Distribution Agreement

In presenting this thesis or dissertation as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for an advanced degree from Emory University, I hereby grant to Emory University and its agents the non-exclusive license to archive, make accessible, and display my thesis or dissertation in whole or in part in all forms of media, now or hereafter known, including display on the world wide web. I understand that I may select some access restrictions as part of the online submission of this thesis or dissertation. I retain all ownership rights to the copyright of the thesis or dissertation. I also retain the right to use in future works (such as articles or books) all or part of this thesis or dissertation.

Signature: _____ _____

Dinah Hannaford Date

Married to the Mobile: Migration, Gender, Class and Kinship in Contemporary Senegal

By

Dinah Hannaford
Doctor of Philosophy

Anthropology

_____
Bruce M. Knauft, Ph.D. Advisor

_____
Carla Freeman, Ph.D. Committee Member

_____
Peter D. Little, Ph.D. Committee Member

Accepted:

_____

Lisa Tedesco, Ph.D.
Dean of the James T. Laney School of Graduate Studies

_____
Date

Married To The Mobile:
Migration, Gender, Class and Kinship in Contemporary Senegal

By

Dinah Hannaford
M.A., Emory University, 2010
B.A., Duke University, 2004

Advisor: Bruce M. Knauft, PhD

An abstract of
a dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the
James T. Laney School of Graduate Studies of Emory University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in Anthropology
2014

Abstract
Married To The Mobile:
Migration, Gender, Class and Kinship in Contemporary Senegal
By Dinah Hannaford

Across the world, neoliberal transnationalism engenders new forms of kinship and marriage. At the same time, rising inequality, both within and among countries, and the privatization of public wealth inform the perceived need and the opportunity for new kinds of kinship and marital flexibility. This dissertation examines a reflection of these trends in contemporary Senegal in the form of transnational marriages between Senegalese migrant men and non-migrant women back in Senegal

Limited finances and lack of jobs make it increasingly difficult for Senegalese men and women to find opportunities for social stability much less financial advancement within Senegal. Increasingly, they reach outside the country in an attempt to procure means for building successful social lives within Senegal. For many Senegalese men (and some women) this entails migration in an attempt to find work abroad —while continuing to invest in social life at home. Investment at home frequently includes marrying and forming families with women back in Senegal. For Senegalese women, these same pressures not infrequently lead them to willingly marry men from Senegal who are overseas migrants. Many married couples spend years at a time separated by thousands of miles, with no immediate plans for relocation and reunification.

This dissertation is based on multi-sited, transcontinental research that explored the phenomenon of transnational marriage through extensive transnational fieldwork and in-depth interviews among Senegalese migrants living in France and Italy and migrants' wives in Senegal. Transnational marriages continue to be desirable to both parties, despite their many challenges, because of a general shift in Senegalese culture that connects and prioritizes transnational goals with longstanding patterns of Senegalese kinship and gender relations.

Transnational marriage in Senegal provides a fascinating window into the entanglement between neoliberal economics and global labor restructuring and local ideologies of kinship, class, and romance. The emergent transnational connection between international remittances, kinship, class, and gender makes this dissertation an important contribution to contemporary cultural anthropology and our wider understandings of migration, class, and relationships between kinship and neoliberal capitalism.

Married To The Mobile:
Migration, Gender, Class and Kinship in Contemporary Senegal

By

Dinah Hannaford
M.A., Emory University, 2010
B.A., Duke University, 2004

Advisor: Bruce M. Knauft, PhD

A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the
James T. Laney School of Graduate Studies of Emory University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in Anthropology
2014

Acknowledgements

The process of researching and writing this dissertation was made simpler and more enjoyable with the help of many supporters, mentors and institutions.

The men and women whose stories appear in this dissertation deserve my first expression of gratitude. Without their participation there would have been no study at all. Though their names do not appear in this text for their privacy, they are co-authors of this text.

Gary Engelberg and the staff of the ACI Baobab Center gave me an office, a community, and occasionally a place to sleep and I am grateful to have the Center as my eternal home base in Dakar. Amy Diop Niang brought her extroverted enthusiasm and her gift for conversation to her role as my research assistant and I cannot thank her enough for her help. Dienaba Signate gave patient and wise counsel on matters both linguistic and cultural. Maimouna Cisse and the entire Niang family of Liberté V remain central to my work and to my life. They kindly guard the part of my heart that lives in Senegal.

The financial support of the IIE Fulbright Association allowed me to initiate this project long before I entertained thoughts of a doctoral degree. Dr. Andaleeb Banta and Dr. Jill Pederson provided examples of a balance between scholarly rigor and good fun in that year and I continue to look to them as models of personal and professional fulfillment.

The Social Science Research Council's IDRF Program and the Wenner-Gren Foundation generously provided funding for a large portion of this research and I thank them especially for their flexibility. Emory's Department of Anthropology, Institute for African Studies, and Institute for Comparative International Studies funded preliminary fieldwork. The Mellon Graduate Teaching Fellowship and Spelman College gave me the opportunity to write the thesis while teaching dynamic and engaged students.

Thanks go to Lora MacDonald, Rachel Von Ins and Debbie Keyes for their capable assistance with all things administrative and bureaucratic. I also thank classmates Moyukh Chatterjee, Jo Weaver, Kara Moskowitz, Shunyuan Zhang, Casey Bouskill, Amy Cobden, Lauren Myers, Jennifer Tookes, Bethany Turner, Claire-Marie Hefner, Starra Priestaf, Nikki Karalekas, Hemangini Gupta, Lena Suk, Aubrey Graham, and Des Fitzgerald for their companionship and influence. Outside of Emory, Carla Takaki Richardson, Cheikh Anta Babou, Ermitte Saint Jacques, Ellen Foley, and Bruce Whitehouse have been great collaborators and thoughtful reviewers.

It was a great privilege to work with my committee members, Dr. Bruce Knauft, Dr. Carla Freeman and Dr. Peter Little. From the beginning, this team guided me with patient thoroughness and I cannot thank them enough for their time and attention.

Finally, I wish to thank Marion Faber, Steve Hannaford and Janie and Eric Rosenthal for their moral support and love, and Adam and Charlotte Rosenthal for filling each day with silliness and affection.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

"Degg dooyul ma

Bëgg naa giis la

Jaabaru modou modou

Sonn na

Jabaru immigré

Moom weet na"

"Hearing you isn't enough

I want to see you

A *modou modou*'s wife

She is weary

A migrant's wife

She is lonesome"

-Ndickou Seck, *Modou Modou*[1]

Across Senegal and the Senegalese diaspora, men and women are trying to make sense of a growing category of women, the *jabaaru immigré.* This Wolof label, which literally translates to "immigrant's wife", describes the non-migrant wives of Senegalese men who reside overseas.[2] In popular song, televised films, in the news media and online, these women are depicted alternately as opportunistic gold-diggers, forsaken lonely

[1] *Modou modou* is another term for migrant that particularly refers to labor migrants from
[2] A more accurate social scientific category would be émigré*,* as the term refers not to immigrants into Senegal, but Senegalese who have moved overseas.

hearts, and naïve dupes. Songs like the one quoted above stress the sacrifice and forbearance of a migrant's wife, while news stories with headlines like "*L'émigré retrouve son épouse avec une grossesse de sept mois*" ["Emigrant returns to find his wife seven months pregnant"] (L'Observateur 2011) suggest not all wives are so patient in their husbands' absence. The comments sections of that article and many others like it on popular Senegalese news aggregation websites have hundreds of comments in Wolof and French from readers—both castigating the woman in question for her adultery and blaming the husband for abandoning his wife for years at a time. Some commenters insist that husbands who leave for work overseas are violating Islamic[3] principles of husbandly duty; others insist that all women are promiscuous gold-diggers who will sell their bodies for access to cash and consumer goods. Overseas migrants and *jabaaru immigré* themselves weigh in in the comment section, sharing their own stories and adding perspective to the experience of transnational marriage.

Transnational marriages have grown increasingly prevalent in Senegal, as economic and social possibilities have steadily declined. Rising inflation and a lack of remunerative employment make it increasingly difficult for Senegalese men and women to find opportunities for financial and social advancement within Senegal. Increasingly, they reach outside the country in an attempt to procure means for building successful social lives within Senegal. For many Senegalese men (and some women)[4] this entails

[3] Senegal is 95% Muslim and all of the subjects of this study were Muslim.
[4] As Senegalese emigration is still overwhelmingly male and transnational marriages in which the wife is international and the husband stays local are rare, my dissertation puts the focus on male migrants and female non-migrants. I am, however, able to consider a few cases of husband-wife co-migrants.

migration in an attempt to find work abroad[5] —while continuing to invest in social life at home. One Senegalese household out of ten counts an emigrant among its members (Daffé, 2008), and an estimated half of all households have a relative living abroad (Beauchemin et al. 2013). Migrant investment at home frequently includes marrying and forming families with women back in Senegal. For Senegalese women, these same pressures for financial and social advancement not infrequently lead them to willingly marry men from Senegal who live overseas.

Though some families do eventually reunite either in the migrant context or at home, most transnational couples live the majority of their marriage in separate locations (see Baizan et al. 2011). The frequency of a husband's visits varies widely, depending on his legal migration status, his employment, and his financial resources. At one extreme, couples go many years without seeing one another because husbands do not have their *kayt* (Wf: immigration papers) and thus cannot leave their country of residence without being blocked from returning. At the other extreme, there are husbands whose work in import/export facilitates a return every four to six months. Factory workers in Europe usually have Christmas closures and a long August holiday from work, though trips home are too expensive for most factory workers to return on a bi-annual basis. As many Senegalese migrants belong to the Mouride brotherhood[6], many who can choose to return yearly for the Magal, the annual pilgrimage to the Mouride's holy city of Touba in the

[5] While Senegalese have been moving to other African countries in the region as traders for centuries, this dissertation discusses primarily migrants to the "newer" destination countries in Europe, the Americas, and the Middle East.

[6] Mourides are one of Senegal's four major Islamic brotherhoods—the others being Tidjane, Layenne, and Qadirriya. See Diouf 2000, Babou 2007, Cruise O'Brien 1971, Riccio 2004, among others, for the particular transnationalism of the Mouride brotherhood.

north of Senegal. Others return yearly for Eid Al-Fitr (*tabaski*) or the end of Ramadan (*koritė*).

Many transnational couples keep in touch daily, primarily through telephone calls, though increasingly also through other communication media such as Skype and instant messengers. With a few rare exceptions, Senegalese migrant husbands send remittances home through agencies such as MoneyGram and Western Union, or through more informal channels, such as through gifts or cash sent with fellow migrants making a journey home on vacation, or particular religious networks of exchange (Tall 2002). These remittances finance everything from home construction to laundry detergent, from school fees to breakfast, and many households in Senegal depend on support from overseas to function on a day-to-day basis. Financial remittances are a source of tension between migrants and migrants' wives, frequently causing stress and conflict as couples clash over the ideal amount, frequency and use of remittances (see Hannaford forthcoming).

Questions of fidelity also strain relations between husbands and wives, though in uneven ways. While Senegal's culture of polygyny[7] removes most expectation that husbands will remain celibate in the absence of their wives—and indeed, some Senegalese migrants have wives in the host country as well as at home (Hannaford 2012)—wives face tremendous social sanctions for infidelity. As many migrants' wives move in with their in-laws and face social control from their households and virtually

[7] Senegalese Muslim men are permitted up to four wives, and the practice of polygyny is cuts across all sectors of society and is found in rural and urban settings in Senegal, in upper class families as well as those living in poverty (Kane 2011: 169, Antoine and Nanitelamio 1995).

from husbands overseas (see Hannaford 2014), opportunities for female infidelity are limited, yet migrant husbands and Senegalese society at large tend to exaggerate the potential threat of female infidelity.

It is difficult to get clear numbers of transnational couples in Senegal as few reliable statistical surveys exist. There are number of reasons why collecting data on transnational marriages is difficult—many marriages are not legalized, but are only preformed in the mosque; migrants frequently do not list Senegalese spouses (particularly in plural marriages) on their immigration paperwork; divorce and remarriage are common and quick in Senegal in general and especially in the case of transnational marriage (Hannaford 2013). One study of households in Dakar estimated that 23% of female household heads had spouses abroad (Beauchemin et al. 2013). This number, however, fails to count wives who are not household heads, and many migrants' wives are likely to live with their own parents or their in-laws in the absence of their spouse (see chapter 5). Thus it is likely that the numbers are even higher.

What accounts for the prevalence of transnational marriage in contemporary Senegal? Why are Senegalese migrants selecting wives at home instead of in their host countries or in the diaspora? Why are so few opting for spousal reunification? Why, in parallel fashion, are Senegalese women choosing to marry men who live overseas instead of the men next door, potentially sacrificing daily emotional and sexual companionship? How do long-distance marriages operate on a day-to-day basis and how do they meet contemporary Senegalese men and women's expectations for married life?

This study is an exploration of transnational marriage—how these marriages are formed and, sometimes, dissolved; the lived experience for husbands and wives separated

by thousands of miles for years at a time; how these marriages shape and are shaped by Senegalese and Islamic conceptions of love, marriage, duty, and honor; and how they articulate with this particular moment of neoliberal globalization.

Scope and Methods of the Study

I stumbled onto this subject of study of transnational marriage within the first year of my research on Senegalese migrants in Italy (2004-2005) when I discovered that so many of my migrant interlocutors had wives at home in Senegal. This included migrants who had been overseas for decades and married equally as long—so I was quickly disabused of my initial assumption that this arrangement was a temporary solution to spousal reunification difficulties—as well as migrants who had wives and families abroad as well. I grew increasingly curious about this kind of marriage—why it was so prevalent and how it worked—and it gradually became the focus of my study and led me on a multi-year, multi-sited exploration of what it means to connect in a transnational age.

