11 Masculinities and Intersectionality in Migration: Transnational Wolof Migrants Negotiating Manhood and Gendered Family Roles

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Abstract

Men are seldom a topic of concern in migration research as gendered subjects who experience the implications of social justice, for instance in aspects relating to lives in their families such as fairness of representation, consequences of material redistribution, and management of emotions. Economic migrants in particular, who are seen as matching the role of breadwinners and confirming the status of dominant patriarchal men, are a particularly underrated case. Using the experiences of Wolof men who emigrate from Senegal to become the main providers for their families, this chapter questions this assumption by drawing insights from a theorization on 'transnational families', 'intersectionality' and 'masculinity' as developed within migration and gender studies. The chapter discusses how male gender roles become interlocked with other categories, as asymmetries (be they real or perceived) intervene between the migrant and the stay-behind, and as geographic distance forces them to revisit the propriety of arrangements that enable them to enact their gendered responsibility within families. Caught between pressures deriving from their economic and moral obligations towards family and kin on the one hand, and personal aspirations of fitting the part of successful men on the other, the ethnographic research presented in this chapter shows that migrants engage in an emotional journey that may challenge, rather than confirm, their expectations of 'hegemonic' masculinity.

Keywords: family relations, gender relations, hegemonic masculinity, intersectionality, manhood, men, Senegal, transnational migration, Wolof.

11.1 Introduction

The study of transnational families has become an established area within the field of migration studies. This literature has increasingly brought to the fore a concern for the gendered nature of migration and transnational relations and the implications for equality and social justice, for instance raising questions about the effects of migration on the empowerment or marginalization of migrant or stay-behind women. Transnational families are an important socializing institution where gender roles are constructed and hierarchies of authority and power defined. Yet research on transnational families suffers from two major shortcomings: it focuses predominantly on the experiences of women, and it overemphasizes the role of culture, identity and emotional factors to the detriment of more structural factors that shape intra-family inequalities in a transnational sphere. Transnational families are made up of individuals who succeed in maintaining a sense of unity by upholding kinship relations across geographic distances. As well as being a source of identity, transnational families also provide welfare and mutual support to their members (Bryceson/Vuorela 2002; Chamberlain/Leydesdorff 2004). As socially ascribed gender roles are bound to be redefined in transnational families, migration introduces new inequalities between family members, and these are often interwoven with gender lines and require both women and men to adjust to them in the transnational family space. This chapter investigates how gender and other sources of social inequality in families that result from the asymmetries generated by migration mutually shape each other and the power dynamics that they entail. It applies the construct of 'intersectionality'. This refers to how social inequali-

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ties are shaped by gender differences as well as by the interaction between gender differences and other socially and culturally constructed categories such as race, class, ability, and age. The focus is on men and masculinities as largely under-researched issues in existing work on transnationalism and gender. Specifically, this chapter attempts to answer the question of how male migrants engaging in transnational migration negotiate their aspirations to fit the patriarchal norms expected from men, and how this is reflected in daily practices with family members. An intersectional approach can be beneficial to the study of transnational families. It allows the fluid and plural nature of masculinities to be grasped, masculinities that are questioned and redefined at the intersection of unequal power relations in multiple spheres.

There are various reasons why Senegalese migration is an exemplary case study for the analysis of the issues outlined. Firstly, transnational migratory practices and the establishment of transnational families are common among the Senegalese. Emigration from Senegal involves approximately one-tenth of the country's population,[2] and most families have at least one member who is living abroad. Leaving the family behind is, in fact, often a deliberate choice: a circumstance that is at once a reason for and cause of the strong transnational character of Senegalese migration. Migrants from Senegal remain deeply attached to their country of origin, where they can uphold family and other social ties and make regular visits in the hope of returning permanently one day. Secondly, the emigration of largely unskilled labourers seeking their fortune overseas most often results in unequal access to resources between and within families. This is particularly striking in the case of intercontinental migration, as Senegalese migrants to France, Italy, Spain, or the United States are able to remit significant resources across borders that make a difference in the livelihoods of receivers back home. Thirdly, despite feminization trends being on the rise, emigration remains a predominantly male affair in Senegal. Typically, Senegalese emigrants are young and unmarried Wolof men who migrate alone and later use their trips back home to choose a wife (sometimes more than one) and create families of their own. Successful migration will allow them to establish with time a separate household independent from their birth household.

