburtsdatum:

Unterschrift: Datum:

Ich, die verantwortliche Forscherin, habe diese Person mundlich und schriftlich über das Forschungsprojekt informiert.

Name:

Beschäftigung:

Unterschrift: Datum:

English summary

Much research on migrant youth focuses exclusively on their lives in their country of residence, exploring which family, school, and community factors support or inhibit their educational success and general well-being. The lives of young people born in the country their parents migrated to are considered to exist solely within that country's borders, while young people who themselves migrate are viewed as 'blank slates' upon arrival (Mazzucato 2015). While transnational migration research acknowledges that migrant youth maintain connections to people and places beyond the borders of their country of residence – through contact with relatives in their family's country of origin, the practice of home-country language, religion and cultural customs, or knowledge of their family's past (Levitt and Waters 2002; Levitt 2009; Haikkola 2011) – this research largely considers migrant youth to be immobile. While these bodies of research provide insights into the practices, influences, and relationships that constitute the daily lives of migrant youth in the country of residence, they are missing a crucial piece of the puzzle: transnational mobility.

The absence of transnational mobility from research on migrant youth is puzzling, given that an increasing proportion of the youth population in Europe has a migration background (OECD/European Union 2015) and that empirical evidence shows that they are highly mobile. For example, recent studies show that most migrant youth in Europe visit their or their parents' country of origin at least every two years (Schimmer and van Tubergen 2014; Mazzucato and Haagsman 2022). Developing a better understanding of how, why and with what effects young people are on the move is important. Geographic mobility is increasingly seen as an integral part of youth transitions to adulthood and as a pathway to the acquisition of skills needed in a globalised world (Suárez-Orozco 2005; Robertson et al. 2018). By contrast, negative assumptions abound about migrant youth's mobility: education policy presumes that mobility harms migrant youth's education, while public policy often views migrant youth's connections to their country of origin as coming at the expense of their 'integration' into their country of residence (Carrasco and Narciso 2015; Mazzucato 2015). Some scholars argue that migrant youth's transnational mobility can in fact produce positive competencies (Suárez-Orozco 2005: 211; Orellana 2016: 91; Mazzucato 2015), yet these positive impacts remain understudied.

Against this backdrop, this thesis asks: *How do young people of Ghanaian background living in Hamburg, Germany, experience their transnational mobility over time and space, and how does mobility affect their lives?*

I conducted 14 months of youth-centric, multi-sited, mobile ethnographic fieldwork with 20 young people of Ghanaian background in Hamburg and on their travels to Ghana in 2018 and 2019. The sample included 14 female and 6 male participants aged 15-25. While 8 were

born in Ghana and 12 in Germany, all had experienced some form of mobility between the two countries, including 14 changes of residence and 29 short visits. Data collection involved participant observation and interviews with participants and other key informants, but also the use of various mobile methods that documented young people's mobility patterns, experiences and effects over time and space. These included mapping young people's mobility trajectories throughout their lives, following their mobility by accompanying their visits to Ghana and staying in touch online during their travels, and interviewing them before and after their trips to understand the anticipated and actual impacts of their mobility.

The thesis draws on insights from various bodies of research, particularly migrant transnationalism and mobility studies, while addressing five main research gaps. First, it takes a youth-centric approach in contrast to the focus on adult migrants or adults' perceptions of migrant youth in the literature. Second, I explore migrant youth's diverse mobility experiences over time and space through the concept of 'youth mobility trajectories', which encapsulates all moves young people make, rather than focusing on a single migratory move or return visit. Third, I investigate how experiences in the country of origin throughout young people's mobility trajectories impact their lives in the country of residence, rather than considering only residence-country factors as relevant to their day-to-day lives. Fourth, I employ an innovative methodology that is youth-centric, multi-sited, mobile, and collaborative, to generate new insights into migrant youth mobility, especially regarding the embodied and dynamic aspects of mobility. Finally, the thesis provides empirical data on the under-researched yet increasingly important migration flow between Africa and Europe, especially of migrant youth. The case of Ghanaian-background youth in Hamburg is relevant because many young people of Ghanaian background abroad are part of highly mobile transnational networks, and Germany hosts Europe's second-largest Ghanaian community after Italy, with Hamburg being home to the largest Ghanaian community in Germany (Nieswand 2008; Mörath 2015).

Main empirical findings

The main research question was dissected into three sub-questions, each addressed by an empirical chapter that has been published or is currently under review at international peer-reviewed journals.

Chapter 5 investigates young people's visits to Ghana from Germany to understand *how their mobility experiences shape their changing relationships to the country of origin over time and space*. Using a modified version of Urry's (2002) typology of proximity (face-to-face, face-the-place, face-the-moment*)*, the chapter studies mobility up-close, in real-time, and through the changing constellations of people, places and moments that make up young people's visits to Ghana throughout their mobility trajectories. The chapter shows the value of using a youth-centric and mobile methodology that enables researchers to investigate the

specific details that make up young people's mobility experiences, and of adopting a mobility trajectories lens to investigate such experiences throughout young people's lives. The findings challenge the often-static representation in research of the country of origin and migrant youth's feelings towards it by revealing that migrant youth experience and articulate their relationships to the country of origin in changing, complex ways based on mobility experiences that also change over time and space.

Chapters 6 and 7 apply the embodied and processual approach fleshed out in Chapter 5 to explore how migrant youth's experiences in the country of origin throughout their mobility trajectories shape life in the country of residence. They do so by studying the contexts inhabited and relationships nurtured in Ghana, which provide resources that are applied to life in Germany. Chapter 6 investigates *how young people gain resources in the country of origin and then translate and use these resources to navigate their school transitions in the country of residence following an international move*. In the chapter, I analyse young people's resources through the concept of 'embodied cultural capital' and employ a mobility trajectories lens. The analysis reveals how young people gain four types of embodied cultural capital – confidence, discipline, respect and adaptability – through their educational environments and extended family networks in Ghana and then use these resources to successfully navigate their school transitions in Hamburg. Their successful transitions reflect a 'chemical reaction' between the resources young people possess and the recognition and value afforded these resources in their specific reception context. By looking at factors beyond the country of residence and by employing a youth-centric perspective, the chapter contributes to explaining previously unexplored mechanisms that shape migrant youth's school transitions.

Chapter 7 analyses *how young people build and maintain transnational peer relationships through their mobility trajectories, which resources they obtain from these relationships, and what effects these resources have on their lives in the country of residence*. The chapter combines how transnational peer relationships are established and maintained through young people's periods of residence in and visits to Ghana, as well as through the use of ICTs during periods of immobility. The chapter uses the concept of 'social capital' to analyse the resources migrant youth obtain from their relationships with other young people in Ghana. These resources, including educational motivation and transnational frames of reference, affect young people's lives in the country of residence by shaping their education and plans for the future. By adopting a mobility trajectories lens, the chapter advances our understanding of migrant youth's support systems and the resources they provide, thereby moving beyond adult-centric views of transnational networks and methodologically nationalistic views of young people's peer relationships.

Conclusions

The thesis makes five key contributions to the literature on transnational youth mobility and other bodies of research with which it engages.

1) Emphasising the value of studying transnational youth mobility trajectories

The concept of 'youth mobility trajectories', which includes all geographic moves young people make and the changing family constellations that accompany them (Mazzucato 2015; van Geel and Mazzucato 2018), allowed me to address a crucial gap pertaining to migrant youth's mobility in existing research by enabling me to study their mobility in a thorough and nuanced way. In other words, it allowed me to focus on young people's individual mobility experiences as well as their broader patterns of mobility, and the effects mobility has on their lives. Gathering information on all mobility experiences throughout young people's trajectories – including their timing, duration, purpose, and location – creates a comprehensive picture of the topography of their transnational lives. This achieves two things.

First, it brings migrant youth's experiences in the country of origin into the picture, countering the methodological nationalism of much research on migrant youth and emphasising the importance of a transnational lens for understanding their lives. Second, by considering experiences in both the country of origin and the country of residence and analysing them over time and space, youth mobility trajectories allow researchers to study mobility's cumulative effects and dynamics; that is, how experiences in the country of origin shape young people's lives in the country of residence. For example, the confidence, discipline, respect and adaptability young people built through their schooling and family relationships in Ghana smoothed their school transitions to a new education system in Hamburg, and young people's relationships with peers during period of residence in and visits to Ghana gave them educational motivation, directly affecting their schooling in Germany. Young people's mobility has largely been overlooked in research, studied alongside sedentary transnational practices, or conceived in simplistic ways. By studying youth mobility trajectories, this thesis shows that migrant youth *are* mobile, that they have unfolding patterns of multi-directional mobility, and that mobility shapes their lives in profound ways. This finding contributes not only to transnationalism research and mobility studies, but also to literatures that seek to better understand the factors shaping migrant youth's lives in the country of residence.