To understand the demands and dynamics of transnational marriage, my research itself was transnational. Over a period of seven years, from 2004-2011, I conducted almost 30 months of multi-sited fieldwork among Wolof-speaking[8] Senegalese migrants in France and Italy and among non-migrants in Senegal.[9] My fluency in the relevant languages (French, Italian, and Wolof) but also in the quotidian experience of each

[8] The majority—though not all—of the migrants and migrants' wives in this study were members of Senegal's majority ethnic group, the Wolof, and all were Wolof-speaking.
[9] See Appendix A for a more detailed accounting of my methods.

location allowed me to connect to my interlocutors' stories about the multiple facets of their transnational lives.

My research among Senegalese migrants in Italy was concentrated in what is called the Industrial Triangle of Italy, between Milan, Turin and Genova. I conducted interviews, focus groups and participant observation with Senegalese migrants, and was able to have a longitudinal aspect of this research by returning to the same communities in 2004-2005, in 2008, and in 2011. In 2010, I conducted fieldwork in the Bordeaux region of France for comparative data about the Senegalese diaspora in that country.

In 2009 and again from 2010-2011 I conducted fieldwork among non-migrant Senegalese in Senegal. In addition to participant observation, the core of this research was 51 long-form semi-structured interviews in Wolof with wives of migrant in three major sending communities of overseas migrants—the capital city of Dakar, and the rural regions of Touba and Louga.

By returning again to the same communities from 2004 to 2011, I not only deepened my connections to the places and people that appear in this study, but I was able to develop a longitudinal perspective on migration and marriage. As the people I knew got married, got divorced, got green cards, reunited abroad or at home, started businesses and built houses, I was there to document these changes. I also witnessed important technological changes over the years of my research, as telephone centers and cyber cafés were gradually replaced both in Senegal and in Europe by ubiquitous cell phones and high-speed internet in homes. By the end of my research, transnational migrants were increasingly using voice-over-internet technologies like Skype and social media like Facebook to stay in touch with friends, relatives and spouses at home.

Over the course of my research, economic conditions in both Senegal and Europe worsened considerably for all but the very rich. Migrants in Italy complained that it was getting harder to make ends meet as the European financial crisis took hold. Factories in the north steadily began to close, itinerant traders watched commerce dry up, and informal economies also felt the effects of this crisis. In Senegal, prices of everyday staples continued to rise, employment to decline, water and power outages to intensify and national morale plummeted, culminating in the popular anti-government *Y'en a Marre* movement that began in 2011.

All of these changes intensified political and economic conditions that favor transnational marriage. By the final year of my research, in 2010-2011, the *jabaaru immigré* was enough of a trope that I could use the term as shorthand for my research topic with Senegalese at home and in the diaspora and no one wondered that the subject would be of interest for a researcher. *Jabaaru immigré* and their marriages were of interest to them too, and the Senegalese people I spoke to were eager to hear what I had learned. They immediately understood the other themes related to my project, and guessed correctly that this topic would push me to consider consumerism, kinship, love and sexuality.

Transnationalism and the Family

New dynamics of transnationalism in migration have inspired new configurations of kinship and gender roles. As transnational migrants build social relations that cross national boundaries (Basch et al. 1993: 7) and create social fields across borders through

their daily activities and relationships (*ibid*: 27), they continue to play active roles in family lives at home while abroad. A number of sociological and anthropological studies have emerged in recent years that focus on long-distance familial relations (c.f. Parreñas 2005, Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila 1997, Gamburd 2000, Ong 1999, Gasparetti and Hannaford).

This study connects new developments in transnational kinship to a neoliberal demand for flexibility in all aspects of life. I argue that the economic and political forces of neoliberal globalization are deeply intertwined with the cultural construction and configuration of intimate relationships. In this study, I show that in courtship and marriage, economic motives and forces are interlaced with the construction and configuration of romance The case of transnational marriage illustrates how political economy can be instrumental in "redefining spaces, meanings, and expressions of intimacy" (Constable 2009: 58), and how those intimate practices and ideologies in turn shape politics and economics. As other studies of neoliberal globalization have shown, "its policies [capture] a wide array of desires produced in part out of the policies themselves" (Rofel 2007: 14).

In this dissertation I demonstrate that local neoliberal reforms and global labor restructuring combine with cultural ideologies of masculinity and spousal caring to produce a new imperative of mobility for marriage in Senegal. Longstanding notions of husband/provider and new realities and imaginaries of a static Senegal and a dynamic and profitable *l'extérieur*[10] push men to migrate to achieve marital goals within Senegal.

[10] Fr: the exterior; fig. the world outside of Senegal

Structural forces as well as ideals about femininity, religious piety, and sacrifice, keep couples from reuniting in large numbers either overseas or at home.

Studies of transnational families point to how the stretching of kinship across national borders can create new or intensified expectations for familiar kin roles. Rhacel Salazar Parreñas' 2005 study on Filipina migrant women highlights how these women perform motherhood from afar. By calling, managing household spending and budgeting from afar, they are performing gendered labor as mothers as much as they can. Simultaneously, she notes, these women are also doing the 'work of fathers' by sending remittances and providing financially for their children. While they take on this additional role, however, they are not released from expectations of mothering, but rather face a double burden and are expected to perform both acts of providing and nurturing even in their absence. These migrant mothers, Parreñas shows, are often condemned for disappointing in both roles.

For migrant Senegalese men, remittances also act as a medium for playing out gendered and familial roles, and are a key instrument of "transnational family maintenance" (Parreñas 2005: 324). Senegalese culture has traditionally emphasized the importance of a husband as provider, and while this quality has been given equal value to other characteristics such as provenance from a good family, strong character, and religious piety, women have always sought to attach themselves to *goor jaarin. Goor jaarin* literally means a man who is worth something; it conveys a masculine form of honor that rests in large part on financial success (see Foley and Hannaford,

forthcoming). In addition to initial marriage payments, husbands are expected to provide for (Wf: *yor*) their wives and children.

Despite their efforts, transnational husbands are criticized for not adequately providing for their wives materially. Exaggerated expectations for financial possibilities overseas lead wives and their families to inevitable disappointment in the reality of what migrant men remit. Migrants have other familial obligations that they juggle along with their duties as husbands and fathers. Because husbands must play the role of sons, brothers, cousins, and nephews as well, they frequently come into conflict with their wives. Their meager earnings are stretched thin by relentless demands from multiple relations and, like Parreñas's Filipina mothers, they frequently face criticism and censure for never doing enough.

Like absent mothers, transnational husbands are unable to fulfill all aspects of their familial responsibilities from abroad. The tenets of a husband's duty to his wife are threefold, and two involve the kind of provision described above. *Sang, dëkkal, dëkkoo* is the Wolof expression used to capture a husband's role in marriage. A husband must clothe (*sang)*, house (*dëkkal*) but also sexually satisfy (*dëkkoo*) his wife. Married women's sexuality is acknowledged and respected in Senegalese culture and a lack of sexual satisfaction in marriage is grounds for a woman to ask for divorce. By living apart and only seeing one another infrequently and for brief periods, transnational couples sacrifice the sexual element of their marriage. General panic about the infidelity of migrants' wives points to an indirect acknowledgement that migrant husbands are not providing for their wives in this critical third way.

Non-migrant wives also find themselves struggling to meet the demands of their duties as part of transnational marriages as well. As wives, they are responsible for honoring their in-laws—particularly their *goro* (Wf; husband's parents), rearing their children, and efficiently running the household on whatever budget their husbands provide. Though many women marry migrants because they believe it will increase their odds of a successful married life, the constraints of transnational marriage make fulfilling these obligations especially difficult.

Senegalese women face an enormous pressure to ensure the success of their children's future through their own behavior. A myriad of Wolof proverbs tell women that her actions towards others will shape her children's lot in life, for example "*ku ñulug sa jekker, yakk sa doom",* or she who disrespects/provokes[11] her husband ruins her child. In selecting a wife, a man and his family look to a woman's mother and her success as a *seeykat* (Wf: married woman), and evaluate the daughter thus. A wife also benefits her children by showing *teranga* (Wf: hospitality) to guests. *Teranga* means welcoming guests with open arms, providing them with ample food and drink and never indicating that they have overstayed their welcome. It is said that a woman who shows *teranga* is assured that her children will be warmly received wherever they go in life (Gasparetti and Hannaford 2009).

A woman honors her husband by showing *teranga* to guests in his household, as the subtext of her giving lavishly is that her husband is a good provider. Whatever her husband gives her, a good wife manages the amount so that she can run the household on

[11] The verb *ñulug* literally means to add water to a pot of sauce, but here functions as "instigate."

that amount won't have to ask for extra. Because Senegalese households are crowded and always open to unexpected guests who come for a meal, a night, or even longer visits without a warning, even the best-laid calculations can be instantly upset. By managing the household budget and covering for shortfalls in her husband's funds, a wife exhibits not only resourcefulness, but *sutura* (Wf: discretion). *Sutura* is extremely valued quality in a woman; a woman must be discrete particularly about her family's problems, including financial problems. Keeping up appearances and not airing one's dirty laundry in public is continually emphasized as a wife's essential duty.

Many migrants' wives find themselves struggling to meet demands on remittances that come sporadically and are seemingly never enough. They face additional pressure as migrants' wives to keep up the appearance of having enough, because they are often the key vehicle of representation of their husband's success as an earner and a provider. Migrants' wives are often stressed by the inflated expectations from friends and relatives. Like their migrant husbands, they face additional requests for loans and gifts from those around them because of their ties to overseas wealth.

A Wolof proverb notes that harmony with the family-in-law is as essential for the success of a Senegalese marriage as salt is to a meal (Gueye 2010). Though relations between a wife and her in-laws are almost always fraught, transnational wives find it especially hard to be compatible with their *goro* (parents-in-law) and their other in-laws, such as *ñjekke* (sisters-in-law) and *wuju peccior ga* (husband's brothers' wives) when their husbands are abroad. Remittances raise the stakes of familial competition (see Hannaford forthcoming), and a husband's absence can allow normal familial clashes to escalate severely, even to the point of violence (see chapter 5).

As elsewhere in the developing world, men and women in Senegal are finding it necessary to create new flexible forms of kinship that respond to the structural imperatives of neoliberal globalization. Marriage is in effect socially compulsory in Senegal, and many men migrate with the primary goal of accumulating the resources for marriage and family formation. Due to changes in labor restructuring and citizenship, however, they find marriage to women in the host country or diaspora untenable and—because of gendered and religious ideologies of womanhood—undesirable. Senegalese women, also facing social and financial pressure to marry, find that non-migrant men are delaying marriage—what scholars elsewhere in the region have called a matrimonial crisis (e.g. Masquelier 2005) —and migrant men appear more likely to be good providers. Thus women marry migrant men, non-migrant men believe they must migrate to marry, and transnational marriage becomes a new endeavor to make marriage tenable in insecure times.

Romance and Finance

Jennifer Cole critiques recent work on African intimacies as foregrounding the instrumental and emphasizing the strategic. Though Cole recognizes that scholars often do so either to highlight African agency or to show the logic behind seemingly promiscuous behavior, "nonetheless, the effect is simultaneously to downplay the affective dimensions of these relationships and to give academic credence to a view frequently espoused by African men that they are "used" by African women (see especially Ferguson 1999)" (Cole 2009: 111). Certainly any discussion of Senegalese

women marrying migrants for their potential as providers could echo a similar overshadowing of affect, particularly because Senegalese men (and women) do link the phenomenon of transnational marriage to women's materialism. I seek to avoid this significant hazard and its associations with a history of exoticizing and othering African sexuality in two important ways: by giving a more nuanced picture of love in Senegal and its relation to material exchange; and by linking Senegalese transnational marriage to discussions of contemporary love and marriage outside of the context of Africa, thereby preventing the presentation of transnational marriage as a case of African exceptionalism or exoticism.

Cole and Thomas, in their edited volume Love in Africa, emphasize how, like others across the world, "Africans have long forged intimate attachments through exchange relationships" (2009: 13). Similarly, in this study I seek to move away from a tendency to dichotomize or polarize economy and intimacy as if, in the final instance, they were mutually exclusive causes (or results) of transnational marriage. By contrast, I show, for instance, that in courtship and marriage, economic motives and forces are deeply intertwined with the construction and configuration of romance.

Married life in Senegal has always been linked to material value. Husbands are expected to provide, and providing represents not just a duty, but an act of care. Transnational couples have fewer opportunities for acts of care and intimacy than couples who live side by side. Thus a husband's act of providing through remittances—and a wife's response to these remittances—represent key sites of spousal support and care (Hannaford, forthcoming). What is often misinterpreted as prioritizing money over relationships—a wife's voracious desire for more remittances or a husband's failure to

remit adequately—upon further examination, reflects decisions that prioritize their relationships with others over their relationship with one another. This is an important distinction that is often underemphasized, including by some Senegalese themselves, in the attention given to the role of money and remittances in transnational migration, and in transnational marriage. In examining these intensified interactions ethnographically, we understand that money and gifts function as a kind of emotional currency that both parties use not only in their own marriage but to participate in a larger moral economy. In these marriages, and in marriage in Senegal more broadly, caring, family and finances are inextricably linked.