This chapter is based on research conducted between 2004 and 2010 with a broader concern for the mobility patterns and aspirations of Senegalese migrants between their home country and Italy. A body of data gathered from participant observations conducted in the homes of Senegalese immigrants in Italy, in addition to direct visits to their families in urban and rural areas of Senegal,[3] provides new qualitative insights that are reflected upon separately here. Above and beyond the initial research design, the transformation of men's gender identities through migration and the implications for understanding masculinity as a social construct emerged throughout fieldwork as a significant issue. Gender roles and identities are more easily observed through everyday practices than openly and profusely spoken about, and extensive multi-sited observations provided the most valuable insight into migrant men's experiences of masculinity. Observations and informal talk with respondents about the meanings of masculinity facilitated the building of trust and confidence ahead of supplementary in-depth qualitative interviews conducted with selected Senegalese migrants.[4] The experiences of these migrating men add to, as well as challenge, the existing body of knowledge that emphasizes aspects of rational calculation in the male breadwinner role, devoid of other aspects such as emotional gains and losses. Criteria of reasoned choice ensured that the sample covers various male profiles in terms of their social positionings in Senegal.[5] Rather than assessing the frequencies of given phenomena in a representative way, such a sampling strategy allows trends common to all cases within the sample despite its di-

2 A policy document issued by the Government's Ministry for Senegalese of the Exterior in 2006 indicated an unofficial estimate of the Senegalese diaspora of over one million people worldwide. For the same year, projections based on the latest population census estimated the total national population at 11,343,328 people (see: <http://www.ansd.sn/publications/annuelles/SES_2006.pdf>, accessed 18/05/2012).

3 Research focused on two regions of northern Italy (Lombardy and Veneto) where Senegalese immigrants are highly concentrated. In Senegal, the families of 31 migrants were the object of multiple visits in the Dakar region, as well as in smaller cities and rural villages in the regions of Diourbel, Kaolack, Louga, Saint Louis, and Thiès.

4 Interviews were conducted with 79 migrant men. In addition to this data, another 12 interviews with women migrants ensured comparison on gender-sensitive issues and further interviews with nine key informants were used to validate preliminary findings during the progress of research. It should be noted that the data was collected with a deliberate exclusive focus on heterosexual masculinities, and on transnational families in a hetero-normative context.

versity to be identified, as well as focusing on how specific structural factors of inequality may interact with gender differences in outlier cases.

In order to capture the experience of masculinity among male migrants, this chapter uses a theoretical framework for the understanding of transnational families that does not take gender roles as a fixed reality, but maintains openness to the transformation of gendered relations of power and hierarchy and how they affect men as gendered social beings. This framework, outlined in the following section, is constructed by combining insight from theorization on transnational family relations with theories of intersectionality and masculinity. The two subsequent sections present an analysis of the research through this theoretical lens. The importance of inequalities in access to material resources and the resulting power disparities between migrant breadwinners and their families emerges in a strikingly uniform way across the research sample as a source of confirmation for their roles as hegemonic and patriarchal men (11.3). This evidence is contrasted with an illustration of other factors that challenge such visions of masculinity and manhood (11.4) and gives an insight into some of the individual responses to this challenge adopted by migrants. Concluding remarks are offered in the final section (11.5).

11.2 Framing Migrant Men: Transnational Families, Intersectionality, and Hegemonic Masculinity

Kinship and its related social institutions are often at the centre of studies of transnational migration. Scholars inspired by the New Economics of Labour Migration theory, for instance, identify households as important sites of production in which migration decisions are taken as a collective strategy that allows the sharing of economic risks between members. The debate about migrant transnationalism, moreover, has been interested in families as sites more for cultural reproduction than for material production (Levitt/Glick-Schiller 2004). A substantial corpus of work currently exists that investigates the reproduction of cultures and identities in families through the transnationalization of rituals (Al-Ali 2002; Gardner/Grillo 2002) and emotions (Chamberlain/Leydesdorff 2004; König/de Regt 2010; Svasek/Skrbis 2007; Svasek 2008; Yeoh/Huang/Lam 2005).

Literature on transnational families has been particularly sensitive to calls inviting the incorporation of a gender dimension to analysis (Fouron/Glick-Schiller 2001; Mahler/Pessar 2001, 2003, 2006; Truong/Gasper 2008). Suggestions for research were made on how "gender as it is lived across the borders of nation-states" may "sustain gender divisions, hierarchies and inequalities" or "help build more equitable relations between men and women" (Fouron/Glick-Schiller 2001: 540). Similarly 'gendered geographies of power' (Mahler/Pessar 2001) have been advocated in order to grasp how, in transnational spaces, the reconfiguration of gender categories can challenge or fortify related hierarchies. Much of the resulting research investigating changes in gender relations within transnational families suffers, however, from a major limitation. It overwhelmingly concentrates on the effects of migration on the marginalization or empowerment of women, with research variously addressing: the effects of female migration on power dynamics within gender relations (Dannecker 2005; Marques/Santos/Araujo 2001; Purwani/Williams 2005); transnational care chains and the strains of transnational motherhood on migrating women (Aranda 2003; Hondagneu-Sotelo/Avila 1997; Parreñas 2001 & 2005; Ryan/Sales/Tilki/Siara 2009); the influence of gender on remittance behaviour and development outcomes in the homeland (Dannecker 2009; Nyberg Sørensen 2005; Wong 2006); and the effects of transnational migration on women who stay behind (Buggenhagen 2001; de Haas/van Rooij 2010; Lo 2008; Lukasiewicz 2011).