2) Showing that mobility trajectories provide migrant youth with transnational resources

The methodologically nationalistic view in much research of the resources available to migrant youth focuses on their family, school and community contexts in the country of

residence (Portes and Zhou 1993; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Suárez-Orozco et al. 2009; Haller et al. 2011), while transnational migration research highlights migrant youth's resources transmitted through their parents in the country of residence. By adopting a mobility trajectories lens and taking a youth-centric approach, this thesis shows that migrant youth also gain resources first-hand through their own transnational mobility to and from the country of origin. These resources include various forms of embodied cultural capital, like confidence, respect, discipline and adaptability; social capital, such as educational motivation and transnational frames of reference; and young people's changing relationships with the country of origin itself, comprised of the social relationships, resources and opportunities they associate with it. Furthermore, the thesis demonstrates how these resources operate transnationally – that is, how resources gained in one country are translated to and used within another. This finding adds empirical weight to the theoretical importance of using a transnational mobility lens in research on the lives of migrant youth by showing that the contexts in which they develop resources extend far beyond the boundaries of their country of residence and are accessed through their mobility trajectories. Transnational resources are particularly important in migrant youth's education and future planning.

3) Demonstrating the central role of young people's agency in their mobility trajectories

This thesis argues that migrant youth's agency is crucial to the viability of their transnational resources and thus to how transnational mobility shapes their lives. The agency of the participants in this study enabled them to translate and use their transnational resources between the country of origin and the country of residence. They actively pursued opportunities, invested in or retreated from relationships, and interpreted the meaning of their visits to Ghana; they exercised agency in determining which forms of cultural capital from Ghana to use or adapt in their school transitions in Germany; and they agentically shaped their own transnational networks by establishing, maintaining, and employing resources from transnational peer relationships.

This finding does not imply that adults are unimportant in the lives of migrant youth, nor does it suggest their agency is unfettered. Relationships with adults were important to them, and adults had a prominent presence and influence in their transnational mobility trajectories. However, such relationships and influences are well documented in the literature; this thesis instead highlights young people's agency as an important aspect of their transnational mobility and how it shapes their lives. This finding contributes to transnational migration research, making clear that research needs to study the migration and mobility experiences of young people in their own right, not just in reference to and relationship with adults. It also contributes to research on cultural capital and education by showing that young people do not only benefit from their parents' capital, but actively broker their own transnational resources, accumulating, translating, and using them strategically to shape their own pathways.

4) Revealing the shifting dynamics of young people's transnational social positioning throughout their mobility trajectories

Transnational migration research has long acknowledged that migrants – including many Ghanaian migrants – often hold higher social positions in their countries of origin than their countries of residence (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004; Nieswand 2011; Coe and Pauli 2020). Yet such findings have rarely explored in relation to migrant mobility trajectories, nor for migrant youth. This thesis shows that migrant youth also experience diverse social positions between the countries of origin and residence, and that their transnational mobility trajectories help explain the dynamics of these diverse positions. The participants in this study occupied low social-class positions in Hamburg but often came from relatively privileged backgrounds in Ghana. Their experiences and relationships in various contexts in Ghana provided them with valuable resources that moved with them throughout their transnational mobility trajectories and were used to offset certain disadvantages of their lower social-class position in Germany.

This thesis highlights that one mechanism explaining the relationship between parents' social-class backgrounds in the country of origin and their children's outcomes in the country of residence (Ichou 2014; Feliciano and Lanuza 2017) is migrant youth's own transnational mobility trajectories. Further, this study indicates that changing social-class positions experienced through mobility trajectories, and the related flow and impact of resources between the countries of origin and residence, are important not only for adult migrants in the employment and economic spheres, but also for young people and in other areas of life, such as education. Finally, literature on cultural capital and education about migrant youth has focused almost exclusively on migrants occupying low social-class positions in the country of residence, and on the resulting disadvantage inflicted by their 'lack' of the 'right' capital. My thesis suggests that the dynamics of social class in the education of migrant youth are more complex. Understanding migrant youth's educational experiences and outcomes within the country of residence requires knowledge of their social positioning in their country of origin, to which they remain actively connected through their transnational mobility trajectories.

5) Innovating a youth-centric and mobile methodology for the study of transnational mobility trajectories

The theoretical insights of this study of transnational youth mobility trajectories were only possible through a methodology that adequately captures the patterns, experiences, and effects of mobility. I used an innovative methodology that centered around young people's own perspectives and experiences and employed mobile methods to capture various aspects of their mobility (Büscher and Urry 2009; Fincham et al. 2010), in contrast to the methodological approaches that have dominated research on migrant youth mobility thus far.

Within an ethnographic approach including participant observation and interviews, three techniques used in this research represent a palette of youth-centric mobile methods that can be used separately or in combination. These include mobility trajectory mapping to capture young people's mobility over time and space throughout their lives; following mobility in real-time, both physically and digitally, to emphasise the embodied and dynamic nature of mobility experiences; and before-and-after interviewing to document the meaning-making process in action by tracing the anticipated and actual impacts of mobility.

Using these methods is not necessarily easy. Physically accompanying mobility, for example, is resource intensive; it takes significant time, money, and energy. Yet where it is possible to use youth-centric mobile methods, they add enormous value to research and can be used by diverse bodies of research, including studies of mobility or those that would benefit from acknowledging the central role of mobility in the lives of migrant youth.

Nederlandse samenvatting (Dutch summary)

Migrantenjeugd worden vaak enkel bestudeerd en begrepen door de levens die zij leidden in het land van verblijf. Veel onderzoek naar migrantenjeugd houdt zich bezig met de omstandigheden binnen het gezin, school en de gemeenschap waar ze wonen die hun onderwijsprestaties en algemene welzijn kunnen vormen. Hoewel transnationaal migratieonderzoek erkent dat migrantenjeugd banden behouden met mensen en plaatsen buiten het land waar zij woonachtig zijn (door contact met familieleden in het land van herkomst, het gebruik van de taal, (culturele) gebruiken van het land van herkomst of kennis van het familieverleden (Levitt en Waters 2002; Levitt 2009; Haikkola 2011)), beschouwt dit type onderzoek migrantenjeugd vaak als immobiel. Ofschoon dit onderzoek veel inzicht verwerft in het dagelijks leven van migrantenjeugd in het land van verblijf mist het een essentieel onderdeel van de puzzel: transnationale mobiliteit.

De afwezigheid van transnationale mobiliteit in het onderzoek naar migrantenjeugd is wonderlijk aangezien er een toenemend aantal jongeren is binnen Europa dat een migrantenachtergrond heeft (OECD/Europese Unie 2015) en omdat er empirisch is aangetoond dat deze jongeren zeer mobiel zijn. Recente studies hebben bijvoorbeeld gedemonstreerd dat de meeste migrantenjeugd wonend in Europa hun of hun ouders thuisland ten miste elke twee jaar bezoekt (Schimmer en van Tubergen 2014; Mazzucato en Haagsman 2022). Het is belangrijk beter te begrijpen hoe, waarom en met welke gevolgen jongeren deze reizen maken. Geografische mobiliteit wordt steeds vaker gezien als integraal deel van de overgang naar volwassenheid en als de weg waar de benodigde vaardigheden worden opgedaan die nodig zijn in de huidige mondiale wereld (Suárez-Orozco 2005; Robertson et al. 2018). Negatieve aannames over de mobiliteit van jongeren zijn daarentegen alomtegenwoordig: onderwijsbeleid verondersteld dat mobiliteit schoolprestaties van jongeren schaadt en overheidsbeleid neemt vaak aan dat de band die jongeren hebben met het land van herkomst ten kostte gaat van hun ‘integratie’ in hun land van verblijf (Carrasco en Narciso 2015; Mazzucato 2015). Sommigen wetenschappers zeggen echter dat de transnationale mobiliteit van jongeren juist het tegenovergestelde effect kan hebben en het positieve vaardigheden aanleert (Suárez-Orozco 2005: 211; Orellana 2016: 91; Mazzucato 2015). Al zijn deze positieve effecten nog weinig onderzocht.