The Commodification of "Modern Love"

Some feminist scholars have argued that a hallmark of neoliberal globalization is the commodification of intimacy. Intimate and personal relations are increasingly treated as market commodities—"are bought or sold; packaged and advertised; fetishized, commercialized, or objectified; consumed or assigned values and prices" (Constable 2009: 50). Constable notes the commodification of intimacy is "linked in many cases to transnational mobility and migration, echoing a global capitalist flow of goods" (Constable 2009: 50). This is evident in a spate of studies on international marriage in the last decade (c.f. Brennan 2004, Constable 2003, Johnson-Hanks 2007). In each of these settings, Western men seek partners who perform a particular kind of gendered identity that matches their desired ideal for a spouse. The corresponding women of the developing

world seek financial resources and mobility through marriage to men who live in the West.[12]

Relatedly, Thai (2008) and Ong (1999) discuss another activity on the global marriage market—migrant men marrying women in the homeland rather than marrying locals or compatriots in the diaspora. Like the parallel Senegalese case discussed in this dissertation, non-migrant women in Vietnam (Thai) and China (Ong) are seduced by what Ong calls "romance of mobile capitalism," which involves an "imagined personal freedom and wealth, a heady mix that young women imagine traveling men can provide passports to" (1999: 156). Chinese women seek to marry overseas-Chinese men as a bridge to what she calls the "dazzling world of overseas-Chinese capitalism," meaning both wealth but also pathways to emigration for their family members (Ong 1999: 155), and Vietnamese women disappointed with their possibilities for upward mobility with the suitors in Vietnam hope overseas migrants can offer a more promising future. Vietnamese migrant men, for their part, look to Vietnam much like Western men seeking brides in Asia for their 'traditional,' less egalitarian, values. Ong frames this marital market activity as being in opposition to marriages made for love or class solidarity (1999: 156).

How can this interpretation of the state of intimate relationships in late capitalism be reconciled with recent scholarly work on companionate marriage? One volume in that growing body of scholarship identifies a seemingly global shift in contemporary

[12] The subjects of Brennan's study are sex workers in the Dominican Republic who hope to marry their European tourist clients and move abroad; Constable and Johnson-Hanks examine (so-called "mail-order") marriages contracted online between Western men and Filipina and Chinese or Cameroonian women, respectively

marriage: the growing importance of romantic love and companionate marital ideals. The editors of *Modern Love* (Hirsch & Wardlow 2006) argue that the companionate ideal has grown in prominence worldwide. From Papua New Guinea to Pakistan, emotional closeness and sexual attachment becomes the primary motivation for and goal of marriage (2006: 26). Whereas obligations to kin and economic considerations may have been the prime motivator for marriage in the past, now is the era of "prioritization of and greater personal investment in the marital bond over other relationships" (2006: 24). The authors suggest that this ideal has entered the social imaginary in countless locales as a key indicator of what it means to be "modern."

Elizabeth Bernstein's (2007) study of sex work in San Francisco perhaps offers an avenue through which to reconcile these two theories of contemporary marriage—the commodification of intimacy and the privileging of companionate ideals. Bernstein finds a particularly postindustrial capitalist inflection to the exchange of sex for money. The clients and sex workers she studies expect that something more than physical labor must be part of the exchange, something she calls the GFE, or the "girlfriend experience." The girlfriend experience entails an emotional performance on the part of the sex worker, where she play-acts not only deep sexual satisfaction but affection for clients, a desire to spend time with them and get to know them. The client expects a "bounded intimacy" that provides the comforts of a non-transactional relationship but without any of the emotional responsibilities on his part. He seeks to purchase love and affection as a commodity rather than invest emotionally in an exchange where he must give these in return.

The idea of bounded intimacy helps us to put a perceived increase in discourses of romantic love and companionate partnership in marriage into perspective. Though partners may increasingly desire emotional sharing and affection in marriage, they also are also increasingly considering those same elements as discreet consumables rather than as imbricated in large relational dynamics. Studies of international marriage by Constable, Brennan and Thai[13] remind us to look closely not only at ideals but at the marital choices that men and women are making around the world. The way that men and women approach marriage may tell a different story than their stated ideals about the way that structural forces of contemporary political economy shape conceptions and practices of intimate partnership.

As men and women Senegal find themselves caught between a desire to reach "honorable adulthood" (Johnson-Hanks 2007: 643) through marriage and a local and global economy that make that increasingly difficult to do in Senegal, both parties are turning to transnational marriage. Senegalese transnational couples are opting for other considerations in place of emotional closeness, romance, and especially, physical intimacy, all of which have traditionally been valued elements of a successful marriage. Transnational marriage, in which husbands and wives live miles apart, thus represents a move away from—and not towards—the values of companionate marriage which heretofore have been constitutive of Senegalese marriage: emotional closeness and sexual attachment.

Despite difficulties, couples continue to pursue transitional marriage because it seems to them to offer the best path, under challenging circumstances, of fulfilling larger

[13] And others, such as Johnson-Hanks 2007, Faeir 2007, Venables 2008, etc.

social as well as economic goals. Understanding this dynamic also helps broaden and recontextualize anthropological orientations that prioritize the increasing or even global spread of "modern love" and its relation to ideals of modern companionate marriage. At extreme, the companionate ideal might suggest the primacy of conjugal bonds built on emotional and sexual connection over and above other social relationships—and economic considerations. Senegalese transnational couples often do invest emotionally in the ideals of companionate partnership – even as they often move away from or against this ideal in their in their attempt to mediate and negotiate other social relations, on the one hand, and their related economic needs and constraints, on the other. Companionate marriage is not framed by Senegalese men and women as a modern practice that is in opposition to older patterns or traditions but rather as a nostalgic ideal that is often not attainable (or no longer attainable) in a more fully modern world.

This is not to suggest that love and transnational marriage are incompatible, nor that Senegalese women do not invoke love when discussing their relationships with men, their marriages, and their decision to marry their husbands. Rather than question whether or not love is a present, I take a cue from Ferguson's study of Zambian families to argue that what is perhaps more interesting is to "examine domestic relations for what they *do accomplish*, exploring the way that they meet needs and respond to circumstances" (Ferguson 1999: 192, emphasis his). I seek to examine how these relationships are formed and encouraged by transnational processes, and what they suggest about how the movement of global capital offers opportunities to define new sorts of relationships and meanings of intimacy.

As more and more families are stretched across oceans in the context of global restructuring, newly flexible forms of kinship appear to be emerging across the world, including new forms of transnational parenting. Turning our attention to the imperatives of the neoliberal era, including its cultural and social as well as economic construction, the practices as well as the ideals of marriage, allows us to examine particular responses to uncertainty that articulate with contemporary political economy. Many Senegalese believe that marital companionship and emotional intimacy were easier to achieve in the past than in the present. In this context, to engage in "modern" practices of marriage means opening up to new forms of flexibility in a transnational terrain.

This dissertation points to new ways in which contemporary economic and political policies combine with technological advances and existing understandings of gender, duty, and desire to promote radically novel understandings of the possible practice of intimate relationships. The emergent transnational connection between international remittances, kinship, class, and gender makes this dissertation an important contribution to contemporary cultural anthropology and our wider understandings of migration, class, and relationships between kinship, marriage and neoliberal capitalism.

Overview of the Dissertation

In the six chapters that follow, I examine the phenomenon of Senegalese transnational marriages from a variety of angles: the *jabaaru immigré* [migrant's wife] with her lonely heart and wandering eye, the absent husband/hero/trickster, the

demanding relatives and hostile in-laws, the webcams and the money wires, the question of reunification, and the promise of return.

In the next chapter, I unpack the choice among Senegalese migrant men to practice transnational marriage—to marry women in Senegal and opt against reunification. Transnational marriage is a direct response to both local economic constraints —a result of failed structural adjustment policies and neoliberal reform— and a global economy that draws men out of Senegal to work and live but cannot guarantee them pathways to citizenship and stability abroad. Drawing on larger theories of transnational migration, Senegal's recent political and economic changes, and my own ethnographic fieldwork, I detail how transnational marriages facilitate particular gendered aims associated with transnationalism, including orientation toward and investment in the homeland.

In the third chapter, I build on the arguments in chapter 2 to explain what entices non-migrant Senegalese women into transnational marriages. The same economic and social pressures that draw men to emigration make it difficult for unmarried women to find desirable partners who are ready to marry and to take on husbandly duties of material support. Furthermore, widespread emigration has unsettled older definitions and calculi of class and of the desirability of a potential spouse or in-law. These factors make marriage to a migrant increasingly desirable for Senegalese women seeking to fulfill their own gendered goals of respectability, elegance, and generosity.

Chapter 4 puts transnational marriage in Senegal into conversation with recent anthropological research on companionate marriage. I argue that while companionate ideals are indeed salient in Senegalese conceptions of marriage, they represent not a

modern distinction from traditional values, but a nostalgic ideal no longer easily achievable in Senegal's contemporary economic situation. Marital bonds in Senegal have traditionally prized sexual intimacy and emotional sharing between partners, modeled after the Senegalese understanding of the Prophet Mohammed's relationship with his wives. The trend towards transnational marriage in Senegal—and other new forms of marital practice in that country—supports particular forms of marital duty (*sang* and *dëkkal*) but deprioritizes others (*dëkkoo*). I argue that transnational marriage can be productively examined alongside other important studies of transnational kinship to reassess what we know about social relations in late capitalism more broadly.

Chapter 5 discusses how long-distance marriages are embedded in and determined by networks of kin relations. When husband and wife lives miles apart, family relationships can supersede the conjugal bond in determining the success or eventual dissolution of a long-distance marriage. I introduce key Wolof terms (*muuñ, seeyi, masla)* to explain kinship's important place in any Senegalese marriage. Accounts from my interviews with migrants and their wives then illustrate kinship's further expanded and exaggerated role in long-distance marriage. This idea further distinguishes Senegalese transnational marriage from recent theories of a global trend toward companionate marriage in which the conjugal bond takes precedence over all other relationships. Against this, I suggest that the primacy of the conjugal bond is challenged, if not threatened, by the same conditions that encourage transnational marriage.

Rapid advances in communication technology in the last 20 years have enabled migrants to sustain social and economic investment in multiple geographic locations, or, to be transnational. In chapter 6, I critically engage in discussions about the role of

technology in transnational family dynamics, arguing that in the intimate negotiations of Senegalese transnational married life, many migrants' wives feel profoundly ambivalent about the role of communication technologies in their lives. Instead of enabling 'emotional closeness', the virtual presence of their absent husbands frequently represents a specter of suspicion, control and surveillance.

Chapter 7 uses an in-depth ethnographic portrait of a migrant and of his wife as they reunite in Italy after years of transnational marriage to explore the challenges of reunification abroad. In the rare cases when husbands bring their non-migrant wives abroad to join them, wives often find themselves disillusioned by the realities of life abroad and stress and discomfort in their new role as migrants vis-à-vis their families at home. Though this transition from transnational marriage to cohabitation is often emotionally and financially difficult for couples, it can open new spaces for emotional intimacy and sharing between partners as they find themselves on the same side of the transnational divide.

Most transnational couples insist that their situation is not idyllic. Many migrant men find that their wives at home represent a source of stress rather than support. *Jaabaru immigré* quickly discover that marriage to a migrant fails to live up to expectations for financial stability, and instead creates other sources of tension and struggle in their lives. The men and women in my study spoke of numerous problems—from loneliness and sexual frustration, to in-law and co-wife drama, to frustration and misunderstanding. As I detail in the chapters that follow, however, Senegalese men and women continue to find themselves compelled to enter into transnational marriages despite these difficulties because creating ties that cross international borders is a new

imperative of social life in neoliberal, transnational Senegal.

CHAPTER 2: Your Happiness is Your Homeland

My first encounter with transnational polygamy was made possible only because of the multi-sited nature of my fieldwork. I met Mbaye[14] while on a Fulbright scholarship researching the Senegalese migrant community in Italy in 2004 and 2005. I met many of my research contacts through friends I had met a year and a half earlier in a five-month stay in Senegal. Many of the people I knew in Dakar had friends or relatives living in Europe and were happy to put me in touch. This was how I met Mbaye, the cousin of a friend from Dakar and a long-time migrant in Turin. When I called a few months into my year in Italy, he suggested we meet for lunch. I assumed this meant in Turin, but when he gave me the location to meet, it was at a train station in a different town. I got there at the appointed time, and a short and stocky Senegalese man with a broad smile and pointy dreadlocks introduced himself as my host and quickly whisked me into his car. We drove for forty minutes, stopping several times to pick up groceries and run other errands. Along the way, I pieced together that we were headed to the home of a Senegalese coworker of Mbaye's who would be making us "lunch," although because it was Ramadan, "lunch" really meant "dinner" and we would not be eating after sundown—about 6 hours later.

Needless to say, this gave me ample "interview" time with Mbaye. We sat in his friends' living room, watching Senegalese music videos on tape, talking about his life, his migration trajectory, and his difficulties with his Italian wife and their two kids. Mbaye and his wife—a nurse whom he met in a *discoteca* some ten years earlier—clashed constantly over dynamics of power within the household. Mbaye told me that he often

[14] All names that appear in this dissertation are pseudonyms.

found himself nostalgic for life at home in Senegal, where women knew how to respect their husbands. Sometimes, he told me as we watched the Senegalese dancers in the music video sway their hips to the beat, he thinks about just packing it all in and moving back there, marrying a Senegalese girl, and living out the rest of his days in Senegal.

About eight months later, I found myself in Dakar, Senegal's capital city, with Mbaye's cousin, Aly, walking through the sandy streets of newly constructed houses paid for with money sent home from abroad by migrants like Mbaye. Smiling the same broad grin as his cousin, Aly suggested we go pay a visit to Mbaye's wife later that day. I was shocked to hear that she was there. Mbaye had said that neither his wife nor his kids had ever visited Senegal, and frankly I was surprised to hear the couple was still together. Soon it became clear that Aly meant Mbaye's Senegalese wife. "He got remarried already?" I asked, confused. Aly laughed, "No, he's been married to her for many years."

In Senegal, where an estimated half of all households are polygamous (DHS 2005)[15], Muslim men are allowed up to four wives at a time. Polygamy cuts across all sectors of society and is found in rural and urban settings in Senegal, in upper class families as well as those living in poverty (Kane 2011: 169, Antoine et al. 1995). Though I had heard rumors of migrants with European wives in Europe and Senegalese wives at home, this was the first case—of many eventual cases—I had run into headfirst.