The limitation outlined above may be overcome by focusing on alternative male experiences and calling for a deeper enquiry into the relations between migration, transnational families, and changing masculinities. This emerging area of research may benefit from the adoption of theories of 'intersectionality' and 'hegemonic masculinity' that can help explain how manhood is constructed and masculinity negotiated within transnational families and provide an analysis that is sensitive to interactions between different sources of social inequality.

Originally coined by legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw (1991), the concept of 'intersectionality' has gained widespread success within feminist studies,

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5 On the basis of social class and occupation prior to migration, social caste, affiliation to the main Senegalese Islamic brotherhoods (Muridiyya, Tijaniyya, Layenne, Qadiriyya), as well as other dimensions that could influence respondents' status as males (such as rural/urban origin, young/mature age, with/without independent family, brief/long migration experience).

where it is used as a conceptual tool for the analysis of gender as a multi-dimensional phenomenon where multiple axes of identity (gender, race, class, ability, age) interact on multiple and often simultaneous levels, creating a system of oppression that reflects the 'intersection' of multiple forms of discrimination. Though intersectionality has a long historical heritage in the struggle against slavery and classism, the concept was renovated by feminist scholars (more precisely black feminist scholars in the United States) to investigate mechanisms of discrimination against women of colour and indigenous women as groups that are disadvantaged, excluded, or oppressed. Given that in a situation of social inequality men are often implicitly assumed to be the ones holding privilege and power, research applying intersectionality to men is relatively rare (Hearn 2009; Hurtado/Sinha 2008). Intersectionality might nonetheless be useful to study relationships of dominance and oppression that affect men and women at intra- and inter-group levels.

Connell's (1995) work on hegemonic masculinity appears a useful tool for exploring male gender identity as being intersectional. Hegemonic masculinity is defined as "the currently most honoured way of being a man, it require[s] all other men to position themselves in relation to it, and it ideologically legitimate[s] the global subordination of women to men" (Connell/Messerschmidt 2005: 832). Connell conceptualizes masculinity in plural terms, as a multiple construct where different notions of manhood are defined in relation to hegemonic masculinity. Hegemonic masculinity is therefore an essentialist normative ideal and socially legitimated dominant patriarchal model, in relation to which counter-hegemonic masculinities—including subordinate, complicit, and marginalized masculinities—are defined. Connell recognizes that hegemony is "a historically mobile relation" (1995: 77); nonetheless, in reality not only the relation between hegemonic and other masculinities but also dominant models of masculinity are best conceptualized in fluid terms. This allows it to be recognized that alternative and even conflicting notions of manhood may be variously combined within hegemonic masculinity itself.

'Intersectionality' and 'hegemonic masculinity' are both based on the assumption that gender relations and hierarchies are constantly negotiated and subject to change. Moreover, both concepts share an interest in understanding how such change is embedded in hierarchies of power arising from specific contexts and situations. Applied to the study of transnational migration, both concepts can advance current debates. Intersectionality is a means of overcoming a culturalist bias that has placed greater emphasis on "the identity orientations and the cultural traits of migrants, and on social interaction within transnational social spaces" and has neglected the economic basis of transnationalism, so that "social inequality and fragmented social spaces have not received the analytical attention they deserve" (Bürkner 2012: 190). Intersectionality can help bring into being an analysis that incorporates Mahler and Pessar's 'gendered geographies of power' in the study of transnational family relations, and help the understanding of "how the social constructs of masculinities and femininities shape migration decisions and experiences" and how "the social construction of migrants' identities [...] connects a variety of domains in social lives – sexuality, gender, work, home maintenance and child care, institutional life, domination and resistance" (Truong/Gasper 2008: 290). Reference to hegemonic masculinity, moreover, allows the repercussions of transnationalism on gender relations to be studied from a male perspective, given that work analysing the relation between masculinity and transnational migration is still relatively rare (Broughton 2008; Datta/McIlwaine/Herbert/Evans/May/Wills 2009; Elmhirst 2007; Malkin 2004; Monsutti 2007; Osella/Osella 2000; Pribilski 2012). Transnationalism does nonetheless "offer the potential for processes of extension of some men's transnational intersectional power" (Hearn 2011: 99), processes which deserve to be studied and which "may take the form of non-responsibility, of surveillance and destruction, of loss of expected security/privilege" (Hearn 2011: 99). This requires the investigation of how masculinities are negotiated as people move across borders while maintaining ties with their families of origin in a transnational space, and how essentialist understandings of hegemony and patriarchy may be challenged, confirmed, and transformed.