In dit kader vraagt deze dissertatie: *Hoe ervaren jongeren van Ghanese afkomst wonend in Hamburg, Duitsland, hun transnationale mobiliteit over tijd en ruimte en hoe beïnvloed deze mobiliteit hun leven?*

Ik heb in 2018 en 2019 14 maanden *multi-sited* (op verschillende locaties) op jongeren gericht veldonderzoek gedaan met 20 jongeren van Ghanese afkomst wonend in Hamburg en heb hen in die tijd ook gevolgd op hun reizen naar Ghana. De vrouwelijke (14) en mannelijke (6) deelnemers waren tussen de 15 en 25 jaar oud. Acht daarvan waren geboren in Ghana en 12 in Duitsland. Al hebben ze zich allen tussen deze landen bewogen, bestaande uit 14 verhuizingen en 29 korte bezoeken. Dataverzameling bevatte verschillende methoden zoals participerende observatie en interviews met participanten en andere sleutelinformanten alsook verschillende mobiele methoden die de mobiliteitstrajecten, -ervaringen en -effecten van deze jongeren vastlegden. Deze methoden registreerden al de mobiliteit van deze jongeren en volgden deze jongeren mede door mee te gaan op hun reizen naar Ghana en door hen tijdens deze reizen ook online te volgen. Ook werden ze voor en na hun reizen geïnterviewd om de geanticipeerde en uiteindelijke impact van hun mobiliteit te vatten.

Belangrijkste empirische bevindingen

De hoofdvraag is opgedeeld in 3 deelvragen. Elk wordt onderzocht in een apart empirisch hoofdstuk. Deze hoofdstukken zijn allen of gepubliceerd of liggen ter beoordeling bij een internationaal peer-reviewed tijdschrift.

Hoofdstuk 5 onderzoekt de bezoeken die de jongeren vanuit Duitsland aan Ghana brengen om te begrijpen *hoe hun ervaringen met mobiliteit hun veranderende relatie met het land van herkomst vormt over tijd en ruimte.* Gebruikmakend van een geadapteerde versie van Urry (2002) zijn typologie van nabijheid (face-to-face, face-the-place, face-the-moment) bestudeert dit hoofdstuk mobiliteit van dichtbij, live en door de veranderende samenstelling van mens, plaats en moment die deel uitmaken van de bezoeken die zij aan Ghana brengen. Dit hoofdstuk toont de waarde aan van een op jongeren-gerichte methode waar ook mobiliteit centraal staat, omdat dit het voor onderzoekers mogelijk maakt om bepaalde details die deel uit maken van de mobiliteitservaring te onderzoeken. Bovendien maakt de mobiliteitstrajectlens het mogelijk om deze ervaringen te onderzoeken tijdens het hele levenstraject. De resultaten betwisten de vaak statische representaties van het land van herkomst en de gevoelens van jongeren voor dat land. Het laat namelijk zien dat migrantenjongeren hun band met het land van herkomst ervaren en articuleren in een altijd veranderende en complexe manier gebaseerd op hun mobiliteitservaring die ook weer verandert door ruimte en tijd.

Hoofdstuk 6 en 7 gebruiken de belichaamde en processuele aanpak die in hoofdstuk 5 in detail besproken wordt en onderzoeken hoe het leven in het land waar ze woonachtig zijn wordt gevormd door de mobiliteitstrajecten en ervaringen van migrantenjeugd in het land van herkomst. Dit doen deze hoofdstukken door de context te bestuderen waarin de jongeren in Ghana woonachtig zijn en de relaties die zij daar onderhouden die weer resulteren in hulpbronnen die gebruikt worden voor hun leven in Duitsland. Hoofdstuk 6 onderzoekt *hoe*

jongeren toegang verkrijgen tot middelen in het land van herkomst die vertaalt en gebruikt worden in de navigatie van schooltransities die jongeren maken na de verhuizing naar het nieuwe land van verblijf. Het hoofdstuk gebruikt een mobiliteitstrajectlens en analyseert de middelen die jongeren disponeren door het concept 'belichaamd cultureel kapitaal'. De analyse toont aan hoe jongeren vier types van belichaamd cultureel kapitaal verwerven – zelfvertrouwen, discipline, respect en aanpassingsvermogen – door hun onderwijsmilieu en grootfamilie in Ghana die ze dan weer gebruiken om hun schooltransities in Hamburg succesvol te navigeren. Hun succesvolle transities weerspiegelen een 'chemische reactie' tussen de middelen die jongeren zelf tot beschikking hebben en de erkenning en de waarde die deze middelen toegekend krijgen in hun ontvangstcontext. Door te kijken naar verschillende factoren die voorbij gaan aan enkel het land van verblijf en een perspectief te gebruiken waarin jongeren centraal staan draagt dit hoofdstuk bij aan het verklaren van eerder onvoldoende onderzochte mechanismen die de schooltransities van migrantenjongeren vormen.

Hoofdstuk 7 analyseert *hoe jongeren transnationale relaties aangaan en onderhouden met hun leeftijdsgenoten, welke middelen zij verkrijgen door deze relaties en welke effecten deze middelen hebben op hun leven in het land van verblijf.* Het hoofdstuk brengt samen hoe transnationale relaties worden gevormd en onderhouden tijdens hun verblijf in Ghana en hoe ICT gebruikt wordt tijdens tijden van immobiliteit. Het hoofdstuk gebruikt het concept 'sociaal kapitaal' om te analyseren hoe jongeren middelen verwerven van de relaties die ze aangaan en onderhouden met jongeren in Ghana. Deze middelen, inclusief onderwijsmotivatie en transnationale referentiekaders, smeden hun onderwijs en toekomstplannen en beïnvloeden als zodanig het leven van deze jongeren in het land van verblijf. Door het gebruik van een mobiliteitstrajectlens hebben wij beter inzicht verworven in de ondersteuning die jongeren verkrijgen door hun (transnationale) netwerk en de middelen die daaruit voortvloeien. Hierbij gaan wij voorbij aan de op volwassen gerichte kijk op transnationale netwerken en de methodologisch nationalistische blik op de relaties die jongeren aangaan met andere jongeren.

Conclusies

De dissertatie maakt vijf belangrijke bijdragen aan de literatuur waarin in deze dissertatie gebruikt wordt gemaakt, in het specifiek aan de literatuur over transnationale jeugdmobiliteit.

1) Het benadrukt het belang van de studie naar transnationale jeugdmobiliteitstrajecten

Het concept jeugdmobiliteitstraject, dat verwijst naar alle geografische bewegingen die jongeren maken en de veranderende familiesamenstellingen die daarbij gepaard gaan (Mazzucato 2015; van Geel en Mazzucato 2018), permitteerden mij om een tekortkoming in huidig onderzoek te adresseren doordat ik zo de mobiliteit van migrantenjeugd op een

grondige en genuanceerde manier kon onderzoeken. Met andere woorden, het stond mij toe om mij te richten op de individuele mobiliteitservaringen van jongeren, hun bredere mobiliteitspatronen en het effect dat mobiliteit heeft op hun levens. Door de timing, duur, het doel en de locatie van alle mobiliteitservaringen gedurende de jeugd zijn/ haar leven te onderzoeken krijgen we een goed beeld van de topografie van hun transnationale leven. Dit resulteert in twee dingen. Ten eerste belicht het de ervaringen van de jongeren in het land van herkomst en benadrukt het het belang van een transnationale lens. Het gaat daarbij om het eerdergenoemde methodologisch nationalisme waar veel onderzoek naar migrantenjeugd last van heeft. Ten tweede kunnen onderzoekers door middel van jeugdmobiliteitstrajecten onderzoeken hoe de ervaringen van jongeren in het land van herkomst het leven in het land van verblijf beïnvloeden doordat het toe staat tegelijkertijd de ervaringen in het land van herkomst en verblijf te analyseren zowel door tijd en ruimte. Bijvoorbeeld de discipline, respect, het vertrouwen en aanpassingsvermogen die jongeren door hun scholing en familierelaties opbouwen in Ghana vergemakkelijken de schooltransitie naar een nieuw onderwijssysteem in Hamburg. En de relaties die jongeren aangingen met andere jongeren in Ghana gaf hun onderwijsmotivatie dat direct hun onderwijsprestaties in Duitsland beïnvloedde. Door hun mobiliteitstrajecten te onderzoeken laat deze dissertatie zien dat migrantenjeugd mobiel is, dat zij ontvouwende mobiliteitspatronen hebben in meerdere richtingen en dat mobiliteit hun leven grondig vormt. Deze constatering draagt niet alleen bij aan de literatuur van transnationalisme en mobiliteit, maar ook aan de literatuur die wil begrijpen wat het leven van migrantenjongeren in het land van verblijf vormt.