I had a flood of questions for Aly, which he answered with some bemusement. Does Mbaye's Italian wife know about the Senegalese wife? ("Of course not.") Does the Senegalese wife know about the Italian wife? ("Of course!") Does he have children in

[15] It is difficult to get reliable marriage statistics in Senegal, as many marriages—particularly remarriages—are performed in the Mosque alone and therefore not recorded by the government. Divorces and remarriages, too, are generally not registered officially and are thus largely left unrecorded (Dial 2008: 14).

Senegal? ("Naturally.") Do his Italian children know they have siblings? ("No.") My head was buzzing throughout the meal with Aly and his family, considering why Mbaye would need a wife in a country he only visited occasionally, wondering if the wife at home resented her situation, and marveling at how on earth the wife in Italy could be kept in the dark.

It was after this incident that I turned my focus to the study of transnational marriage—this fascinating node in the tapestry of relations that transnational migrants weave between home and abroad. Marriages between women resident in Senegal and migrant husbands living abroad have become quite common in contemporary Senegal, with both migrant men and unmarried women opting for transnational or long-distance marriage over reunification. In this chapter, I address the primary question that the discovery of transnational type of marriage inspired in me, namely, why? Why does an overseas migrant marry a woman in Senegal rather than a host national or a Senegalese migrant? Why were so many of my Senegalese migrant interlocutors in France and Italy not opting for spousal reunification[16]?

The answers that emerged over my years of fieldwork are intimately tied to both the changing political economy of Senegal and global changes in labor structuring and communication technology and their particular inflections in Senegalese conceptions of adulthood, masculinity, and kinship. In this chapter, I examine migration and transnational marriage as a culturally-mediated response to both the local economic crisis brought on by the neoliberal retrenchment that followed structural adjustment policies

[16] This is especially confounding in light of the apparent fears of European policymakers that reunification was the main goal for most migrants, fears that have led to much proposed legislation restricting spousal import (Nielsen, Smith and Celikaksoy 2007).

and to global economic systems that draw men into migration but keep them from settling comfortably into their host nations. I draw from my own ethnographic fieldwork, political and economic histories of Senegal and Italy, and theories of transnationalism to detail how transnational marriages facilitate particular gendered goals of transnational social establishment.

Let me make clear that the economic context I describe below, though critically important to understanding the dynamics of transnational marriage, is not in itself determinant of that cultural response. As I describe in the chapters that follow, Senegalese and Islamic ideologies of masculinity, femininity, care and love are equally influential in producing a social climate that favors transnational marriage. New calculations of necessity and desire arise in the intersection of the macro, the meso, and the micro levels of social and economic life.

Structural Adjustment and Migration

One cannot tell the story of Senegal's overseas emigration[17] without discussing structural adjustment policies in the mid- to late 1980s. To obtain relief from mounting debt and the failed promise of an economy that never took off after Senegal independence from France in 1960, Senegal agreed to structural adjustment policies in exchange for loans from the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (Creevey et al. 1995: 674). Through these policies, the IMF and the World Bank pushed the Senegalese government

[17] While Senegalese have been moving to other African countries in the region as traders for centuries, this dissertation discusses primarily migrants to the "newer" destination countries of Europe, the Americas, and the Middle East.

to shrink government, withdraw many of its social services, abolish trade barriers and privatize its markets. These programs had a profound effect on Senegal's agricultural sector, abolishing agricultural cooperatives that small farmers relied on for purchasing the provisions needed to farm cash crops. Without these cooperatives, the majority of small farmers could no longer depend on farming for financial gain (Perry 1997: 212). This, combined with a series of severe droughts in the 1970s and 1980s and the subsequent crisis in groundnut cultivation, solidified the decline of the agricultural sector as a viable livelihood. Thus much of the "first wave" of Senegalese migration to southern Europe and the United States came from Senegal's "groundnut basin" in the 1980s. Many of the influential studies of Senegalese migration focus on Mouride[18] traders from this region (Carter 1997, Cruise O'Brien 1971, Diop 1981, Diouf 2000, Ebin 1992, Riccio 2004), their extensive economic and religious networks, their solidarity, and their hierarchical structures of discipleship.

Another important impact of structural adjustment policies was the devaluation of the West African franc in 1994. The effect of this devaluation of 50% was devastating—cutting the standard of living across West Africa in half in a single day. The currency devaluation impacted migration in at least three significant ways. Imports that were crucial for Senegalese farmers (including farm equipment) were now completely unaffordable, further collapsing the productive potential of the agricultural lifestyle (Perry 1997: 213). Inflated import costs also had devastating effects on trade as a

[18] Mourides are one of four major "brotherhoods" of Sufi Islam in Senegal, followers of Cheikh Amadou Bamba. More on the history of the Mouride brotherhood can be found in Diouf (2000) and Babou (2007).

profession and drove traders out of West Africa, many to New York City (Stoller 1997: 84).

One of the biggest changes resulting from the currency devaluation, however, was an immediate inflation that pushed the cost of everyday staples out of reach for families, which led to rising food insecurity and what some have called the "pauperization" of the middle class (Aduayi-Diop 2010: 53-54). For young Senegalese, the lack of employment as they come of age had an effect similar to that on youth in the rest of Africa. Structural adjustment took away important social safety nets too (Creevey et al. 1995: 669), giving young people the additional burden of providing for their elders in the absence of substantial pensions. The gap between expectations and opportunities—particularly for young people—disrupted a linear narrative for advancement (Mains 2007: 666, Ferguson 2006). Weiss has gone as far as to say that this gap may might be the "one unifying feature" of African youth (Weiss 2004)—citing frustration and stagnation as the defining characteristic of what it means to be young and African. As elsewhere on the continent (cf. Mains 2007, Cole 2004, Honwana and De Boeck 2005), young Senegalese men began delaying social adulthood and family-formation because they could not afford it.

At the same time that opportunities for young people have disappeared, neoliberalism has paved the way for rising inequality within and across countries (Harvey 2005). In Senegal, as elsewhere, privatization has placed public wealth in private hands and the extreme wealth of the elite is increasingly visible in Dakar. New shopping malls with escalators and European clothing stores, chic ocean-view hotels, and omnipresent luxuries SUVs exist alongside multiple day power and water cuts, poor public sanitation, and malnutrition. Global images of wealth are also pervasive in Senegal, reminding the

disenfranchised that vast riches and the good life are just out of reach. James Ferguson sees globalization as having brought an acute awareness of the "semiotic and material goods of the global rich" to most Africans, without bringing these goods within their grasp (2006: 21). Weiss (2004: 116) speaks of a kind of pain that African youth feel in being marginal to the global consumer culture that they desire so ardently. As Comaroff and Comaroff put it, African youth are increasingly welcomed into the global marketplace as consumers while simultaneously being excluded from its benefits by being left out of economic participation (2005: 29). Neoliberal capitalism produces expectation and desire for consumption while simultaneously cutting off paths to earning and economic stability (Comaroff and Comaroff 2001: 8).

Another impact of the currency devaluation that is central to this study is that remittances and overseas earnings were instantly worth twice what they had been (Melly 2011: 374). Since the mid-90s, therefore, the perception of migrant success has doubled. More and more, migrants were able to build homes, mosques, and businesses in Senegal, as well as support families and spend lavishly on trips home. This change cemented the growing idea that moving abroad was the only path towards material success and providing for a family. Combined with the drastic fall in the standard of living, more than just farmers and traders concluded that Senegal no longer offered employment possibilities (Somerville 1997, Tousignant 2013: 7). A second wave of urban residents and employed middle class men began leaving Senegal to seek their fortunes abroad (Riccio 2005: 114).

In the past two decades since the currency devaluation, migration has taken on the qualities of what Comaroff and Comaroff (2001) call the "enchantments" of neoliberal

globalization. One of the defining characteristics of neoliberal capitalism is the decreasing importance of production, leading to an obfuscation of how wealth is accumulated (Comaroff and Comaroff 2001: 5) The origins of the fortunes people see around them are less tangible and more mysterious than ever. Comaroff and Comaroff describe a perception among those marginalized by neoliberal capitalism that the few who master its technologies seem to make money effortlessly and instantly (2001: 8). This perception is certainly accurate for non-migrants in Senegal. As the increasing visible wealth from overseas begins to dot the landscape in the form of homes, clothing boutiques, and fancy cars, the origins of said wealth are quite abstract. As I point out in chapter 3, for many non-migrants, being "*la bas,*" *bitim rew*, or *à l'exterieur*[19] is synonymous with being successful and having access to great wealth. Even after years of emigration and close contacts and family overseas, most non-migrants in Senegal remain quite ignorant about the specifics of how migrants make their living. As I show in the chapters that follow, this persistent knowledge gap has tremendous consequences for new Senegalese migrants who—faced with the disappointing reality of life abroad—must negotiate outrageous expectations for immediate remittances from those at home and little sympathy or understanding for their struggles as migrants.

Previously, land, large families, or bureaucratic jobs were synonymous with wealth. Now, however, signifiers of Europe such as a Juventus jersey are more likely to hint at fortune than a briefcase or a shirt and tie (see Riccio 2005). Money seems to come from abroad so most Senegalese make the jump that to be abroad is to have money. This

[19] Fr: "there"; Wf: "out of the country"; Fr: "outside"—all vague terms that describe overseas, usually in reference to Europe.

equation makes citizens of an economically depressed Senegal desperate to be associated with the world outside of Senegal. Though economic opportunities do exist abroad, this equation of life abroad and automatic, easily-attainable, and infinite wealth functions as a myth, in the sense that Ferguson discusses when he says that myths are not merely fictional stories, but "ways of expressing and constructing complex political and cosmological schemas" (1999: 203). This myth impacts Senegalese society in a myriad of ways—from fashion and dreaming to, as I show in chapter 3, migrant class status and the selection of spouses.

The Senegalese belief that the West is full of riches and that Europe represents "El Dorado" (Riccio 2004) leads non-migrants to think that merely setting foot outside of Senegal means access to riches and the good life. Disconnected from labor processes abroad, non-migrant Senegalese can only conclude that it is the overseas location that itself generates easy wealth. The idea that if one could only get abroad, the money would begin flowing is Senegal's version of the "locally nuanced fantasies of abundance without effort" that characterize the casino capitalist zeitgeist in the new millennium (Comaroff and Comaroff 2001: 6).

Honwana and de Boeck discuss how the West functions as "an imagined topos," just out of reach for most young Africans (2005: 8). Indeed, as immigration regulations in "Fortress Europe" and in the United States get more strict, impatient young Senegalese are ready to risk their lives for the chance to make it overseas. "Barça walla barsakh" [wf: Barcelona or death] became a popular saying to capture the desperation of the tens of thousands of young men (and some women) who piled into fishing boats beginning in the 2000s, hoping to sail from the coast of West Africa to Southern Europe (Carling 2007,

Willems 2008, Melly 2011). Many of these boats famously sunk in the Atlantic, while others arrived on the shores of the Canary Islands of Spain or the Italian island of Lampedusa only to be met by border police who incarcerated them in detention centers. The International Red Cross, the governments of Spain, Italy and Senegal, and other international organizations have attempted to stem this tide of economic refugees through various sanctions and development programs, and though the rate of clandestine immigration to Spain dropped in 2009 (Gimeno 2010), hopeful would-be migrants continue to attempt the voyage by sea—and overland, as evidenced by October 2013's tragic discovery of nearly one hundred dead bodies in the desert of Niger, who perished from thirst on their trek north towards Europe (Associated Press 2013). Though the majority of migrants from Senegal attempt to reach Europe and the United States by much less dramatic methods, these clandestine voyages represent the spirit of anxious certainty in Senegal that a better life waits just across the ocean.

For the majority of hopeful emigrants who go through the official channels to secure a visa for a Western country, the sense of gambling and playing the odds is equally strong. Many Senegalese treat the visa process like a game of chance, spending borrowed money to file costly applications in the hopes that once they "win" they will be able to pay it back in spades, fetishizing documents like "letters of invitation" from Europeans and Americans, and attempting to use fraud to game the system. The mysterious and opaque nature of how capital is accumulated today makes the occult an increasingly appropriate metaphor our times (Comaroff and Comaroff 2001: 27), and many Senegalese visa hopefuls turn to their *serignes* [Wf: *marabouts*, religious/spiritual

leaders] for prayers, amulets, and sacrifices that will help them turn the hands of fate and of foreign embassies.

The Global Pull

At the same time that Senegalese dream of reaching the West for easy earning, the main destination countries that these migrants target have been steadily on the path towards flexible accumulation, creating a pull factor for migrant labor. In the post-war economic boom of the 1950s and 60s, France, Italy, and other contemporary European destinations for Senegalese migrants began to expand their industrial sectors, internationalizing their labor markets and increasing demand for a low-wage labor force. The industrial North of Italy, the site of the majority of my European fieldwork, followed this model. In the boom of the 1950s and 60s, it was largely migrants from the South of Italy (*meridionali*) who filled many the factory jobs in metal mechanics and especially the auto industry of the industrial triangle of Italy—surrounding Turin, Milan and Genoa. Like the *extracomunitari* [foreign immigrants] who later replaced them same niche in the labor market, the *meridionali* faced racism and discrimination from the Northerners who depended heavily on their labor (Signorelli 1995).

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, Italy famously transitioned from a country of emigration and internal migration to a major destination for international migrants. This shift was due to a combination of factors including the economic boom within Italy, an economic decline in many of the countries in Northern Europe after the global oil crisis of 1973, and a subsequent tightening of borders in France, Belgium and Holland in 1974.

Italy's lenient immigration policies and porous borders made it at first a "second choice" for migrants mostly from Eastern Europe, but also the developing world, and gradually a primary destination in its own right. In 1990, Senegalese ranked among the top five nationalities applying for residence permits at around 20,000; by 1999 that number had doubled. Immigrants found employment in domestic service, construction, and light industry.