11.3 'Breadwinning' and Other Markers of Manhood for Senegalese Migrants within their Transnational Families

Families constitute a central pillar of Senegalese society and their importance is not wavering in the face of the increased geographic dispersal imposed by intercontinental migration. Family values, in fact, are found to hold strong even among the Senegalese diaspora (Riccio 2008). Patriarchal and matrilinear in

structure, families in Senegal include not only parents and siblings or spouses and children, but stretch to include other members of the extended kin such as grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, and nieces and nephews. It is common for a family living in the same compound to be made up of various nuclear households. Following the principle of patrilocality, for instance, upon marriage the wife traditionally moves into her husband's home, which involves living with in-laws. The line that separates kin from strangers, moreover, is largely a matter of self-perception: as an enactment of the Wolof saying *dëkkaale bu yàgg, mbokk la* (tr.: living together for a long time turns neighbours into relatives), the extended family may also include significant others who are not related through blood and kinship. As synthesized by Bass and Sow, marriage, consanguinity, kinship ties, and being associated with a shared surname are at the basis of family affiliation; nonetheless, "extensive shared social experience may also be sufficient to provide both kin and household membership" to outsiders (2006: 91).

This model of family operates as an economic system of welfare and exchange: it is along the lines of extended family bonds that distribution and redistribution of wealth is organized. The Wolof word *mbokk*, indicating those related through ties of blood and kinship derives from *bokk*, which means 'to share' or 'to have in common'. Although Islamic brotherhoods have also played a crucial role in the establishment of Senegalese migration in Italy and elsewhere, families are always indicated by respondents as being at the core of male providers' decisions to emigrate as a household strategy, and as being the fulcrum of transnational connections and practices upheld throughout migration (Sinatti 2011).[6] Migration is followed by striking asymmetries between migrants and the stay-behind in terms of access to mobility, capital, and other resources (Bryceson/Vuorela 2002; Carling 2008). As has been suggested by Levitt and Glick-Schiller, "many migrants gain more social power, in terms of leverage over people, property, and locality, with respect to their homeland than they did before migrating. It is this complex intersection between personal losses and gains that any analysis of power within transnational social fields must grapple with" (2004: 1013–1014). This imbalance is at the basis of an economics of exchanges that take place between family members, in which migrant men are invested with important responsibilities towards their relatives in Senegal. Remittances cover the everyday basic needs of many Senegalese households (Diagne/Rakotonarivo 2010) and migrants interviewed for this research all confirmed that they regularly send money home:[7]

> "When you have a family you're no longer alone. You can't only think of yourself and your own needs, but you have to think also of them. [...] The way I see it, when you have a family you no longer live for yourself. A part of you remains yours, but another part of you is no longer yours" (Bathily).

> "It is a question of *kóllëre*[8], there are certain people that I cannot forget" (Makhtar).

In addition to their economic and instrumental function, remittances to family members also have an affective function, as shown in research also among other West African transnational migrants (Åkesson 2011; Carling 2008). Evidence from other regions of the world, moreover, shows that for male migrant breadwinners gendered aspects are also relevant, and that there is a relationship between economic support or gift-giving and constructions of manhood (Johnson/Stoll 2008; Malkin 2004; Osella/Osella 2000; Pribilsky 2012). Work and money play an important part in the practice of migrants' male masculinity: fulfilling the breadwinner role allows respect and status to be gained from the migrant experience. Interviewees in this research often mentioned the hardships of migration, but they also unanimously indicated the need to work and support their families as the drive allowing them to overcome such daily difficulties:

6 A copious literature exists on the links between Senegalese transnational migration and membership in Islamic brotherhoods. The Muridiyya in particular undoubtedly played a major role in the initial phases of Senegalese migration to Italy, where early migrants relied on the brotherhood's tight networks and were inspired to work hard as a means of achieving heavenly blessing. With the progressive affirmation of Italy as an established migrant destination, however, the centrality of Murid affiliation has been diminishing: the presence of other brotherhoods has gained importance, and the arrival of young urbanites joining the ranks of earlier Murid migrants has contributed to a secularization of Senegalese immigration in this country and to the emergence of different ways of being transnational (Riccio 2001; Sinatti 2008).

7 All interviewees quoted or mentioned in this chapter have been given fictitious names in order to preserve their anonymity.

8 *Kóllëre* is a Wolof word indicating loyalty in relationships. It refers to bonds that may even extend beyond kin, for instance between families that have been close for various generations.