2) Het toont aan dat mobiliteitstrajecten jongeren transnationale hulpbronnen brengt

De methodologische nationalistische blik die domineert in veel onderzoek naar de hulpbronnen die beschikbaar zijn voor migrantenjeugd richt zich op hun familie, school en de sociale omgeving in het verblijfsland (Portes en Zhou 1993; Portes en Rumbaut 2001; Suárez-Orozco et al. 2009; Haller et al. 2011), terwijl transnationaal migratieonderzoek juist de hulpbronnen benadrukt die aan migrantenjeugd wordt overgedragen door hun ouders in het land van verblijf. Door een mobiliteitstrajectlens met een focus op jongeren te gebruiken laat deze dissertatie zien dat migrantenjongeren ook middelen verwerven door hun eigen transnationale mobiliteit van en naar het land van herkomst. Deze hulpbronnen bevatten verschillende vormen van cultureel kapitaal zoals zelfvertrouwen, respect, discipline en aanpassingsvermogen; sociaal kapitaal zoals onderwijsmotivatie en transnationale referentiekaders; en de veranderende relatie die jongeren hebben met het land van herkomst die bestaat uit de sociale relaties, middelen en mogelijkheden die zij daarmee associëren. Deze dissertatie laat bovendien zien dat deze hulpbronnen transnationaal opereren, met andere woorden hulpbronnen die worden opgedaan in het ene land worden vertaald en gebruikt in het andere land. Dit toont het belang aan van een transnationale mobiliteitslens wanneer men migrantenjeugd bestudeerd omdat de context waarin jongeren hun hulpbronnen

bemachtigen veel verder reikt dan het land van verblijf en deze aangeboord worden door hun mobiliteitstrajecten.

3) Het demonstreert de centrale rol van keuzevrijheid in mobiliteitstrajecten van jongeren

Migratieonderzoek schetst vaak het beeld dat de mobiliteit van migrantenjongeren afhankelijk is van volwassen. Deze dissertatie beargumenteert dat de keuzevrijheid van migrantenjeugd cruciaal is voor de levensvatbaarheid van hun transnationale hulpbronnen en ten gevolge voor hoe transnationale mobiliteit hun leven vormt. Deze keuzenvrijheid staat migrantenjongeren toe om hun transnationale hulpbronnen te vertalen en te gebruiken tussen het land van herkomst en het land van verblijf. Zij gaan actief op zoek naar kansen, investeren in of trekken zich terug uit relaties en geven hun reizen aan Ghana betekenis; zij gebruiken hun keuzevrijheid in het bepalen welk cultureel kapitaal zij willen gebruiken of vormgeven in hun schooltransities in Duitsland; en zij geven vorm aan hun eigen transnationale netwerken door het creëren, behouden en gebruiken van hulpbronnen uit transnationale relaties die ze met andere jongeren hebben.

Deze bevinding betekent niet dat volwassenen onbelangrijk zijn in het leven van migrantenjongeren noch dat hun keuzevrijheid onbelemmerd is. De relaties die zij hebben met volwassen zijn voor hen belangrijk en volwassenen hebben een vooraanstaande rol in en veel invloed op hun transnationale mobiliteitstrajecten. Echter, in tegenstelling tot de bestaande literatuur, toont deze dissertatie dat de keuzevrijheid van jongeren een belangrijk onderdeel is van hun transnationale mobiliteit. Deze bevinding draagt bij aan transnationaal migratieonderzoek en toont aan dat onderzoek de migratie- en mobiliteitservaringen van jongeren op zichzelf moet bestuderen, niet alleen met betrekking tot volwassen. Het draagt ook bij tot onderzoek naar de relatie tussen cultureel kapitaal en onderwijs door aan te tonen dat jongeren niet enkel profiteren van het kapitaal van hun ouders, maar dat zij actief zijn in het bemiddelen van hun eigen transnationale hulpbronnen.

4) Het ontsluiert de veranderende dynamiek van de transnationale sociale positionering van jongeren

Transnationaal migratieonderzoek heeft lang erkend dat migranten vaak hogere sociale posities bekleden in hun land van herkomst dan het land van verblijf, zo ook veel Ghanese migranten (Levitt en Glick Schiller 2004; Nieswand 2011; Coe en Pauli 2020). Echter zijn deze bevindingen maar sporadisch onderzocht voor migrantenjeugd. Deze dissertatie toont aan dat migrantenjeugd ook verschillende sociale posities innemen in het land van herkomst en verblijf. Bovendien verklaren hun transnationale mobiliteitstrajecten deels de dynamiek van deze verschillende posities. De onderzoeksparticipanten bekleden lage sociale posities in Hamburg, maar kwamen vaak uit een relatief bevoorrechte context in Ghana. Hun

ervaringen en relaties met Ghana gaf hen een waardevolle hulpbron die bepaalde nadelen van hun lage sociale positie in Duitsland kon compenseren.

Deze dissertatie draagt bij aan verschillende literaturen die pogen te begrijpen wat de rol van sociale klasse in het leven van migrantenjeugd is. Ten eerste is de eigen transnationale mobiliteit van deze jongeren een mechanisme dat de relatie tussen de sociale status van hun ouders in het land van herkomst en de uitkomst voor kinderen in het land van verblijf verklaart die door recent onderzoek is geïdentificeerd (Ichou 2014; Feliciano en Lanuza 2017). Ten tweede is veel literatuur over het onderwijs van migrantenjongeren gericht op de lage sociale klasse in het land van verblijf en op de daaruit voortvloeiende achterstand die veroorzaakt wordt door het 'gebrek' aan het 'juiste' kapitaal. Mijn dissertatie oppert dat om de onderwijservaringen en -uitkomsten in het land van verblijf te begrijpen men de sociale positie in het land van herkomst moet meenemen omdat zij daar verbonden mee kunnen blijven door hun transnationale mobiliteitstrajecten.

5) Het belang van het gebruik van een op jongeren gerichte en mobiele methodologie om transnationale mobiliteit te bestuderen

De theoretische inzichten van deze studie waren enkel mogelijk door het gebruik van een methodologie die op de juiste manier de patronen, ervaringen en effecten vat van de transnationale mobiliteitstrajecten van jongeren. In tegenstelling tot retrospectieve methoden gericht op één locatie dat onderzoek naar migrantenjongeren tot nu toe domineert, heb ik een innovatieve methode gebruikt dat de eigen perspectieven en ervaringen van jongeren centraal stelt en heb ik 'mobiele methodes' gebruikt om de verschillende aspecten van hun mobiliteit te vangen (Büscher en Urry 2009; Fincham et al. 2010).

Door het gebruik van een etnografische aanpak, met inbegrip van participerende observatie en interviews, heeft deze studie een palet van op jongeren gerichte mobiele methoden ontwikkeld die apart ofwel samen gebruikt kunnen worden. Deze bevatten het in kaart brengen van mobiliteitstrajecten zodat de mobiliteit van jongeren door tijd en ruimte en over hun hele levensloop kan worden gevat; het in real-time volgen van mobiliteit (zowel fysiek als digitaal) om de belichamende en dynamische aard van mobiliteitservaringen te benadrukken; en het interviewen voor en na de geanticipeerde en werkelijke impact van deze mobiliteit

Deutsche Zusammenfassung (German summary)

Jugendliche mit Migrationshintergrund – einschließlich junger Menschen, die selbst migriert sind, sowie Kinder von Migrant:innen – werden häufig ausschließlich im Hinblick auf ihr Leben im Wohnsitzland betrachtet und verstanden. Die Migrationsforschung an Jugendlichen untersucht überwiegend die Faktoren Familie, Schule und Community in dem Land, in das sie oder ihre Eltern eingewandert sind, daraufhin, ob sie ihren Bildungserfolg und ihr allgemeines Wohlergehen unterstützen oder hemmen. Während die transnationale Migrationsforschung anerkennt, dass Jugendliche mit Migrationshintergrund Verbindungen zu Menschen und Orten jenseits der Grenzen ihres Wohnsitzlandes aufrecht erhalten – durch den Kontakt mit Verwandten im Herkunftsland ihrer Familie, sprachliche Praktiken, Religion und kulturelle Traditionen ihres Herkunftslandes oder die Kenntnis ihrer Familiengeschichte (Levitt und Waters 2002; Levitt 2009; Haikkola 2011) – werden Jugendliche mit Migrationshintergrund weitgehend als sesshaft betrachtet. Solche Migrationsstudien geben Einblicke in das tägliche Leben Jugendlicher mit Migrationshintergrund im Wohnsitzland, es fehlt ihnen jedoch ein entscheidender Teil des Puzzles: die transnationale Mobilität.