In the 1980s Senegalese, North Africans, and other non-Europeans began to outnumber Yugoslavian and other European migrants in Italy. Like many industrialized countries in this period (Harvey 1989), Italy gradually transitioned to flexible accumulation, and by the 1990s the Italian economy was characterized by a high level of segmentation and flexibility, with a demand for temporary and precarious jobs that the local labor supply was not able to satisfy (Salih 2003: 31). The decline of the Italian auto-industry in the 1990s exacerbated employment instability for workers in the North, including the many Senegalese migrants who found employment as welders, car painters, and in transport (Carter 1997: 37). Fordist labor organization was largely replaced by temporary "special contracts," which guaranteed little in the way of job security. Special contracts had to be renewed at the end of each contract, leaving the migrant laborer vulnerable not only to unemployment without benefits, but expulsion from Italy, as migration status is tied to employment (Carter 1997: 45).

Italy and other industrialized countries reap great benefits from these labor arrangements that keep migrants in perpetual limbo. The international labor market insures a net savings for international employers who draw on migrant labor. Though the state must cover the training, health care and other social service costs for nationals,

migrants with precarious status will not be eligible for such benefits (Carter 1997: 45). Employers are therefore able to effectively exploit the labor power of developing nations at a very low cost.

Donald Carter notes that preventing migrants from achieving full parity with nationals is key to Italy's continual exploitation of this labor reserve (1997: 46). In addition to these "special contracts" which inhibit long-term legal status, the state sets up a variety of obstacles to keep migrants on the margins of legal status. As in France, various bureaucratic hurdles —the work permit, the permit of stay[20]—that migrants must possess and repeatedly renew, make "the immigrant vulnerable to the hazards of police, administrative and employer control and make it easier to fix their length of stay in accordance with the needs of economy" (Meillassoux 1981: 122 as quoted in Carter 1997). Carter further points to the discriminatory practices to which Senegalese migrant workers are subject—being denied benefits they have legally earned, having their short-term contracts not renewed, being labeled "unskilled" in their official work papers when they in fact do possess employable skills—that impede their ability to advance in the Italian economy (1997).

The 1995 Schengen agreement pushed Italy to develop stricter immigration legislation as part of a growing European Union push for the construction of a "Fortress Europe" (Salih 2003: 36). This created a sort of ambivalence for the Italian state, with a dependence on migrant labor and a pressure to limit to immigration. The ideal conditions for the Italian state, therefore, consist of a population of workers who are "temporary" in

[20] Meillassoux refers to France's migration laws in this piece, though Italy's regulations are roughly equivalent, e.g. the *permis de sejours* and *permesso di soggiorno.*

the sense of not being securely employed, not being absorbed into the Italian state's social safety net, and remaining perpetually expellable, and yet "permanent" in the sense of never returning home conclusively and thus leaving the labor market and forcing the immigration of new laborers. This temporary-permanence is, in effect, the status of many transnational Senegalese migrants.

Transnationalism

The conditions of political and economic instability that employers and states create encourage transnationalism on the part of migrants. The insecurity of flexible employment and the subsequent threat of expulsion—together with locally salient ideals about duty, honor and caretaking—encourages migrants not to invest fully in their host locales, but to continue to strengthen their ties to home from abroad (Levitt 2001: 26). When instability abroad could lead at any time to a need for return to the homeland, migrants have an important stake in preparing for a soft landing upon return. This means not only investing in property and business ties in the homeland, but also building families and good social reputations to come home to.

As I, and other researchers, have demonstrated elsewhere, Senegalese migrants are prototypically transnational, seeking to participate actively in social life in one place while living and working in another (Kane 2011, Carter 1997, Riccio 2001, Ebin 1992, Gasparetti and Hannaford 2009). Transnational migration is a process of building social relations that cross national boundaries (Basch et al. 1993: 7). Transmigrants create social fields across borders through their daily activities and relationships (*ibid*: 27). This type

of migration stands in opposition to older theories of assimilation in migration, which posited that over time migrants would gradually acculturate and integrate permanently into their host societies. Transnational migration, by contrast, entails maintaining a presence in both societies and exploiting the political, economic, and social resources of both localities (Portes and DeWind: 2007: 9).

Some scholars have been unwilling to see the phenomenon as entirely new in content (Lewellen 2002: 11), pointing to other migrant movements that retained strong ties to their homelands. Others argue that the amplified "intermingling of spaces and practices of travel, production, discipline, consumption, and accumulation" (Ong 1999: 244), as well as the expanding availability and rapid transmission of images, symbols, ideas and information, push us to reform the way we think of society, social institutions, citizens and nation-states (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004: 182). These changes allow for a new type of migrant experience and thus new ways of conceiving of the migratory project as a whole.

There are many different explanations for why the present historical moment leads to increased transnationalism among migrants. The most obvious is that today's technologies of transport and communication allow for a far more dynamic and concentrated exchange across borders than earlier circumstances would allow. The "time-space compression" (see Harvey 1989) that characterizes our modern era is key to the level of transnationalism we see today. Indeed, the Senegalese migrants and spouses in my study today take advantage of low-cost international calling and voice-over-internet technologies to maintain a level of contact that would have been impossible just a few decades earlier.

Additionally, "the current moment of capitalism as a global mode of production" (Basch et al 1994: 24) has played an important impact in drawing people into migration. Both Massey (1998) and Sassen (1998) claim that the penetration of capital-intensive production technologies into the developing world disrupts customary livelihoods and traditional work structures, with the result of creating mobile workers in need of employment. Meanwhile, global consumption practices lead to a context of "heightened global economic interconnectedness" (Levitt 2001: 25), as the intensified circulation of global media and commodities socialize and familiarize would-be migrants into the culture of the host country (*ibid*: 25). Developing nations lure members of developing nations into migration by exposing them to modern consumption, giving them the desire but not the means to consume new commodities (Portes and DeWind 2007: 6).

The current era of global production and consumption plays an important role in facilitating international migration, but, as I outline above, the recent changes that globalization has produced in labor structures in the developed world also encourage immigrants, whom Stephen Castles refers to as "the new industrial reserve army" (2000: 28), to remain transnational. Rather than definitively rooting themselves in host societies, migrants are inclined to invest at home as well—even, as the opening vignette illustrates, investing in personal and familial lives at home and abroad simultaneously.

As I mention, Senegalese in Europe have been hit hard by the current economic crisis in the Eurozone. The majority of my Senegalese interlocutors living in Italy, for example, were precariously self-employed *commerçants* (Fr: ambulant sellers) or *operaii* (It: manual laborers) in northern Italy's factories, which are currently closing at an alarming rate. More and more, even those lucky enough to find employment in the

industrial sector are subject to more flexible and expendable work conditions. Those few Senegalese migrants who owned the kinds of immigrant-oriented businesses where I spent a majority of my fieldwork faced "burdensome and unjust" regulation and legislation targeted at closing down immigrant-owned business and reducing their visibility (Castagnone and Gasparetti 2008: 146). Countries like Italy, Spain, Portugal, and even France, which one seemed like potentially profitable places to work, are now considered nearly dead markets to migrants. One Senegalese migrant friend joked that even the *spacciatori* (It: drug dealers) are finding it hard to make ends meet as the Italian economic crisis deepens.

With such instability, it is little wonder that Senegalese migrants are preoccupied with investment in their social and financial lives at home. Their transnational projects include building homes, businesses, and families in Senegal, even as they sometimes build families abroad as well (Hannaford 2012b). In addition to enabling men to realize one of the most critical male social roles, that of husband and provider, having a wife (or several) in Senegal is a good way to accomplish transnational goals of building social and financial capital and investing in the future, which almost all Senegalese migrants envision in Senegal and not in their countries of residence.

Few, if any, Senegalese migrants plan to live abroad for the rest of their lives (cf. Sinatti 2011). Thirty-two-year old Seydou, who I interviewed in 2011 when he had then been resident in Italy for eight years, assured me that he doesn't live in Italy, he merely works there. When I pressed him on this, pointing out that in eight years he had only returned home to Senegal once, he explained that no Senegalese migrant plans to stay where he is.

If a doctor tells you that you only have one week to live, if you're Senegalese, the only thing you're thinking about is how to get the money together to fly home and die there. So that person, he doesn't live here. You might live here, but you won't accept to die here. Even if you own a house here, you're going to pray to God you can one day sell it and move back to Senegal.

This is one of the hallmarks of transnationalism—profound personal and social engagement in a geographic area other than that in which you live. Senegalese abroad live their lives oriented towards Senegal, with social status and reputation in Senegal as the crucial arena (Wf: *lamb ji*) for personal respectability (Kane 2011).

Marriage as a Transnational Strategy

In light of the transnational nature of Senegalese migration and the home-oriented disposition of overseas migrants, transnational marriage becomes logical and straightforward. Many migrants think of their stay in the host country as temporary and contingent; given the discouraging picture of long-term employment prospects and social inclusion, they are not trying to anchor themselves in that country.

Migrants' feelings of transience in the host country—even in cases when they have lived abroad for most of their adult lives—contribute to their reluctance to establish their family in the host country. The same Seydou quoted above, who claimed not to live in Italy but merely work there, added, "It's not that I *bayn* [Wf: reject] Italy, I don't reject it. But Senegal is my country, it is my origins, my assets [Wf/Fr: *sumay biens]*. That's where I want to invest, because my *mbokk* [Wf: family/people] are there, my brain, my heart are there." In an interview in 2005, I asked Talla, a 28-year old migrant living in Turin for most of his young adult life, what he misses about Senegal. He responded,

"Your happiness is your homeland, no? [It: *La tua felicità è la tua terra, no?*] Therefore… even if there is money here, it's always better there."

I met Abdou in 2011 at a bus stop in Lecco, an industrial town in the north of Italy. Close to forty, unmarried and contemplating his options, he told me that he never considered marrying an Italian woman in his six years living in Italy. "It's not that I reject [Wf: *bayn*] Italians, because black people, white people, they are all the same. But personally I prefer to marry a Senegalese woman." Migrant Senegalese men often discuss their desire to marry women in Senegal as a preference for spouses who share their 'traditional' values, rather than the more gender egalitarian women of their host nations.

Abdou said that even if he does marry a Senegalese woman, it wouldn't be one who lives in Italy Kane (2011) and Babou (2008) have noted the contention among Senegalese migrant men that Senegalese women in the diaspora are more likely to resist the dominance of their husbands.[21] This is cited as a reason that many men also decline to bring their wives abroad to join them. Abdou, too, says if he marries a woman at home he will not consider unification in Italy, not because of a fear that she will develop more egalitarian values, but because of his desire for an eventual return.

Because personally, I don't envision remaining here long, I don't want to stay here in Europe, remain here a long time. I want to return to my country. Because this isn't my country… If I bring my wife here, my kids, then I live here, quoi. *That's why I don't want an Italian family. If you have a wife here, basically you live here, quoi… That is, a part of you is always here.*

[21] I should note that their imaginings of the 'traditional values' of contemporary women resident in Senegal is often as fictional or outdated as those of Western men who seek correspondence marriages with Asian women (see Constable 2003).

Many Senegalese migrants are reluctant to establish relationships and associations that will constrain their desired eventual return home. These relationships and emotional investments make up this often-cited difference between working in a country and "living" there. When your happiness is your homeland, having a wife in the homeland only solidifies and facilitates your intentions to resettle there one day. A wife abroad, be she Senegalese or otherwise, may not envision her own future in Senegal.[22] This could cause complications when it comes time to return, so many Senegalese migrants prefer to avoid having a wife abroad.

Why marry at all? Or rather, why not wait until that eventual return to marry? Marriage is a critical rite of passage for achieving Senegalese adulthood. Male or female, you are not a full adult in Senegal until you are married with children. A man has not established social adulthood until he is a *borom keur* (Wf), or "head of a household." As Schaller de la Cova has put it, "there exists no model of swinging bachelorhood to which to aspire" in Senegal (2013: 211)—a successful adult male is one with a wife (or several wives) and children. This explains why marrying a woman in Senegal is one of the first projects migrant men undertake with their newfound resources. Accumulating enough to accomplish the goal of taking[23] a wife happens more quickly than accumulating enough capital to move back indefinitely, or building a home, thus many migrants marry

[22] Babou (2008) and Kane (2011) note that women in the Senegalese diaspora in the United States who have access to earning power—and subsequently to domestic influence—through hair-braiding are less enthusiastic than their husbands about an eventual return to Senegal where they may lose much of this this newfound authority. This dynamic has been observed among women in Mexican and Caribbean communities as well (Goldring 2001; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994 :100; Levitt 2001: 104-6).
[23] The Wolof is *takk jaabar*, literally to tie or tether a wife.

expecting (mistakenly) that their next goal of raising the funds for a return is not far behind.

Many men migrate specifically with the ambition of marriage in mind. As in other places where extensive male emigration is common (see Osella and Osella 2003 for a parallel in Kerala, India), overseas employment is now viewed as one of few remaining paths towards accumulating enough resources to marry—both in order to be seen as marriageable to women and their families and to support a spouse. Achieving those goals has become increasingly difficult for young men in Senegal's disappointing economy.

As I have indicated above, one of the essential goals of transnational migrants in general, and Senegalese transnational migrants in particular, is establishing social status at home. Becoming a *borom keur* (Wf), a "household head" who supports a wife and, eventually, children, is a clear indicator of economic and social maturity. A wife in the homeland can be a potent symbol of a migrant's status and masculinity even as he is physically absent from the community. What's more, through her own displays of wealth, generosity to family members and neighbors, and exhibition of status items that come from abroad, a non-migrant wife can conspire with her husband toward developing his reputation as financially successful and a good provider (see the next chapter when we examine the intricacies of dress and reputation among migrants' wives).

Polygamy as a transnational strategy

This kind of status work through marriage leads many migrants to marry not just one wife in the home country, but several. About a third of the migrants' wives in Senegal whom I interviewed in depth were part of polygamous unions (see Appendix B).