> "In Italy we live and work in hard conditions, but we have to *goorgoorlu*. It is for the sake of our families that we do this" (Adama).

The term *goorgoorlu* indicates how close the link is between masculinity and work: as a verb it means 'to get by', as a noun it refers to people in the informal sector surviving on occasional jobs. Yet *goor* means 'man' and by extension *goorgoorlu* also means 'behaving like a man'.

Alongside other key ritual moments in a man's life (circumcision, pilgrimage to Mecca, etc.), taking responsibility firstly for one's family of origin and then for one's independent household are seen as central steps in transition to manhood and in later progression towards more mature visions of masculinity. There is a diachronic side to the construction of masculinity over time that also shapes economic responsibilities towards the family in different ways throughout migration. Upon reaching adulthood, sons are expected to contribute to the well-being of their families of origin (Antoine/Sow 2000). Fathers are seen as having to be repaid for having brought their sons up with solid moral values and religious principles.[9] Obligation is particularly strong towards mothers, especially in polygamous households where the father's responsibilities over numerous wives and children often require women to integrate family revenues. Migrants therefore feel compelled to provide for the well-being of their parents and siblings:

> "I am responsible for the whole of my family. In Senegal, if I have a *mag bu jigéen* [elder sister], I am responsible for her because I am a man and she is a woman, even if she is older than me. I am responsible for her, my brother, my wives and children, my mother ... everybody, the whole family" (Makhtar).

With a first wife living with his elderly parents in his village of origin and a second wife and children settled in Dakar, Makhtar brings evidence of how, although all migrants have financial responsibilities towards the family, the nature and extent of provisions depend on a migrant's specific positioning in one or more households. While Makhtar has sole responsibility for the well-being of the urban household, he also feels obliged to contribute to the rural one where his parents and first wife live.

Dispensing monetary and material support to family members through migration is not only a response to economic and moral obligations held by all migrants, but is also a marker of manhood. Remittances are a source of virtue and prestige, a means for the migrant to assert himself as a benevolent, honourable, and respected man in his sending community. Unequal transnational distribution of resources between migrants and the stay-behind leads to relations that are frequently fraught with tensions (Carling 2008; Riccio 2008) and, regardless of the situation of need of the family back home, cases were frequently observed in which migrants were put under considerable pressure by constant demands for support beyond the monthly *dépense*[10] owed to the households over which they have direct responsibility. The rewards associated with remittances and other transfers in terms of avowing hegemonic visions of the patriarchal man nonetheless lead most migrants to speak of their efforts as leading to personal gratification and fulfilment.

Migration, moreover, has become a means for Senegalese men to access adulthood and that can shape their further opportunities to progress along the socially legitimized steps leading to the apex of mature manhood. This requires a man first to access marriage (Carling and Carretero 2008), then claim independent status for his own household while still under his father's roof (*beru*), relocate the new household to a separate roof (*sanc kërëm*), and eventually become the established head of an extended family (*boroom kër*). Similar findings from research in Kerala indicate that "[m]igration may accelerate an individual's progress along a culturally idealized trajectory towards mature manhood" (Osella/Osella 2000: 118). The case of Yoro and Talla is an example of how migration can offer a shortcut in this progression. They left Senegal when still under eighteen by forging their dates of birth in order to be eligible adults for the tourist visas that they later overstayed. Despite being *de facto* still minors, in their home families they were already praised as responsible young males, whereas some of their elder brothers struggling to make ends meet while they pursued university education in Senegal were frowned upon.

In a similar way to how Yoro and Talla succeeded in overcoming signifiers of manhood with relation to age, migration can become a means to break through

9 Respondents often spoke of *fulla ak fayda*, which indicate firmness of character and determination, as a core inheritance that is passed from father to son.

10 The *dépense* is the fixed amount constituting the core of remittances transferred by a migrant, to which extra transfers and gifts may be added with greater flexibility and variation. The *dépense* is calculated in advance on the basis of the average costs of running the household for which the migrant may be fully responsible or simply contributing to.

social categories such as caste and class. Migrant grooms belonging to the lower social castes of Wolof society have higher chances of marrying upward, outside their own caste.[11] Birame, instead, was able to marry cutting across categories of social class. A simple and illiterate man of rural origin who used to work in Senegal as a *boroom sarret* (horse and cart driver), he would not have stood a single chance of meeting a woman of urban middle-class background willing to be his bride. Against these odds and after having succeeded in building a house in a prominent neighbourhood of Dakar thanks to many years of low-skilled factory work as a transnational migrant, a charming and educated young lady became his second wife. The lure of achieving higher standing in terms of social class was evident as Birame declaimed the attributes of his new spouse. His migrant peers, however, heavily criticized his choice and foresaw troubled relations lurking ahead with this new wife, whose middle-class expectations they believed he would be ill-equipped to anticipate and manage.