Der fehlende Blick auf transnationale Mobilität bei der Erforschung Jugendlicher mit Migrationshintergrund ist überraschend, da ein wachsender Anteil der jugendlichen Bevölkerung in Europa einen Migrationshintergrund hat (OECD/Europäische Union 2015) und empirisch belegt ist, dass diese Jugendlichen sehr mobil sind. Jüngste Studien zeigen beispielsweise, dass die meisten Jugendlichen mit Migrationshintergrund in Europa mindestens alle zwei Jahre das Herkunftsland ihrer Eltern besuchen (Schimmer und van Tubergen 2014; Mazzucato und Haagsman in Vorbereitung). Es ist wichtig, ein besseres Verständnis dafür zu entwickeln, wie, warum und mit welchen Auswirkungen junge Menschen mobil sind. Die geografische Mobilität wird zunehmend als integraler Bestandteil des Übergangs vom Jugendlichen- ins Erwachsenenalter angesehen sowie als Weg zum Erwerb von Kompetenzen, die in einer globalisierten Welt benötigt werden (Suárez-Orozco 2005; Robertson et al. 2018). Negative Annahmen über die Mobilität von Jugendlichen mit Migrationshintergrund sind dagegen reichlich vorhanden: Die Bildungspolitik geht davon aus, dass Mobilität die Bildung von jugendlichen Migrant:innen beeinträchtigt, während die Politik im Allgemeinen annimmt, dass die Verbindungen jugendlicher Migrant:innen zu ihrem Herkunftsland oft ein Hindernis für ihre „Integration" im Wohnsitzland darstellen (Carrasco und Narciso 2015; Mazzucato 2015). Einige Wissenschaftler:innen argumentieren hingegen, dass die transnationale Mobilität von jugendlichen Migrant:innen vielmehr positive Kompetenzen hervorbringen kann (Suárez-Orozco 2005: 211; Orellana 2016: 91; Mazzucato 2015), doch diese positiven Auswirkungen werden bislang kaum untersucht.

Vor diesem Hintergrund beschäftigt sich diese Dissertation mit der Frage: *Wie erleben Jugendliche ghanaischer Herkunft, die in Hamburg leben, ihre transnationale Mobilität über Zeit und Raum und wie wirkt sich Mobilität auf ihr Leben aus?*

Ich habe in den Jahren 2018 und 2019 über 14 Monate jugendzentrierte, multi-lokale, mobile ethnographische Feldforschung mit 20 Jugendlichen ghanaischer Herkunft in Hamburg und auf ihren Reisen nach Ghana durchgeführt. Die 14 weiblichen und sechs männlichen Teilnehmer:innen waren zwischen 15 und 25 Jahre alt. Während acht in Ghana und zwölf in Deutschland geboren wurden, hatten alle eine Form der Mobilität zwischen den beiden Ländern erlebt, darunter 14 Wohnsitzwechsel und 29 Kurzbesuche. Die Datenerhebung umfasste die Beobachtung von und Interviews mit den Teilnehmer:innen und anderen wichtigen Bezugspersonen, aber auch den Einsatz verschiedener mobiler Methoden, welche die Mobilitätsmuster, -erfahrungen und -effekte junger Menschen über Zeit und Raum dokumentierten. Dazu gehörte es, die Mobilitätspfade junger Menschen im Laufe ihres Lebens zu erfassen, ihre Mobilität durch Begleitung ihrer Besuche in Ghana nachzuverfolgen und während ihrer Reisen online mit ihnen in Kontakt zu bleiben. Außerdem führte ich Interviews mit ihnen vor und nach ihren Reisen, um die erwarteten und tatsächlichen Auswirkungen ihrer Mobilität zu verstehen.

Der Fall Jugendlicher mit ghanaischem Hintergrund in Hamburg ist vor allem aus drei Gründen relevant. Erstens ist Migration in Ghana sehr verbreitet (Mazzucato 2007; Mazzucato et al. 2018; Schans et al. 2018), und daher sind viele junge Menschen mit ghanaischem Hintergrund, die im Ausland leben, Teil hochmobiler transnationaler Netzwerke. Zweitens sind die Ghanaer in Deutschland Teil einer relativ jungen Migrationsbewegung zwischen Afrika und Europa, zu dem es bislang wenig Forschung gibt (Mazzucato et al. 2015; Schans et al. 2018), das gilt insgesamt für Jugendliche mit afrikanischem Hintergrund. Drittens ist Deutschland historisch gesehen eines der wichtigsten Aufnahmeländer für ghanaische Migrant:innen. Deutschland beherbergt Europas zweitgrößte ghanaische Gemeinschaft nach Italien, und in Hamburg befindet sich die größte ghanaische Gemeinschaft in Deutschland (Nieswand 2008; Mörath 2015).

Wichtigste empirische Befunde

Die Hauptforschungsfrage wurde in drei Teilfragen untergliedert, die jeweils in einem empirischen Kapitel behandelt werden, das in einer internationalen Fachzeitschrift veröffentlicht wurde oder geprüft wird.

Kapitel 5 untersucht die Besuche junger Menschen von Deutschland nach Ghana, um zu verstehen*, wie ihre Mobilitätserfahrungen ihre sich verändernden Beziehungen zum Herkunftsland über Zeit und Raum prägen*. Anhand einer erweiterten Version von Urrys (2002) Typologie der Nähe, oder „typology of proximity“, (*face-to-face, face-the-place,*

face-the-moment) untersucht dieses Kapitel Mobilität aus der Nähe, in Echtzeit und anhand der sich verändernden Konstellationen von Menschen, Orten und Momenten, aus welchen die Besuche junger Menschen in Ghana während ihrer gesamten Mobilitätspfade bestehen. Das Kapitel zeigt die Vorteile einer jugendzentrierten und mobilen Methodik, die es Forschern ermöglicht, genau die Details zu erforschen, auf denen die Mobilitäserfahrungen der jungen Leute beruhen, und eines Fokus auf Mobilitätspfade, um solche Erfahrungen im Verlauf des Lebens der jungen Leute nachzuvollziehen. Die Ergebnisse stellen die in der Forschung oft statische Darstellung des Herkunftslandes und die Gefühle Jugendlicher mit Migrationshintergrund zu diesem in Frage, indem sie zeigen, dass Jugendliche mit Migrationshintergrund ihre Beziehungen zu ihrem Herkunftsland auf komplexe, sich verändernde Weise erleben und artikulieren, basierend auf Mobilitätserfahrungen, die sich ebenfalls im Zusammenhang mit Zeit und Raum verändern.

In den Kapiteln 6 und 7 wird anhand des in Kapitel 5 dargelegten verkörperten und prozessualen Ansatzes untersucht, wie die Erfahrungen jugendlicher Migrant:innen im Verlauf ihrer Mobilitätspfade in ihrem Herkunftsland sich auf das Leben im Wohnsitzland auswirken. Dazu wird in diesen Kapiteln das Umfeld untersucht, mit dem sie während ihrer Besuche in Ghana in Kontakt kommen, sowie die Beziehungen, die sie dort pflegen; diese stellen Ressourcen zur Verfügung, die im Leben in Deutschland genutzt werden. Kapitel 6 untersucht*, wie junge Menschen im Herkunftsland Ressourcen erhalten und diese Ressourcen übertragen und nutzen, um nach der Übersiedelung ins Ausland ihren Übergang ins Schulsystem des Wohnsitzlandes gestalten*. Das Kapitel legt den Fokus auf Mobilitätspfade und analysiert die Ressourcen junger Menschen anhand des Konzepts des „inkorporierten kulturellen Kapitals“. Die Analyse zeigt, wie junge Menschen durch ihr Bildungsumfeld und erweiterte Familiennetzwerke in Ghana vier Arten von inkorporiertem kulturellem Kapital – Selbstvertrauen, Disziplin, Respekt und Anpassungsfähigkeit – erlangen und diese Ressourcen dann nutzen, um ihren Übergang ins Hamburger Schulsystem erfolgreich zu bewältigen. Ihre erfolgreichen Übergänge spiegeln eine „chemische Reaktion“ zwischen den Ressourcen, die junge Menschen besitzen, und der Anerkennung und Wertschätzung dieser Ressourcen in ihrem spezifischen Aufnahmekontext wider. Durch die Betrachtung von Faktoren außerhalb des Wohnsitzlandes und durch die Verwendung einer jugendzentrierten Perspektive trägt das Kapitel dazu bei, bisher unerforschte Mechanismen zu erläutern, die den Übergang Jugendlicher mit Migrationshintergrund in die Schule im Ankunftsland prägen.