This number is slightly higher than the average number of marriages that are polygamous in Senegal overall, which is estimated at 25% according to the 2002 census (Vázquez Silva 2010). Though it may appear curious to need more than one wife in a place one visits only annually or biannually, for migrant men, having multiple wives aids in building up status at home. In rural and urban Senegal, and across class categories, having multiple wives is a sign of wealth, social status and manhood—the ability to provide for not just one, but several partners and their children (Antoine and Nanitelamio 1996). Like building a large house or owning a fleet of cars, supporting multiple wives is a signifier of 'big man' status, and a way for a migrant to advertise his economic success overseas.

Gnagna's husband works in commerce in Dubai. Every six months or so, he comes home to Dakar for a month, where Gnanga lives in a house with his first and second wife, and his elderly mother. In 2010 I asked Gnagna about how her husband splits his time between three wives in his month at home and she explained that if he is home for thirty days he spends ten nights with each. Each woman has her own bedroom and her husband rotates between them, spending two nights at a time with each wife before moving on to the next. Islamic law dictates that in the case of plural marriage, a man should deal equally with his wives, including in the number of night he spends with each (Dial 2008: 62). I asked Gnagna what happens if her husband is home for a period of time not divisible by three. She explained casually that he picks up where he left off the next time he comes home, six months hence. I asked if the wives write down who was last and who goes next, if they have some special calendar to remind them. She laughed and said there was no need. The wife who is owed more time won't ever forget, she said.

In some cases, like Gnagna's, all of a migrants' multiple wives live together in one home. In other instances, each wife will have her own residence. A migrant of rural-origin might have a wife in Dakar and a wife in his natal village. This is the case for Fatoumata's husband, who visits from France for two months every two to three years. Fatoumata lives in her father's house in Dakar, while her co-wife lives in the south of Senegal hours from the capital city. When her husband visits, he often doesn't have the time to travel all the way to the village, so Fatoumata's *wujj* (Wf: co-wife) comes up to Dakar to live with Fatoumata's family for the period of his visit.

Fatoumata, who at 24 is many years her husband's junior, is her husband's second wife; his first wife was a local girl from his village who, upon marriage, moved in with his parents and now cares for his aging mother in his absence. Another important transnational goal that migrants fulfill through multiple marriages at home is providing for their kin (see Mbow and Tamba 2007: 79). Supporting one's parents and developing a reputation as a generous son and relative is a crucially important point of masculine pride in Senegalese society. Senegalese migrants count providing for their parents among the central aims of their migration projects. Many migrants face family pressure to marry a wife in Senegal, even if it is not something they desire for themselves.

Migrants' mothers particularly encourage—or even insist that—their sons marry a cousin or a local girl. Such marriages can be important for maintaining relationships between families, but there are also immediate material benefits to mothers of migrants. Wolof society is patrilocal, meaning traditionally a wife moves in with her husband's family after marriage, both in rural and urban Senegal. This practice continues in most cases of transnational marriage as well. A new bride is usually expected to move in with

her in-laws even in the absence of her migrant husband. A new wife earns respect and good will from her new family by taking care of her mother-in-law, taking on most of the domestic duties of cooking, cleaning, and childcare, and showing herself to be subservient and docile. Many migrants told me they chose to marry a woman in Senegal precisely to have someone to care for their aging mothers. Mothers may request, or insist, that their sons marry precisely for this domestic labor.

For migrant husbands, the complications and frustrations of having multiple wives at home are considerable. In addition to considered calculations of allocation of time when they are home on visits, more wives means more requests for remittances. Complaints from fighting co-wives are also stressful to men overseas who are not at home to diffuse the situation. Giving equal attention and resources to multiple wives takes careful attention, especially under the wives' intent scrutiny. Many multiple marriages end in divorce. Still, the motivation to marry additional wives can be strong, as migrants seek to establish their reputation in Senegalese society as men of wealth and in the family as generous and dutiful sons.

Migrants like Mbaye, whose story opened this chapter, engage in a different kind of transnational polygamy—with a wife in the host country and a wife (or wives) at home. Migrants marry host nationals for many reasons, obviously including love and attraction, and many of the younger migrants I studied in Italy and France were pursuing romantic relationships with women they had met abroad. Though some of these relationships were not headed towards marriage, like those of 28-year old Talla who found that Italian girls he dated rarely wanted a "*rapporto serio*" [It: serious relationship] with him, using him instead for sex and the discovery of dating "*un ragazzo di colore*"

[It: a boy of color], others migrants like Mbaye ended up marrying their Italian or French girlfriends.

Marrying a host national, though not as common among migrants as marrying a wife at home, helps achieve transnational goals in specific ways. A migrant married to a host national immediately has access to rights and privileges harder to achieve for other migrants. Mobility is critically important to the transnational migrant; the ability to move freely between national borders—with visas, citizenship, green cards and residence permits—allows for the accomplishment of social and economic projects in both locals. It is hard for Senegalese migrants to get back and forth to Senegal without proper documentation. Having a stable migration status and legal paperwork also simplifies finding and retaining salaried employment. In Northern Italy, migrants I knew with legal status work as truck drivers or factory assemblymen. Those on the margins of legality must do informal work such as ambulant selling or unlicensed cab driving, both of which have become especially precarious in this period of economic decline in Europe.

In addition to the obvious benefits of legal status, there are important social status advantages to marrying a local. Navigating the rampant discrimination against migrants, but especially Africans, in Italy, for example, is much easier with an Italian spouse. Italians refuse to rent to Africans in certain neighborhoods and buildings, and getting loans as a migrant can be difficult. Having an Italian spouse to be the public face of the household, and having her network of friends and family to help navigate Italian bureaucracy and a culture of patronage and nepotism, is invaluable (Hannaford 2008). The kinds of things that social capital can buy you are critical to pursuing business goals abroad and therefore to remittance goals at home.

As we have stated, these advantages do not displace or neutralize the desirability of having a wife in Senegal, however. Indeed, it may be the very fact of securing legal status through marriage with a host national that allows a migrant the means with which to marry a woman at home. The advantages, social and financial, that marriage to a host national can bring can be a step towards the rest of a migrant's transnational goals, which include marrying a Senegalese woman and starting a family in Senegal. Additionally, migrant men who have European wives and kids abroad may not see those children as investments in their long-term future, which they envision in Senegal, and thus they often marry at home as well as abroad.

Migrants may also marry Senegalese women already living in the diaspora. Kane (2011) and Babou (2008) have discussed the myriad problems that arise as co-resident migrant couples adjust to new gendered expectations and opportunities made available in the host society. The wife in the diaspora reasons as a migrant as well as a migrant's wife, and she may be more concentrated on fulfilling her own financial and transnational goals with the new opportunities that her location affords her. Kane (2011) and Babou (2008) have noted that marrying a second wife at home can be a way that a husband asserts his dominance in the relationship over his migrant wife who is able to claim new kinds of independence in the migrant setting. In addition to this motivation, migrants with diaspora wives may feel the need to marry a non-migrant women at home for the kind of transnational status building described above. If home is the arena (Wf: *lamb ji)* in which status and reputation are displayed, a wife in the diaspora does not fully fulfill this role.

Of course, multiple transnational marriages sometimes arise not from careful strategy, but through desire and accident. One couple I knew met and dated in Madrid

and eventually got pregnant out of wedlock. When the pregnant woman pressured her boyfriend to legitimate their relationship religiously through marriage, she discovered her migrant boyfriend already had both a wife in Senegal and a wife in Spain. She nevertheless resigned to be his third wife, and the couple married after the child's birth. Though she still resides in Spain, their marriage is not recognized by the Spanish government. They were married by proxy in a mosque in Senegal, never legalizing their marriage either in Senegal or Spain.

Many Senegalese marriages are performed only in the mosque and not in City Hall, therefore they are not legally registered (Dial 2008). To obtain a spousal visa, however, a marriage must be officially recorded in civil record books. In nearly all destination countries for Senegalese migrants, polygamy is illegal, thus bringing multiple wives for family reunification is legally out of the question. Through official channels, the husband can only bring overseas a wife who he has married *à la mairie* (Fr. city hall). This can lead to tricky negotiations of legality, such as the young Dakar-based accountant who asked me to translate some documents for her into Italian so that she might deliver them to the Italian embassy. She brought me her marriage certificate to her husband as well as the divorce certificate between her husband and his first wife. Though the man had divorced his first wife years earlier, and my accountant friend and her husband had been married soon after that, the dates on both the documents were very recent. It was only plans to bring the accountant wife abroad to join her husband in Italy that made the couple decide to legalize both the divorce and the second marriage. By doing so, the accountant wife would be a legitimate wife in the eyes of the Italian government.

* * *

As I have shown above, transnational marriage in which migrants choose spouses who live far away and avoid reunification abroad is quite logical given the goals and long-term outlook on transnational migration. In a Senegalese context, in which a desire for an eventual return home combines with unstable conditions for longevity abroad, migrants concentrate their efforts on building social lives and reputations at home, pleasing their non-migrant kin and establishing themselves as financial successful and socially mature men. Having a wife in the homeland is a critical tool toward fulfilling these transnational goals, and though some find having a wife in the diaspora or from the host country as advantageous as well, this usually does not eclipse the advantage of a wife at home.

Families of non-migrants have strategic interest in having their relatives pursue transnational marriage as well, and many families put direct pressure on their migrant family members to marry a girl at home, even if the migrant himself has no desire to marry or is already married. But what of the non-migrant women who choose to marry migrant men? Why would these women desire an absentee husband in favor of a daily companion?

The next chapter explores the motivations of woman who marry migrants, arguing that traditional Senegalese conceptions of material provision and care within marriage, a constriction of opportunities for financial and social advancement within Senegal, and a contemporary culture of migration have combined to alter perceptions of what makes for a suitable and desirable spouse. Overseas residence has gained tremendous prestige, such that it has upset older strictures of social status including neighborhood and education. This allows for new kinds of marital pairings, as I demonstrate in the next chapter

through cases of urban middle class women marrying rural men. The particular complications of these marriages as they are lived highlight the disconnect between non-migrant expectations and understandings about life abroad.

CHAPTER 3: Class and Courtship in a Culture of Migration

Mariama, a beautiful and gregarious native of Senegal's bustling capital city of Dakar, grew anxious at 30 years old that she was still unmarried. Though she had found employment as a store clerk and was able to minimally contribute to her family's household expenses, she knew she would not reach social adulthood until she became a wife. For women in Senegal, as for men, marriage is socially compulsory. Social mobility for woman has traditionally been linked to marriage, and like most unmarried women, Mariama was still living in her parents' home. At 30, her primary social role was still that of a daughter.

Men delaying marriage and family formation in Senegal because of stalled economic opportunities (see chapter 2, as well as Antoine et al. 1995, Aduayi-Diop 2010: 68) has created a parallel—and unwelcome—delay for women as well. Though Mariama had been dating another man for over a year, she had lost hope that he would ever propose. When Serigne—a distant relative by marriage and a migrant home on vacation from Italy—proposed to her, she felt compelled to say yes.

After spending one day in her company, among his relatives and hers, Serigne asked Mariama for her hand. Initially she refused, arguing that she hardly knew him, but Serigne called her and proposed again each day for a week until finally she relented. Mariama says her family was in favor of the union and she emphasizes, "I was no child—I was 30 years old!" Though Serigne was many years her senior, of rural origin, and not nearly as flashy or handsome as her Dakar boyfriend, Serigne was offering something that no other boyfriend had—the social status of wifehood. The couple was married two days after she said yes. They lived for a month in the house he had built for his mother in

his rural hometown in the Louga region, and then Serigne returned to his factory job in Northern Italy.

In the previous chapter we examined the strategies and motivations that underlie Senegalese male migrants' engagements in transnational marriage. In this third chapter, I turn to the non-migrant wives, asking what entices them into transnational marriages. As I make clear below, the same economic realities that draw men into migration result in a lack of local *goor jaarin* (Wf: men of value), or men who can fulfill their marital duties of material support. Women, who face immense social pressure to marry, also face a dearth of men who are prepared to marry.

Moreover, widespread emigration has troubled many of the older definitions and calculi of social standing and desirability. Non-migrant men no longer possess the means to achieve key markers of middle-class-ness. Overseas migrant suitors possess new forms of economic and social capital that gives them entree into marriages with women of elevated social classes, resulting in a number of marriages between middle class urban women and men of rural origin with little formal education. As the case studies below show, however, wives in these marriages are often disappointed to find that their husbands lack the habitus of men of their own social class in ways that strongly impact the lived experience of their marriage.

Finding *Goor Jaarin*

As the previous chapter details, in the wake of the changes of structural adjustment, individuals could no longer count on the state for their future financial stability. Making do on a Senegalese salary is increasingly difficult due to inflation and the shrinking of the public sector (Diouf 1992). These economic realities affect working women in Senegal as well as men.

Mariama gave me the example of her own financial calculations as a gas station shop clerk. She worked the night shift from 9pm to 9am five days a week and was paid a salary of 100,000cfa (about $200/month). She tabulated that everyday she would pay 2000cfa for her transport to and from work and had to buy herself something to eat at her shift break; these expenses would eat away at her already meager monthly earnings.

She went on to describe the difficulties of accumulating wealth and saving on a meager salary in a culture of communal sharing and low employment.[24]

When I worked, it was difficult, everyone counted on you, everyone. They don't know how much you are paid, but they know that, 'Mariama, dey*, she works!' At the end of the month, everyone calls you, 'I have this or that problem.' It's just you with your 100,000cfa a month—it's not enough!*

Mariama lived with family, and thus didn't pay rent, but she felt pressure as an employed person to contribute to household expenses, to help her siblings who were still in school, and to make her own displays of generosity and giving at family celebrations and rituals.