In a country offering grim opportunities for employment at home, migration is seen as a valuable avenue that can allow caring for parents and siblings, moving forward in an ideal progression of manhood, and more broadly advancing one's social standing. Over the last decades Senegal has experienced a growing erosion of patriarchal control over household dependants in particular in rural areas, where neo-liberal economic reforms introduced in the mid-1980s made it more difficult for rural livelihoods to rely solely on cash-crop income and pushed women into petty trade, thus undermining male provider status (Perry 2005). Migration has therefore become established as a means for men to restore their role as economic providers and principal breadwinners, and thus reaffirm their masculinity in this sphere. Migration is nowadays central to people's images of the 'good life' and migrants are celebrated in popular culture as veritable national heroes. However, as argued next, transnational living may also challenge masculinity in other spheres.

11 Senegalese society among the Wolof (and other ethnic groups such as the Sereer and Toucouleur) is organized into a hierarchical caste system on the basis of the division of labour within society (Diop 1985). The *géér* represent the nobles, the *ñeeño* are people of caste, and the *jaam* are slaves and their descendants. Surnames are an indicator of people's belonging to one or the other group and such traditional societal divisions remain influential.

11.4 Challenges to Manhood and Emerging Masculinities in the Transnational Family Sphere

The imaginations of people back home contrast sharply with migrants' own experiences of day-to-day existence in countries of destination, where Senegalese men join the ranks of immigrant minorities and occupy the bottom ranks of the labour market as workers in low-skilled and precarious jobs. In Italy, they mainly engage in blue-collar employment in the industrial sector, in odd jobs in the services sector, and in agricultural labour, often with temporary or seasonal contracts. While most Senegalese immigrants in Italy were engaged in humble jobs before leaving Senegal, their social advancement at home thanks to migration makes them ill-equipped to accept that their social condition will remain low in the country of immigration. This feeling is even stronger in the exceptional cases of individuals who experience significant downward social mobility upon arriving in Italy, after having given up socially valued clerical or teaching jobs in exchange for the lures of migration. Exclusion and oppression along the lines of class and ethnicity in the new country of residence are experienced by all migrant men as a challenge to their masculinity. Against such challenges, economic accomplishments in Senegal become surrogates allowing migrants to restore in the public eye their roles as hegemonic men, at least at home. This is evident, for instance, in the symbolic meanings associated with real-estate investments in housing (Sinatti 2009), which are the first investment priority for any migrant who is not yet a home-owner and which are seen as symbolizing economic success as well as migrants' accomplishments as respected husbands and fathers:

> "In Senegal [...] we are all keen on inviting each other in our own homes. It's a form of competition, because we all want to show our friends how we live in our families, how we behave with our families, our family environment, in what ways we have invested in our houses. We want to show our investments and what we have managed to do" (Diadié).

Through the celebration of money and economic accomplishments Senegalese migrating men defend patriarchal roles and demonstrate a hyper-masculinity that portrays them as victors over adversity and abundant providers (Datta/McIlwaine/Herbert/Evans/May/Wills 2009: 856). In their countries of immigration, however, additional factors combine to threaten hegemonic roles. In the living quarters that they most often share with other co-nationals they are forced to

perform a number of tasks and chores that are traditionally reserved to women: taking care of the cooking, laundry, and housework is demeaning. These aspects are not publicly vented at home, but may constitute a cause for complicity with wives or mothers:

> "My wife gives me cooking tips on the quiet. When I am in Senegal, though, I wouldn't be seen dead inside the kitchen by other people" (Gallaye).

In the flat shared by Gallaye with other urbanite immigrants like himself, it is not uncommon to observe appreciation from other men of his cooking skills, usually followed by sniggers about the contents of his weekly phone conversations with his wife. Intimate relations are in fact a matter that is not overtly spoken about, as this is seen as unmanly. Among migrant men of all backgrounds this taboo rarely falters, as was evident from the reactions triggered by a middle-aged rural migrant with an established household of his own in Senegal who was observed publicly declaiming the virtues of a potato peeler that he had bought as a gift for his wife. Ngouda later confided that migration made him a better husband, as he had become more understanding of the difficulties and needs that his wife faces as a woman. This gift to her testified his love and understanding of the strains of a woman's daily chores.

