

Do., 07.05.2026, 16:15 -17:45 Uhr

Dr. Aschalew Abeje Lakew, Bahir Dar University

***Hierarchical Classifications and Migrant Stereotyping in
Ethiopia: Marginalisation and Multiple Social Injustices of
Migrant Street Children in the Amhara Region***

In the Amhara Region of Ethiopia, there has been a significant increase in the number of children migrating from rural areas and subsequently becoming street dwellers in urban centers over the past few years. These children, hereafter referred to as migrant street children, face distinct challenges. This article analyzes these challenges through an inductive analysis of ethnographic data collected from interviews, observations, and archival reviews. Rural-urban migration is often viewed in binary terms, with many scholars considering it a harmful phenomenon that subjects migrants to exploitation and health risks. This article takes a critical pessimistic perspective, arguing that the challenges by migrants extend beyond mere susceptibility to exploitation and health crises. It argues that migrant street children experience a wide range of hardships, including hunger, physical violence, abduction, detention, and arrest, due to their perceived status as a greater threat to urban well-being compared to other demographics. Therefore, to fully understand migrants' experiences, it is essential to classify migrant groups hierarchically and recognize the different treatment they receive, rather than adopting an oversimplified view that portrays them as homogeneous. Policy initiatives should focus on protecting migrant children living on the streets and developing alternative livelihood opportunities.