These paltry salaries and insecure working conditions are the kinds of available employment that workers in Dakar must negotiate. Mariama explained that these kinds of considerations make labor migration appeal to many Senegalese:

[24] See Whitehouse (2011, 2012) for an interesting discussion of migration as a solution to this kind of accumulation difficulty.

Where I worked, if you are sick, it is you who pays for your care. You don't have benefits or paid vacation. That's why everyone wants [to travel/migrate]… because over there at least you can work, you can réaliser quelque chose[25] *... Here you can work for years and never even have a bank account!*

Though Mariama says that her desire to go abroad and work to support her parents did not factor into her decision to marry a migrant, she hopes that Serigne will eventually bring her overseas to join him. Most of the migrants' wives I interviewed said they would like to join their husbands abroad, or at least go visit, but few were willing to claim that desire as a motivating factor in their marriage to a migrant. Many were happy, however, to project that motivation onto other migrants' wives. Indeed, Mariama herself drew a direct comparison between women who marry migrants and women who marry *toubabs*, or Europeans. "It's only to travel. A woman will do anything to change countries. There are lots of women like that."[26] She was, she assured me, of course not that type of woman.

As this dissertation makes clear, however, marrying a migrant does not necessarily lead to migration. The common Senegalese vision of the migrant's wife—the *jabaaru immigré*—is one who does not migrate, but rather receives remittances from abroad and awaits the visits of her husband. Women are far more likely to be accused of marrying a migrant for "*intérêt*" [lit. interest, or more figuratively for financial advantages] than for the hope of migrating, another motivator that my interviewees denied in their own cases but projected onto their peers with wild abandon.

---

[25] Fr. Achieve something

[26] Venables (2008) has researched women in the south of Senegal who use online dating as a way to meet men overseas, hoping for a ticket out of economic stagnation of their circumstances [like Brennan, Constable, Johnson, Johnson-Hanks, and others have documented in other locales.]

Pursuing relationships for *intérêt,* rather than with more respectable intentions such as religious or filial duty, is considered regrettably commonplace in contemporary Senegal. Nyamnjoh (2005) describes the growing gap between the increasing availability of images of consumerism and consumables and the declining economic conditions of most sub-Saharan economic countries as pushing young Senegalese to pursue romantic and sexual relationship's with wealthier partners (including *toubabs*) "for consumer opportunities and consumer citizenship" (2005: 296). It would be inaccurate and an oversimplification to—as Nyamnjoh does—restrict women's motivation to marry with *interêt* to a greedy desire for material things. The reality of what most women yearn for is both more modest and more complex. As I develop in below and in chapter 5, a closer look at what women wish to do with their wealth belies the idea of sacrificing morality and seeking money for the sake of mere consumption alone. The longing for disposable income among Senegalese women comprises not only the desire to adorn oneself with expensive locally tailored clothing and European *pret-à-porter* items, but also the ability to give generously at religious holidays and life-cycle ceremonies as well as to support elderly parents and other relatives. Women seek money explicitly to play a role in Senegal's moral economy and to garner religious honor.

Furthermore, I depart from Nyamnjoh—and many Senegalese—who point to women's desire to make financially advantageous marital unions as a new phenomenon that signals moral decline. In Senegal as in other African settings, material support and emotional attachment have always been mutually constitutive (Cole and Thomas 2009:

20-21[27]). Senegalese culture has long emphasized the importance of a husband as provider, and while this quality has traditionally been given value equal to other characteristics such as provenance from a good family, strong character, and religious piety, women have always sought to attach themselves to *goor jaarin.*

A *goor jaarin* literally means a man who is worth something; it conveys a masculine form of honor that rests in large part on financial success. Even as women join the workforce more and more, the expectation remains that a husband must provide financially (Wf: *yor)* for his wife. Physical desire and emotional compatibility figure into marital calculations, yet ideal husbands must be *goor jaarin*—men who fulfill their marital duties to their wives by providing them with material support. A man's comfortable financial standing is necessary but not sufficient as he must enact the role of good provider through acts of care and generosity vis-à-vis his wife and other dependents to embody the status of *goor jaarin* (see Foley and Hannaford forthcoming).

As I show in the next section, the kinds of gifts and maintenance that women desire from their husbands allow them to participate in a moral economy that gives them status as well as belonging in a feminine social sphere.

[27] Cole and Thomas do note, however, that monetization can strain the relationship between intimacy and exchange.

A griotte elicits money from a party guest in full view of the other attendeees (photo by author)

Sañse* and *Yaatu

It takes little more than a glimpse of Senegalese society to grasp the importance of dressing well. Women in voluminous *boubous* made of richly colored, shiny fabrics, with large scarf sculptures perched atop their heads, are the centerpiece of every religious or family event. In the weeks before major holidays, like Eid Al-Fitr (*tabaski*) and the end of Ramadan (*korité*) women centers on what fabrics, styles, and accessories they will chose for their adornment for the approaching festivities. Tailors work around the clock before these holidays; in times of frequent power outages the sound of their car-battery generators fill the air with a distinct metallic hum.

This finery does not come cheaply. If embroidery, fabric, and beading are on the lips of women during these holidays, the prices of these items are on their minds. Women across class categories spend hundreds of dollars on each grand ensemble. In recent years, imported high-heeled shoes and leather handbags have also become a critical component of elegant dress. To finance their holiday garments, women call upon their social networks, follow up on old debts owed to them, create new debts for themselves and make demands on their relatives for the money. Overseas migrants especially feel the pressure around these times of year, fielding (or more often avoiding) a greater volume of unsolicited calls from distant friends and relatives in Senegal. Often couched as appeals for help with healthcare costs or particularly expensive utility bills, the requests for remittances increase dramatically at the same time the average woman (and man, to a lesser extent) is on a mission to dress expensively—and this is no coincidence.

Many female researchers of Senegalese fashion are quick to insist that there is more to dressing well, or being *sañse*, than superficial showiness or vanity. Possessing markers of wealth signals the strength of a woman's social networks, which she taps for the resources to afford her finery (Buggenhagen 2012: 26). Being *sañse* is inextricably linked to values of honor, generosity, and respectability and indicates a woman's ability to collect upon previous acts of generosity and hospitality toward others (Heath 1992: 23). It is especially important to make displays of wealth at events like holidays and family gatherings, Deborah Heath explains, because they are the key arena for the politics of reputation for women; these ceremonies constitute the "performance events at which social identities are constructed and maintained" (*ibid*: 20).

Heath argues that performing *sañse* can in fact—contrary to assumptions about vanity or narcissism—be a generous act on the part of the well-dressed woman. Dressing extravagantly can be a public statement about the wealth and generosity of a woman's husband or suitor, an advertisement of his affluence to whomever sees her in her finery and observes that she is well taken care of (Heath 1992: 23). Heath describes this kind of message-carrying as a service that a woman performs for her husband, allowing his wealth to be broadcast in an ostentatious way that simultaneously leaves him free to act reserved and show restraint (*ibid*: 24).

Women seek to develop a reputation for generosity or being *yaatu* (Wf: exhibiting largesse) at these ceremonies and more generally in their broader lives. Supporting elderly parents and other relatives is a great source of honor, and though male children usually shoulder the bulk of this responsibility, women also aspire to perform this filial duty. By marrying and moving into their husbands' household, women cease to be a financial drain on their parents and may even have an opportunity through money from their husbands to contribute to their parents' household. Women seek through marriage to *goor jaarin* be well provided for so that they can in turn provide.

Early 21st century economic challenges make finding a *goor jaarin* increasingly difficult. Men struggle to keep up with rising expectations of what it means to "provide" [*yor*]. As Senegalese sociologist Fatou Binetou Dial notes, "the ideal model of a good husband no longer corresponds to the realities of marriage, and yet women continue to believe in it" (2008: 181). Indeed, the high cost of living in Senegal and the dearth of remunerative employment account for both why contemporary Senegalese women cleave

ever more ardently to the ideal of husband-provider and why men struggle to realize that ideal.

Looking to marry a *goor jaarin*, or a man who can provide, is not in itself a new phenomenon for Senegalese women—yet marrying migrants represents a change in the conception of *goor jaarin* for Senegalese women and their families. Changing dynamics surrounding migration and class in Senegal facilitate the increased desirability of migrant spouses, overturning other older strictures of social order that once determined these choices. In what follows, I examine the way that changing understandings of social class and what constitutes social capital make migrant suitors more desirable—though not necessarily better—spouses.

Class, Courtship, Marriage and Migration

Bruno Riccio noted a profound ambivalence surrounding the figure of the migrant in Senegal, with the double perception of the migrant as a "hero" and a "trickster" (Riccio 2005). Though not explicitly employing class terms himself, Riccio described a class-based division between returning migrants of rural origin displaying and exaggerating their newfound wealth, and educated, (middle class) non-migrant men with more limited access to cash and consumer goods. Non-migrant men accuse these migrants of rural origin, or *modou modou* (Wf) as they are commonly called, of ostentatious display as a

weapon against their feelings of social inadequacy vis-à-vis their more elite and educated urban counterparts.[28]

What this phenomenon reveals is a complicated rupture in Senegalese understandings of social class. Whereas the urban, educated, and French-speaking[29] elite were—and to some extent still are—considered cosmopolitan, Senegal's contemporary "culture of migration" (Massey et al. 1993: 452-453) imbues international mobility with increased prestige. Though university degrees and provenance from urban, middle class neighborhoods may once have signaled potential financial prowess, access to travel and overseas employment has all but replaced these trappings of symbolic capital as a major sign of access to resources.

In recent years, *modou modou* as a category has expanded as more middle class and educated men turn to migration. Though *modou modou* was the shorthand for rural-born migrants who do manual labor abroad—the term has widened to encompass a range of different migratory identities and trajectories. With few viable economic opportunities in Senegal, urban, educated men are taking their chances on migration and moving abroad to do the same kinds of work as uneducated rural men—including ambulant selling and factory work. Simultaneously, some young rural men with limited education who migrate to Europe and the United States as *modou modous* are continuing their education, even getting university degrees and moving into professional jobs (see

[28] This phenomenon is similar to other contexts, such as behavior Nonini (1997) observed among Chinese Malay men who flaunt their masculine identities as overseas labors to assert their authority over those at home.

[29] By French-speaking I do not intend those who do not speak Wolof, but rather those whose fluency in French demonstrates their formal education. The uneducated person's poor attempt at French is a source of great humor and derision in popular television, radio, and cartoon.

Hannaford 2008). As is the case in many stories of migration, class categories in the host country often do not correspond with class categories in the sending community (see for example Aguilar 2003, Nieswand 2011**,** Osella and Osella 2000, Thai 2008).

The lines between rural-origin men with little education and urban-born men from middle class families are eroding when it comes to migration. Both aspire to leave Senegal; both have goals of achieving masculine high status by providing for their families, marrying, and establishing a reputation in Senegal as a pious, financially successful and generous man. The term "*immigré*" (though perhaps less accurate as a social science category than "*émigré*") is beginning to eclipse the term "*modou-modou"* and its class-bound associations. Both the university professor in Normandy and the key chain vendor in Milan can fit into the category of *immigré*. Their wives, consequently, could all be considered *jaabaru immigé,* with the accompanying expectations for their access to wealth.

Yet because so many of Senegal's migrants still hail from rural regions, important distinctions and class-based divisions do remain, and these impact the lived experience of transnational marriages between migrants of rural-origin and urban women in significant ways. Fatou Binetou Dial observes in her study of marriage in Senegal that most marriage matches are made in light of class and neighborhood homogamy; spouses usually have grown up near one another and their families have similar class backgrounds. When there has been a mismatch, it has traditionally been the husband practicing hypogamy, or marrying a woman of a lower class (Dial 2008: 70). Antoine et al. also noted in 1995, that for generations, Dakar-based women had rarely married men from outside of Dakar (1995: 67). In recent years, however, it has become increasingly

common for middle class, *Dakaroise* women—like Mariama and Aissatou—to marry rural men of lower class origin when they are overseas migrants (see Tall 2002, Riccio 2005, Hannaford 2011).

The perception among many marriageable women and their families is that purely by virtue of being a migrant, a suitor is in a better position to provide for his wife than a non-migrant, regardless of his education or upbringing. Non-migrant men of the middle class find it hard to compete on the marriage market and that is a large part of why they too are turning to menial labor overseas. Migrants—almost regardless of their rural/urban origin, caste, pre-migratory class status, or actual job/migration status overseas—find themselves in a position to marry Senegalese women who may not have looked in their direction before they became migrants.

That international migrants expand their opportunities for marriage is in no way a purely Senegalese phenomenon. Other studies in vastly different places have shown how otherwise not very eligible spousal candidates become marriageable because of their location in the diaspora (Palriwala and Uberoi 2008: 31, Fan and Li 2002, Williams 2009: 26, Thai 2002 and 2008). Thai's study of Vietnamese brides and migrant grooms illustrates how a Vietnamese woman might marry an undereducated man or a man from a less respectable family because his location in the diaspora elevates his marriageability (Thai 2005, 2008). In both the Vietnamese and the Senegalese case, women and their families are making new choices about marriage and class as migration becomes "deeply ingrained into the repertoire of people's behaviors, and values associated with migration become part of the community's values" (Massey et al. 1993: 452-453).

Class and Employment: "My Husband's Job is *Immigré*"

What exactly the migrant does overseas and his legal immigration status, are usually of little importance to wives and their families in the negotiations for marriage. In fact, of the 54 women I interviewed who had married migrants, roughly a third had no idea what their husband did for work (see Table D and Table E2 in Appendix B). When I asked the question, "what is your husband's work?" several interviewees answered, "*immigré*" or "*mingi exterieur"* ("he's abroad"). As we discussed in chapter 2, the non-migrant conflation of location abroad with tremendous earning makes the details of employment seem inconsequential to those contemplating marriage to a migrant. Being overseas is in itself a profession, as far as many Senegalese are concerned.