Kapitel 7 analysiert*, wie junge Menschen durch ihre Mobilitätspfade transnationale Peer-Beziehungen aufbauen und pflegen, welche Ressourcen sie aus diesen Beziehungen erwerben und welche Auswirkungen diese Ressourcen auf ihr Leben im Wohnsitzland haben*. Das Kapitel verknüpft, wie transnationale Peer-Beziehungen durch Aufenthalte und Besuche junger Menschen in Ghana sowie durch digitale Medien in Zeiten der Sesshaftigkeit

aufgebaut und aufrechterhalten werden. Das Kapitel verwendet das Konzept des "sozialen Kapitals", um die Ressourcen zu analysieren, die Jugendliche mit Migrationshintergrund durch ihre Beziehungen zu anderen jungen Menschen in Ghana erwerben. Diese Ressourcen, zu denen auch Bildungsmotivation und transnationale Bezugsrahmen gehören, beeinflussen das Leben junger Menschen im Wohnsitzland, indem sie ihre Bildungsorientierungen und ihre Zukunftspläne prägen. Durch den Fokus auf Mobilitätspfade erweitert das Kapitel unser Verständnis der Unterstützungssysteme Jugendlicher mit Migrationshintergrund sowie der in ihnen bereitgestellten Ressourcen und geht damit über erwachsenen-zentrierte Betrachtungen transnationaler Netzwerke und über methodologisch nationalistische Betrachtungsweisen von Peer-Beziehungen junger Menschen hinaus.

Schlussfolgerungen

Die Dissertation leistet fünf wichtige Beiträge zum Forschungsstand über transnationale Mobilität von Jugendlichen und andere Forschungsbereiche, mit denen sie sich befasst.

1) Verdeutlicht den Wert der Erforschung transnationaler Mobilitätspfade von Jugendlichen

Das Konzept der „Mobilitätspfade von Jugendlichen“, welches alle geografischen Bewegungen junger Menschen und die damit verbundenen sich verändernden Familienkonstellationen umfasst (Mazzucato 2015; van Geel und Mazzucato 2018), ermöglichte es mir, die Mobilität Jugendlicher mit Migrationshintergrund sorgfältig und differenziert zu untersuchen, und dadurch eine entscheidende Lücke in bestehender Forschung zu schließen. Mit anderen Worten, es erlaubte mir, mich auf die individuellen Mobilitätserfahrungen junger Menschen, ihre Mobilitätsmuster und die Auswirkungen der Mobilität auf ihr Leben zu konzentrieren. Die Untersuchung des Zeitpunkts, der Dauer, des Zwecks und des Ortes aller Mobilitätserfahrungen im Verlauf ihres Lebens erzeugt ein umfassendes Bild der Topographie ihres transnationalen Lebens. Damit werden zwei Dinge erreicht. Erstens berücksichtigt das Vorgehen Erfahrungen im Herkunftsland, indem es den methodologischen Nationalismus vieler Studien über Jugendliche mit Migrationshintergrund überwindet und die Bedeutung einer transnationalen Betrachtungsweise unterstreicht. Zweitens können Forscher durch die Analyse von Erfahrungen im Herkunfts- und im Wohnsitzland über Zeit und Raum hinweg untersuchen, wie Erfahrungen im Herkunftsland das Leben junger Menschen im Wohnsitzland prägen. So ebneten zum Beispiel das Selbstvertrauen, die Disziplin, der Respekt und die Anpassungsfähigkeit junger Menschen, die sie durch ihre Schulerfahrungen und Familienbeziehungen in Ghana aufbauten, ihren Übergang in ein neues Bildungssystem in Hamburg. Ähnlicherweise gaben die Peer-Beziehungen junger Menschen zu Gleichaltrigen in Ghana ihnen Bildungsmotivation, die sich direkt auf ihre Schulbildung in Deutschland auswirkte. Durch die Untersuchung von Mobilitätspfaden Jugendlicher zeigt diese Dissertation, dass Jugendliche mit

Migrationshintergrund mobil sind, dass sie sich entfaltende Muster multidirektionaler Mobilität haben und dass Mobilität ihr Leben auf tiefgreifende Weise prägt. Diese Erkenntnis trägt nicht nur zur Transnationalismus-Forschung und zu Mobilitätsstudien bei, sondern auch zu Forschungsbereichen, die versuchen, die Faktoren, die das Leben von Jugendlichen mit Migrationshintergrund im Wohnsitzland prägen, besser zu verstehen.

2) Zeigt, dass Mobilitätspfade Jugendlichen mit Migrationshintergrund transnationale Ressourcen verschaffen

Die methodologisch nationalistische Sichtweise vieler Studien zu den Ressourcen, die Jugendlichen mit Migrationshintergrund zur Verfügung stehen, konzentriert sich auf deren Kontexte von Familie, Schule und Community im Wohnsitzland (Portes und Zhou 1993; Portes und Rumbaut 2001; Suárez-Orozco et al. 2009; Haller et al. 2011), während die transnationale Migrationsforschung die Ressourcen von Jugendlichen mit Migrationshintergrund, die durch ihre Eltern im Wohnsitzland übertragen werden, beleuchtet. Durch den Fokus auf Mobilitätspfade und einen jugendzentrierten Ansatz zeigt die vorliegende Dissertation, dass Jugendliche mit Migrationshintergrund Ressourcen aus erster Hand auch durch ihre eigene transnationale Mobilität zwischen Herkunfts- und Wohnsitzland erhalten. Diese Ressourcen umfassen verschiedene Formen von inkorporiertem kulturellen Kapital, wie Selbstvertrauen, Respekt, Disziplin und Anpassungsfähigkeit; soziales Kapital, wie Bildungsmotivation und transnationale Bezugsrahmen; und die sich verändernden Beziehungen junger Menschen zum Herkunftsland selbst, bestehend aus den sozialen Beziehungen, Ressourcen und Chancen, die sie damit verbinden. Darüber hinaus zeigt diese Dissertation, wie diese Ressourcen transnational wirken – also wie in einem Land gewonnene Ressourcen in ein anderes übertragen und dort genutzt werden. Diese Erkenntnis unterstreicht die Bedeutung des Fokus auf transnationale Mobilität für die Erforschung der Leben von Jugendlichen mit Migrationshintergrund, indem aufgezeigt wird, dass die Kontexte, in denen sie Ressourcen entwickeln, weit über die Grenzen ihres Wohnsitzlandes hinausgehen und durch ihre Mobilitätspfade zugänglich gemacht werden.

3) Demonstriert die zentrale Rolle der Agency von Jugendlichen auf ihren Mobilitätspfaden

In der Migrationsforschung werden häufig die Mobilität und die Ressourcen von Jugendlichen mit Migrationshintergrund als von Erwachsenen abhängig dargestellt. Diese Dissertation legt dar, dass die Agency der jugendlichen Migrant:innen selbst für die Funktionsfähigkeit ihrer transnationalen Ressourcen und damit für die Art und Weise, wie die transnationale Mobilität ihr Leben gestaltet, von entscheidender Bedeutung ist. Diese Agency ermöglicht es Jugendlichen mit Migrationshintergrund, ihre transnationalen Ressourcen zwischen dem Herkunfts- und Wohnsitzland zu übertragen und zu nutzen. Sie

streben aktiv nach Chancen, investieren in Beziehungen oder ziehen sich daraus zurück und bewerten die Bedeutung ihrer Besuche in Ghana; sie nutzen ihre Agency, um festzustellen, welche Formen von kulturellem Kapital aus Ghana für ihre Schulübergänge in Deutschland genutzt oder angepasst werden sollten; und sie formen ihre eigenen transnationalen Netzwerke, indem sie Ressourcen in Form von transnationalen Peer-Beziehungen aufbauen, pflegen und einsetzen.