Challenges to established gendered roles may lead to greater intimacy and mutual appreciation; however, handing over to others the family roles conventionally performed by the head of household can also force migrating men to redefine their masculinity in new ways. Transnational living particularly places under stress those legitimized roles of patriarchal men that hinge on daily social interactions with others within the family. In Senegal, the *boroom kër* is consulted regarding the regulation of family affairs, ranging from the education of children, the choice of spouses, the resolution of family disputes, to the organization of family ceremonies (Diop 1985: 178). Although the advice dispensed is not necessarily binding for the enquirer, nonetheless respect for the virtues attributed to this hegemonic patriarchal figure at the apex of his 'career' ensures that he be consulted. Respect and obedience are due to the *boroom kër* in the name of a legitimized moral authority based on gender, age, experience, and wisdom. Among migrants, however, non-presence challenges such processes and requires manhood to be constantly renegotiated in ways that can compensate for lack of daily face-to-face interaction. How new ways of expressing loyalty, intimacy, and love restructure such processes in a transnational space has emerged as an area of inquiry of considerable significance for migration studies with an interest for how "conventional relationships between husband and wife, parent and child or amongst siblings can be subjected to substantial revision" (Bryceson/Vuorela 2002: 16). Lack of day-to-day interaction means that migrants are no longer immersed in the intricate daily dealings of their extended families. Instead, they depend on others to brief them in the hope of obtaining sufficient information for them to formulate such advice. This often turns the tables, resulting in others advising the migrant on the advice he should be giving and ultimately forcing the migrant to entrust others with the fulfilment of his obligations. Migrants build trust relationships with relatives as they share or fully delegate decision-making with fathers, mothers, wives, siblings, or children, depending on the family structure. Although this may lead to greater complicity and equity in such interpersonal relations, it nonetheless also results in the migrant's own male authority being diminished. In particular, those with a short migration history who are still young and unmarried (and as a result more easily exposed to economic pressures from relatives back home) struggle to find ways of affirming their own position as men in their families beyond the breadwinning role. A young migrant with a relatively affluent family in Dakar spoke of his own situation as being not so different from that of most other migrants with less fortunate backgrounds than himself:

> "Everybody considers us a reservoir of wealth. Economic support is the first thing they delegate to you. [...] The biggest frustration of the Senegalese immigrant is this role given to him by the family back home. We are like milk-cows. Immigration has cancelled any other role or place for us, it has wiped out our participation and has reduced it to a mere economic role. I hand out the dough and beyond this, I don't exist" (Moussa).

Many, like Moussa, feel exposed to exploitation. The practice of *mbaraan* (tr.: taking advantage of someone) used to the detriment of migrants has in fact become so well-known that the word has come to indicate also the person who is victim (Nyamnjoh 2005: 302).

In some spheres, migrating men feel that their absence simply cannot be replaced. For more mature migrants who have already formed a family of their own, decisions regarding children and distant parenting, for instance, are often a matter of great concern. Migrant fathers take strongly to heart the education of younger generations:

> "My children back home are growing up. I need to go home and supervise them" (Selle).

> "As an emigrant in Italy it is too difficult to give our sons a basic education. We are losing ground. Without my presence, my wives are too soft" (Bara).

Among those who are closely affiliated to Islamic brotherhoods and value the importance of religious upbringing, this is considered the children's essential heritage and in absence of the head of household it is feared to be inadequate, particularly for boys:

> "When the father is away, an important thing is missing. Children are brought up badly if their father is not present, because the first thing in a child's education is religion" (Laye).

These interviews confirm that migrating men feel that authoritative fatherhood is threatened when they are far away, and that the issue of children staying behind raises feelings of anxiety and emotional unrest in the migrating parent (Orellana/Thorne/Chee/Lam 2001). Against the recognized risk of losing time-honoured moral virtues and values, some transnational fathers take pride in the fact that as migrants they can offer their children better opportunities, for instance through access to formal education and schooling. In addition, migrants explore new ways of exercising fatherhood that can respond to new challenges deriving from the fact that "[i]ntergenerational lifestyle conflicts common to families everywhere may be more marked in transnational families" (Bryceson/Vuorela 2002: 13).

As a transnational father, Aliou offers a striking example of some of the creative ways adopted by a migrating parent in response to the broadening intergenerational gap between himself and his children. Having migrated to Dakar with his family from a small village in inner Senegal, and being convinced that moving to the city would offer his family a life of higher standing, Aliou later migrated to Italy, where he had spent twelve years in precarious employment in factory work as a welder. In between his intermittent presences at home, his children grew up as part of an urbanite generation in the city. When the author visited his home in Senegal, his teenage elder son was carrying a PlayStation in his hands that he presented with pride. This touching and amusing image brought to mind the other side of the story as told by Aliou in Italy, who had received a specific request for this toy that had to fit the make and model *en vogue*. It had taken Aliou a big effort to acquaint himself with the market so as not to disappoint his son's expectations and he had taken on such attentiveness to detail wholeheartedly as a new way of expressing his fatherly care. This scenario clashed strongly with the austerity and integrity associated with the discipline and control that characterize visions of hegemonic masculinity that Aliou and those of his generation most likely experienced during their childhood with respect to their own fathers.

In a context in which neo-liberal economic reform and decline of rural livelihoods are reducing men's economic hold over their households, traditional visions of hegemonic masculinity have long been subject to erosion in Senegal. Migration and its economic returns have become viewed by men as a means of reconquering their dominant position. As migrants' multi-local lives straddle different localities in the countries of origin and of residence, however, they are presented with varying power over different facets of masculinity. Whereas their role as main breadwinners and providers for their families is affirmed, migration makes them lose ground on other important sources of respect and authority associated with hegemonic masculinity, and forces them to invent new, alternative masculinities in different spheres. Masculinity, in fact, not only changes in progressive steps during a man's lifetime, but transnational migrant men are also called to perform different masculinities with different audiences (their families, other migrants, their local communities) that may differ significantly from the hegemonic ideal that originally encouraged them to migrate.

11.5 Conclusion

This chapter has challenged the notion of men as a unitary category of social power. By extending the concept of intersectionality to study the experience of Senegalese men migrants as breadwinners, transnational families were analysed as sites where social interactions can reproduce hegemonic and dominant masculinities, whilst also challenging and questioning them. An intersectional understanding of family relations is beneficial to migration studies, as it allows researchers to grasp how masculinities may be redefined as people move across cultural, social, and national borders, and as they encounter and cope with different regimes of power at the intersection of other social categories. The stories illustrated here show how migration is clearly shaped by understandings of specific male and female roles and how, in turn, migration is a vehicle for the transformation of hegemonic ideas about masculinity. Just as authoritative masculinity can be threatened when relating to

wives, children, and other relatives at a distance, so caring about loved ones staying behind can cause anxiety and unrest among migrating men. After all, for these men, migration was a strategic choice to improve the well-being, at present and in the future, of the family. While they may be fulfilling this role economically, they remain vulnerable emotionally to the implications of fully exercising their gendered roles at a distance, and thus to the possibility of losing part of their socially learned authority.

Transnational family formations have the potential to deeply challenge aspirations among migrating men of fitting the ideal of hegemonic masculinity. An intersectional perspective on masculinity reveals how gender identities are fluid and multifaceted, as breadwinning transnational migrants experience and renegotiate their role as men within their families. Work, money, remittances, and gifts are important elements in the distant construction of hegemonic masculine identities, whilst other everyday practices among migrants show that transnational migration forces Wolof society to rethink social and cultural beliefs about males and females and the differences between them. Understanding these processes requires a plural and fluid notion of masculinity that is in line with Lindsay and Miescher's (2003) analysis of modern sub-Saharan African masculinities. These authors suggest that there may be conflicting visions of what should be masculine behaviour and that essentialized ideals of hegemonic masculinity may not apply indiscriminately in all spheres. The findings of this chapter confirm this observation. Rather than fitting a unitary construct of masculinity, migrants develop multiple masculinities across (and within) time and space. As was shown above, the renegotiation of masculinities is a constantly ongoing process that becomes even more complex in transnational spheres. These, in fact, call for the redefinition of family relations and male and female roles in work, care, and authority that intersect with gender, age, ethnicity, and class. The requirements imposed by transnational family living demand that, out of these complex intersections, men negotiate their status within the family and elaborate alternative masculinities, incorporating them into dominant patriarchal and hegemonic visions.

The findings of this chapter confirm the usefulness of intersectionality as a key concept applied to the study of male experiences in migration that allows more fine-grained differences to be revealed than widespread interpretations of migrant men as 'modern-day heroes' who save their families and nations from poverty and debt. Combined reference to intersectionality and hegemonic masculinity provides conceptual tools that result in a more nuanced and varied account of migrant masculinities, attentive to gendered hierarchies and power differentials. A broader application of intersectionality is therefore proposed here beyond the field of women's studies, in which it is predominantly used to study men also, and more broadly to study how gender relations are affected and transformed in transnational spheres. It was shown above that migrating men and masculinities may be better understood through an intersectional lens and it was suggested that future research agendas should look comparatively at how the same intersectionalities may shape different outcomes that are specific to women and men. Feminization trends of migration, for instance, may be accompanied by new transformations in gendered divisions of labour, responsibility, and authority that could be further investigated: while there already is research evidence of the ways in which such transformations may be empowering for women, much less is known about the kinds of demands and adaptations that they may require on the part of men. In addition, it would be useful to investigate how and when innovative features of masculinity adopted by transnational migrant men are received by non-migrant men in the country of origin. This would not only allow the exploration of how different masculinities may relate to each other, but also the investigation of the implications of migration in relation to broader social transformations beyond the family sphere, such as the establishment of new gender norms and relations in the sending country at large.

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