Diese Erkenntnis impliziert nicht, dass Erwachsene im Leben von Jugendlichen mit Migrationshintergrund unwichtig sind, noch deutet sie darauf hin, dass ihre Agency uneingeschränkt ist. Die Beziehungen zu Erwachsenen sind ihnen wichtig; Erwachsene sind sehr präsent und haben einen prominenten Einfluss auf ihre transnationalen Mobilitätspfade. Im Gegensatz zur bestehenden Forschung wird in der vorliegenden Dissertation jedoch die Agency junger Menschen als wichtiger Aspekt ihrer transnationalen Mobilität hervorgehoben. Diese Erkenntnis trägt zur transnationalen Migrationsforschung bei und zeigt, dass die Erforschung von Migration und den Mobilitätserfahrungen junger Menschen unabhängig von und nicht nur in Bezug auf Erwachsene untersucht werden muss. Sie trägt auch zur Erforschung des kulturellen Kapitals und der Bildungswege bei, indem sie zeigt, dass junge Menschen nicht nur vom Kapital ihrer Eltern profitieren, sondern auch ihre eigenen transnationalen Ressourcen aktiv einsetzen.

4) Verdeutlicht die sich wandelnde Dynamik der transnationalen sozialen Positionierung junger Menschen

Die transnationale Migrationsforschung hat seit langem erkannt, dass Migrant:innen – darunter viele ghanaische Migrant:innen – in ihren Herkunftsländern häufig höhere soziale Positionen innehaben als in ihren Wohnsitzländern (Levitt und Glick Schiller 2004; Nieswand 2011; Coe und Pauli 2020). Im Rahmen dieser Erkenntnisse wurden solche Dynamiken jedoch selten für Jugendliche mit Migrationshintergrund erforscht. Die vorliegende Dissertation zeigt, dass Jugendliche mit Migrationshintergrund ebenfalls unterschiedliche soziale Positionen im Herkunfts- und im Wohnsitzland erleben, und dass ihre transnationalen Mobilitätspfade dazu beitragen, die Dynamik dieser unterschiedlichen Positionen zu erklären. Die Teilnehmer:innen dieser Studie waren in Hamburg Angehörige niedriger sozialer Schichten, kamen aber oft aus relativ privilegierten Verhältnissen in Ghana. Ihre Erfahrungen und Beziehungen in Ghana verschafften ihnen wertvolle Ressourcen, die sie nutzten, um bestimmte Nachteile ihrer niedrigeren sozialen Stellung in Deutschland auszugleichen.

Die vorliegende Dissertation ist ein Beitrag zu Forschungsansätzen, die versuchen, die Rolle der sozialen Klasse im Leben von Jugendlichen mit Migrationshintergrund zu verstehen. Erstens ist die eigene transnationale Mobilität von Jugendlichen mit Migrationshintergrund eine konkrete Praxis, die das Verhältnis erklärt, das in der jüngsten Forschung zwischen dem

sozialen Hintergrund der Eltern im Herkunftsland und den Erfolgen ihrer Kinder im Wohnsitzland festgestellt wurde (Ichou 2014; Feliciano und Lanuza 2017). Zweitens konzentrierte sich die Literatur zur Bildung Jugendlicher mit Migrationshintergrund bislang überwiegend auf ihre niedrige soziale Stellung im Wohnsitzland und auf die daraus resultierende Benachteiligung durch das "Fehlen" des "richtigen" Kapitals. Meine Dissertation legt nahe, dass das Verständnis der Bildungserfahrungen und -erfolgen von Jugendlichen mit Migrationshintergrund im Wohnsitzland Kenntnisse über ihre soziale Positionierung in ihrem Herkunftsland erfordert, mit dem sie durch ihre transnationalen Mobilitätspfade verbunden bleiben.

5) Nutzt eine jugendzentrierte und mobile Methodik, um transnationale Mobilität zu untersuchen

Die theoretischen Erkenntnisse dieser Studie waren nur durch eine Methodik möglich, welche die Muster, Erfahrungen und Auswirkungen der transnationalen Mobilitätspfade von Jugendlichen mit Migrationshintergrund adäquat erfasst. Im Gegensatz zu den einseitigen und retrospektiven Methoden, die bisher die Forschung zur Mobilität Jugendlicher mit Migrationshintergrund dominiert haben, habe ich eine innovative Methodik verwendet, die sich auf die persönlichen Sichtweisen und Erfahrungen junger Menschen konzentriert, und "mobile Methoden" eingesetzt, um verschiedene Aspekte ihrer Mobilität zu erfassen (Büscher und Urry 2009; Fincham et al. 2010).

Im Rahmen eines ethnographischen Ansatzes mit teilnehmender Beobachtung und Interviews entwickelte ich in dieser Studie eine Palette jugendzentrierter mobiler Methoden, die einzeln oder in Kombination verwendet werden können. Dazu gehören die Kartierung der Mobilitätspfade, um die Mobilität junger Menschen über Zeit und Raum im Verlauf ihres Lebens zu erfassen; die Verfolgung der Mobilität in Echtzeit (physisch und digital), um den körperlichen und dynamischen Charakter von Mobilitätserfahrungen hervorzuheben; sowie die Vor- und Nachbefragung, um die erwarteten und tatsächlichen Auswirkungen der Mobilität nachzuzeichnen.

Die Anwendung dieser Methoden ist nicht unbedingt einfach. Körperlich begleitende Mobilität ist beispielsweise ressourcenintensiv; sie benötigt viel Zeit, Geld und Energie. Wo es jedoch möglich ist, jugendzentrierte mobile Methoden einzusetzen, schaffen sie einen enormen Mehrwert für die Forschung und können von verschiedensten Forschungseinrichtungen genutzt werden, einschließlich Studien zur Mobilität oder solchen, die von der Anerkennung der zentralen Rolle der Mobilität im Leben von jugendlichen Migrant:innen profitieren würden.

Impact paragraph

This dissertation analyses the transnational mobility of young people with a migration background between Ghana and Germany. By studying migrant youth's mobility trajectories – that is, their geographic moves over time and space, and the family constellations that accompany these moves – the thesis analyses their mobility patterns, how they experience mobility, and the ways in which mobility affects their lives. Recent research indicates that the majority of migrant youth in Europe, including those who have migrated themselves and the children of migrants, are regularly mobile to and from their or their parents' country of origin. Yet most research and public debate about migrant youth excludes their experience in the country of origin, instead focusing on the local factors that shape their lives, or on how they stay connected to transnational networks and influences from within their country of residence.

The objective of this thesis is to contribute to understandings of migrant youth in ways that more accurately reflect their transnationally mobile lives. To do so, I bring migrant transnationalism research and mobility studies into dialogue and draw on other bodies of resarch to analyse the patterns, experiences and effects of mobility in the lives of young people of Ghanaian background living in Hamburg, Germany. My findings address important research gaps, including the absence of mobility in much research seeking to understand migrant youth's lives; the adult-centricity of migration and mobility research; and a lack of empirical data about an increasingly important yet understudied group and migration flow: African-background youth in Europe, and more specifically, Ghanaian-background youth in Germany. In this section, I outline the achieved and potential scientific and societal impact of my research.

First, the study reveals how physical mobility is woven into the lives of migrant youth, highlights its diverse forms and effects, and reveals the changing role mobility plays in young people's lives over time. This finding has the potential to contribute to various bodies of research, including those not specifically focused on mobility but which seek to understand migrant youth's lives. Second, the study shows that mobility provides migrant youth with transnational resources, such as confidence, adaptability, educational motivation and transnational frames of reference. These resources are gained in one country and then translated to and used within another, highlighting the importance of using a transnational mobility lens in research about migrant youth. Such a lens reveals that the contexts in which young people develop resources extend far beyond the boundaries of their country of residence. Third, the study reveals young people's agency in translating and using their transnational resources between the countries of origin and residence, highlighting the need to study migrant youth's lives and mobility from their own perspectives. Fourth, young

people's transnational mobility trajectories help identify the mechanisms at work in how migrant youth's different social positions in the countries of origin and residence are interconnected. For example, they access resources like confidence and discipline through their relatively high social-class positions in Ghana, which they then use to navigate their school transitions in Germany, where they occupy lower social-class positions. Finally, my youth-centric and mobile methodology presents various promising techniques for studying the diverse and complex mobility trajectories of migrant youth. These methods can be adapted to multi- and single-sited research and quantitative and qualitative studies across various disciplines to better account for the role of mobility in young lives. These findings are all relevant to transnational migration research and mobility studies, as well as to other disciplines that seek to understand young people's lives, including youth studies and education research.

My findings are also relevant to those working with transnationally mobile migrant youth in various contexts, particularly in education. While I intend to further develop this line of impact in consultation with educators and policymakers themselves, here I offer some preliminary food-for-thought. Most teachers do incredible work under enormous workloads, multiple pressures and significant resource constraints. They operate in complex and bureaucratic policy environments. Yet small changes to the way they understand and interact with migrant youth could make significant differences to students' outcomes. First, being alert to the transnational resources that nurture their students' education and well-being can be achieved by expanding their view of students' support systems to include ongoing relationships with people abroad (e.g., peers or former caregivers) and by recognising that many migrant students occupy higher social-class positions in their countries of origin than in their countries of residence. Finally, adopting a pro-mobility stance that enables students' ongoing mobility to the country of origin would help facilitate the flow of transnational resources and the maintenance of transnational relationships that contribute so much to young people's educational outcomes. This can be achieved by, for example, making flexible policies on student absences, providing mobile learning resources, and including students' mobility experiences into the curriculum.

I have pursued making academic impact with my research through various channels. Two of my empirical chapters have been published in international peer-reviewed journals and I co-authored a chapter with MO-TRAYL colleagues in a forthcoming book on innovative methodologies for studying migration and education. My chapter "Changing relationships to the country of origin through transnational mobility: migrant youth's visits to Ghana" (co-authored with Prof. Valentina Mazzucato) was shortlisted for the Rinus Penninx Best Paper Award at the IMISCOE 2021 conference. Throughout my PhD, I presented my research at eight international conferences covering diverse academic disciplines, including African studies, childhood studies, migration, and education. My research has also made impact

through my teaching, including in courses at the University College Maastricht and in the inter-faculty Bachelor of Global Studies, and in guest lectures at various universities.

I have also tried to ensure my research has societal impact, both collaboratively within the MO-TRAYL project and individually. Together with my MO-TRAYL colleagues, I designed and implemented Finding Your Voice – a 3-day storytelling workshop for participants from MO-TRAYL's European case studies, during which I ran podcast and interview trainings. The workshop resulted in a website and (e)book, which share young people's stories of growing up transnationally and insights on using arts/science collaborations to engage with young people.[50] Finding Your Voice won the 2021 Valorisation Prize of Maastricht University's Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences as an outstanding example of research impact. In 2021, I published an article on the science communication website, *The Conversation – Africa*, entitled "Young Ghanaians in Europe travel 'home' a lot: why their mobility matters."[51] The piece has been viewed more than 3,700 times by readers around the world. My research was also featured in a 2019 article, "De kracht van veldwerk? Being there [The power of fieldwork? Being there]," in Maastricht University's newspaper, *The Observant*.[52] I have actively sought to share my research findings and related insights with diverse audiences through presenting in forums such as PechaKucha Maastricht (2020) and at Lumiere Cinema (2019, 2020). Finally, I am one of four finalists for the NWO's (Dutch Research Council) Synergy Award 2022 for societal impact of PhD projects, based on my application, "From Generations to Trajectories: Rethinking the way we categorise migrant youth," which proposes a collaborative project with my fellow MO-TRAYL PhDs involving the Dutch public, policymakers, and educators.

A two-year postdoctoral position with the MO-TRAYL project will provide further opportunities to make scientific and societal impact with my research. I will co-organise and present at the MO-TRAYL conference in 2022 involving academics, policymakers, educators, and research participants. I have secured funding from the Erasmus+ staff mobility scheme to visit the Granada Center for Visual Anthropology (UK) to edit an ethnographic film using footage shot during my fieldwork. The film will be used to share the MO-TRAYL project's research with broader audiences, including through public channels (e.g., website, film festivals), in teaching, and through academic networks (e.g., conferences, presentations). During my post-doc, comparative research will be conducted across the MO-TRAYL case studies, expanding the contribution of my thesis by exploring the particularities of the Hamburg case in view of the Belgian, Dutch, and Ghanaian cases. The post-doc

[50] See https://www.motrayl.com/stories/youth-workshop and https://www.motrayl.com/upload/Finding your Voice_ebook.pdf (accessed 12 January 2022).
[51] https://theconversation.com/young-ghanaians-in-europe-travel-home-a-lot-why-their-mobility-matters-169367 (accessed 12 January 2022).
[52] https://www.observantonline.nl/Home/Artikelen/id/54613 (accessed 12 January 2022).

position will also enable me to continue publishing based on my PhD data, including as part of a co-authored book and in single- and co-authored peer-reviewed publications. I will continue to share my research insights with students in liberal-arts and interdisciplinary undergraduate programs. My plans for creating societal impact include contributing to the recently established MO-TRAYL podcast, presenting my research at the schools, educational institutions, and Ghanaian organisations in Hamburg that participated in my PhD, and writing policy briefs in consultation with educators that report on my research findings and offer practical recommendations for how educational institutions can learn from migrant youth's transnational mobility trajectories.

Research valorisation is a topic close to my heart. My prior work experience in arts and international development and my training in visual ethnography have given me a strong conviction that scholarship must endeavour to engage with the 'real world'. This can be done by finding creative and accessible ways to share research findings and involving diverse stakeholders in the research process itself. Throughout my PhD trajectory, I have actively sought to increase my knowledge and skills regarding valorisation and to contribute to the development of university valorisation initiatives. For example, I was selected to participate in a masterclass on "Community engagement in your research?" organized by the Maastricht Platform for Community-Engaged Research (MPCER) in 2020. In 2021 I was invited to create a video about research impact for PhD candidates as part of the Maastricht University Library's 'Science Communication and Impact' training module.[53] Finally, I was recently appointed to the Faculty of Arts and Social Science's Valorisation Prize Committee for 2022-2023, through which I aim to further support other researchers' valorisation activities and advocate for creative, cross-disciplinary, and collaborative approaches to research impact.

[53] See 'MO-TRAYL's societal impact: Finding Your Voice' on https://www.motrayl.com/gallery (accessed 12 January 2022).

Curriculum Vitae

Laura J. Ogden was born on October 10, 1985, in Gosford, Australia, where she completed her primary and secondary education. In 2007 she graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and Spanish and Latin American Studies (double major) from the University of New South Wales, Sydney, having completed her final year of study at the Tecnológico de Monterrey in Mexico City.

From 2008 to 2011, Laura worked in arts administration for the City of Melbourne, Australia, specialising in public art commissioning and youth arts programming. Following a move to Timor-Leste (East Timor) in 2011, Laura worked in international development, focusing on organisational development, community governance, and education programming for the Timor-Leste Ministry of Education, local NGOs, and international donors – work she continued until 2017, following her move to The Netherlands in 2015.

In 2016, Laura graduated with a Master of Arts in Cultural Anthropology and Development Sociology (*cum laude*) at Leiden University, specializing in Visual Ethnography. Laura conducted research based on her experience working on the 2013 primary-school curriculum reform in Timor-Leste. Her thesis, *Looking Inward, Reaching Out: Divergent visions of education reform in Timor-Leste*, included the ethnographic film, *Scripting Change: Education reform in Timor-Leste*, which has been screened internationally at conferences and ethnographic film festivals.

From 2017 to 2021, Laura was a PhD Candidate in the Globalisation, Transnationalism and Development (GTD) research programme of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at Maastricht University. She was based at the University of Hamburg's Educational Sciences Faculty while completing fieldwork in Hamburg, Germany. Her thesis, which analyses the transnational mobility trajectories of migrant youth between Ghana and Germany, was part of the ERC-funded project 'Mobility Trajectories of Young Lives: Life Chances of Youth in Global South and North' (MO-TRAYL, 2017-2022), led by Prof. Valentina Mazzucato. During this time, Laura was a member of the Maastricht Centre for Citizenship, Migration and Development (MACIMIDE) and the Transnational Migration Group, which she chaired 2018-2019, and she developed and taught undergraduate courses at the University College Maastricht and in the Bachelor of Global Studies.

As of February 2022, Laura works as a postdoctoral researcher at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences of Maastricht University.