In Lamine Mbengue's film *Toubab Dou Woujj* (Wf: "White/Europe women aren't polygamous") one scene in particular hits upon this concept of the *immigé* as a social class/profession. In the film, a Senegalese man's French wife discovers her husband is polygamous and decides to stay in Senegal and live alongside her co-wives. The protagonist protests and says he must return to France, "What about my job in France?" She responds, "What job?" and reminds him that he never worked when they lived in France. He says, 'Yes, but for the people here, being in Europe means having a job.' The man's identity and status—his belonging to a certain class of men—were wrapped up not in an actual career, but in his residence overseas.

Migrant suitors can benefit being lumped into an amorphous *immigré* professional category and most keep the details of their overseas lives vague when pursuing a potential wife, as the numbers of wives who have no knowledge of their husbands' job

suggest. A Senegalese factory worker I interviewed in Northern Italy in 2011 rebuffed my question about whether he had explained the realities of life in Italy to his wife before he married her, claiming the details of his everyday life abroad were irrelevant. "She's marrying me, not Italy," he said sharply. Kane notes that migrants in the US who pretend to be wealthy while courting their wives in Senegal fear bringing their wives abroad lest the wives should ask for a divorce or no longer be "good wives" upon seeing their husbands' humble conditions (2011: 185).

Many migrant suitors in fact play into the assumptions made about their wealth as migrants. The stereotype among non-migrants in Dakar of migrants home on vacation and on the prowl includes wearing sunglasses indoors at night as a way to signal their foreignness and access to luxury accessories (Kane 2011: 193). The women I interviewed who were courted by migrant suitors said the courtship was full of gifts from abroad, either cash or commercial goods that were also marked as foreign—ready-to-wear clothes, bags, shoes, perfumes, etc. Parodies of *modou modous* home on visits conspicuously interject Italian or English words into their Wolof.[30]

Though women may marry without regard for their husband's actual career overseas, after a marriage takes place specific factors about employment in the host country begin to come to the surface. A husband's career and legal status, for example, make a significant difference in the life of a Senegalese migrant's wife even if she never joins her husband abroad. Nearly a dozen of my Dakar interviewees' husbands did not

[30] I should note that this satire is meant to poke fun not only at the showiness of this linguistic tick, but it also mocks the stereotypical rural-born *modou modou*'s ignorance of French due to a lack of formal schooling. [See McLaughlin 2001 on the close connection between Franco-Wolof language and urban identity in Dakar.]

have immigration papers at the time of the interview (see Table F2 and G1 in Appendix B). In some cases this meant that the bride had not seen the groom once over the course of their entire marriage, as he could not travel back and forth without legal immigration papers. Others had waited a period of several years before their husbands eventually got the paperwork they needed to be able to come home to visit.

Career status has an obvious impact on the amount and the frequency of remittances that a migrant can send home to his wife, as well as his ability to travel home. Ambulant sellers who receive no monthly salary cannot send remittances on a regular schedule. The amount of money one earns working in a print shop versus selling umbrellas in the street naturally varies, and wives see the difference in what they receive to live on from their husbands. Migrants who work in factories usually get a specific amount of time off each year in which they could potentially travel home—generally around the Christmas holiday if they are in majority Christian countries[31] or, in the case of Italy, the annual August holiday *ferragosto*. *Commerçants,* or tradesmen, on the other hand, may have to return frequently as part of their trade and, because they are self-employed, are free to come and go when they can afford the trip—though that may be less often than once a year. All of these differences have significant impacts on migrants' wives, yet they are not considered prior to marriage, nor do they push many women to press their potential spouses for details about their employment status abroad.

As I mentioned above, in addition to not giving full consideration to a husband's legal and career status overseas before marrying, many women overlook the salience of a husband's class origins. This results in a number of marriages unlikely outside of the

[31] As opposed to, say, U.A.E.

context of migration, such as middle-class urban women marrying men of rural origin and of little education. As the cases below make clear, however, pre-migratory class status of a husband is also a crucially important gauge of what a woman will experience as his wife because of patrilocal residence patterns, the importance of kin, and the differences in habitus that accompanies rural or urban origin.

Post-Marital Class Clashes

Aissatou and her husband of four years are no longer speaking. He is a 34-year old university-educated Senegalese migrant living in France; she is a 25 year-old accounting student living with her mother in a middle class Dakar neighborhood. Holding her nine-month-old baby in her lap, Aissatou told me that their marriage began to unravel after one of her husband's yearly visits home. Aissatou's husband declared that because of her pregnancy, it was time that she leave Dakar, leave school, and move in with his family in a village a few hours south of Dakar. Aissatou felt leaving school at her young age to live with his family was impractical, old-fashioned, and backwards. "I'm not going to sacrifice my future for that, you know? Just to sit around and serve my in-laws." Her mother, a working woman and an urban dweller, supported her decision, and is now supporting her financially as well. Aissatou's husband, furious at her disobedience, has stopped sending remittances. He and his family don't understand Aissatou and her mother's opposition. "They're *kawkaw*," Aissatou says, using the slang Wolof word for hicks or rural people. "They just think I'm a bad wife."

Aissatou married a migrant, a resident of France, and a university graduate. But she also married a man raised in rural Senegal, with an extensive kin network still there.

This latter characteristic, his pre-migratory social location, would have likely precluded him from marrying an urban, educated woman like Aissatou had he not been a migrant. All of these class identities and their accompanying habitus—pre-migratory, post-migratory, urban, rural—played important roles in the story of their marriage and its eventual demise.

Thai's study of Vietnam shows how specific class factors begin to interfere with the success of a marriage only after the marriage. Women who are used to a certain lifestyle and independence in their pre-marital upper class Vietnamese past might clash with their lower-class migrant husband's divergent gendered expectations for spousal roles and power dynamics (Thai 2005, 2008). For transnational Senegalese couples who marry across class categories, pre-marital class disparities also have an enormous impact on their married life. Urban-born Senegalese women may hope that their husbands living in the West will have similar cosmopolitan values or ideologies as they do having grown up in a cosmopolitan city, especially regarding gender.

The case of Aissatou and her husband, described above, is illustrative of this phenomenon. She hoped her husband's education overseas and his exposure to working women in France would translate into support for her following her own career goals. Instead, she felt her husband's attitude towards her education was more in line with other rural-born Senegalese men.[32] His values—including about the importance of a woman's domesticity and his desire to have his wife tend to his mother full-time—were, to Aissatou, *kaw-kaw* values and represented the old-fashioned conservatism of rural Senegal.

[32] Mezger and Toma (2011) and Fiéloux (1985) similarly found that a husband's migratory status does not have a positive effect on women's labor market participation.

Peggy Levitt coined the term "social remittances" to describe the ideas and behaviors that migrants transmit back to their families along with financial remittances (2001). She and Lamba-Nieves add that the ideas and practices that migrants bring with them from home when they migrate also influence what kinds of social remittances they send back (Levitt and Lamba-Nieves 2011). Aissatou's case (and those that follow) supports this notion, as her husband's rural upbringing determined the attitude and exigencies towards gender roles that he transmitted back from abroad. Equally importantly, many migrants' wives are disappointed to find that the husband's family—particularly the matriarch of his family—has a more important influence on his gender ideology and expectations for his wife than anything he may have observed or experienced overseas.

Many of the *Dakaroise* women I interviewed who had married men of rural origin were pressured to move from Dakar to live with their husband's family (Wf: *seeyi)* in the village. It is common in patrilocal Senegal for a married couple to spend a period of time after their marriage living with the husband's mother, with the expectation that the new bride will try to please her new family by cooking and cleaning and being submissive (see chapter 5 for a more in depth discussion of the *seeyi* experience*).* The practice has begun to lose favor among the urban middle class, however, especially when the in-laws live outside the city, but among migrants the practice is still quite prevalent, even as the men are absent, and thus migrants' wives frequently move alone into their in-laws' home.

Many wives who made the move from Dakar to *seeyi* in a rural village did so unwillingly. In most cases, such a move was not discussed until after a couple was married, and in several cases my interviewees told me that their husbands explicitly

promised them they would not have to move. Mariama and her family were opposed to the idea, also calling it old-fashioned and *kaw-kaw* as well as financially impractical for her to leave her job. Mariama too, was reluctant to leave employment and city life. Gradually though, her husband Serigne convinced her to quit her job because it was "not safe[33]," and soon after put intense pressure on her to move to his village. Mariama finally relented and left her job, her family and friends for a rural life with her mother-in-law.

In many cases of rural-urban transnational marriage the women were employed or in school when they were married and leaving Dakar meant leaving their jobs, potentially never to work again. Husbands raised in rural Senegal, where women's education and professional ambition are less valued, were less likely to condone a wife's career after marriage. Making them leave employment also made women more dependent on remittances from their husbands and thus further subject to the control of their husbands (see an illustrative example of this kind of control in chapter 6). In a few cases, women were able to find jobs in their new location, but it was not without some controversy, as we will see in the case study of Coumba below. In their new locations, many of the women had difficulty making friends with the women who had been raised there. They moved from having active urban social lives and cosmopolitan lifestyles to rural life in a new place, with no friends and without even their husbands for company.

For several of my interviewees, the move to *seeyi* involved a move from Dakar to the holy city of Touba in Senegal's peanut basin. Touba, the spiritual capital of the Mourides, is growing rapidly from investments made by Mouride migrants and

[33] Mariama worked as a clerk in a gas station mini-mart and occasionally worked the nightshift. Her husband also disapproved of her selling alcohol in the store, feeling it was unsuitable work for a Muslim.

businessmen, yet for my Dakar-born interviewees it still felt very rural. Once in Touba, these women had to contend not only with the scrutiny put upon them by the *seeyi* position[34] and in their new families, but also with a new moral code in their new city. One interviewee, Binta, recounted how she had been publicly upbraided for wearing pants under her ankle-length dress, as pants are not permissible for women in Touba. She opened her closet to me and showed me all the clothing she had brought with her from Dakar, including lots of glamorous ready-to-wear Western clothing, which she was no longer able to wear outside of the house. This change was indicative for her of the foreignness and tediousness of her new setting. Whereas in Dakar she worked, dressed in tight jeans as often as she pleased, and had an active social life, in Touba she mostly stayed in her room, watched television and waited for her husband's nightly phone call from Italy.

Another migrant's wife who made the move from Dakar to Touba, Coumba, ended up divorcing her migrant husband because of class tensions with her in-laws and co-wives that came from her status as an urban, educated woman in the rural household. I met Coumba while visiting her at her job as a receptionist in the city of Touba's new state-of-the-art hospital built entirely from Mouride money.[35] Coumba called Touba "a big village" and found it difficult to adjust to life there after growing up in Dakar. She

[34] The period of time called 'seeyi' in which a wife moves in with her in-laws is extremely grueling for young wives. Not only must they cook and clean for the entire household, show modesty and piety, be respectful at all times and do the mother-in-law's bidding, but they are under constant scrutiny by everyone in the household. Differences in the way that the households are run come into relief and the bride's ways are seen as wrong and needing correction. Brides cook and clean for the family, and are criticized for the amount of pepper they put in the food, the way or the speed at which they do laundry by hand, their habits of talking too much or too little, etc. (See also Poiret 1996).

[35] See Foley and Babou (2011)

found people in Touba to be very different from those she had known in Dakar. "Demographically speaking, it is the second largest city in Senegal—two million five hundred inhabitants," she said to me as we sat behind her receptionist desk, checking in patients and rescheduling follow-up visits. "But they are all villagers. 90% come from villages. You may see their fancy houses, but when you speak to them…"

Her city origins, her education, and her desire to work posed immediate obstacles to her integration with the members of her new household. Her co-wife and her sisters-in-law who lived in her new home were all born and raised in Touba, and had had little to no formal education. Coumba, however, had finished high school, and did two years of university in law before dropping out and getting a certificate in secretarial skills. A few years after she moved to Touba, despite disapproval from her in-laws, Coumba started work at the hospital. The other women of the house isolated her and excluded her, and Coumba said that most days she would head straight to her room after work and go to sleep, as no one in the house would speak to her.

Coumba blames herself for some part of the isolation. Early in her marriage, her co-wife and sisters-in-law told her that all the women of the household were planning to wear matching outfits out of the same cloth for a central religious holiday. This is, according to Coumba, very common in rural areas, but only "*meres yi,"* or old ladies, would wear matching outfits in Dakar. Coumba found the idea deeply unhip, so she bought her own fabric and commissioned her own outfit from a tailor in Dakar. Her refusal to participate in her co-wife and sisters-in-law's sartorial plans soured the relationship with the other women and gave them the impression that Coumba thought she was better than them.

In many ways, Coumba did think herself superior to them because of this question of habitus. As Coumba described it, she and the other women of the household didn't have the same "*manière de vivre"* [Fr. way of life]. She disparaged their *kaw-kaw* mentality and felt they did not care about anything of substance. Coumba informed me loudly and emphatically (as the women of Touba passed by us within earshot in the hospital) that *kaw-kaw* women can brutally violent—they are known to brawl, bite one another, and fight viciously.

It is not uncommon to hear stories in Senegal of female-on-female violence of the kind Coumba describes, particularly between co-wives or romantic rivals. It is, in many ways, a class-related phenomenon. Women of Dakar associate such behavior with the lower-class *banlieue* [Fr. outskirts] of Dakar. Women of the *banlieue*—where Coumba was raised—associate it with rural areas and the *kaw-kaw*.

Coumba claims that this kind of violence is particularly prevalent in Touba. She pointed to the emergency room across from where we were sitting and said that working here she has witnessed several cases of brutal co-wife violence—including one co-wife biting off the lip of another, a co-wife throwing boiling oil on her rival, and even one woman drowning the newborn baby of her co-wife in a boiling pot of rice. Witnessing the aftermath of these cases at the hospital cemented her belief that the people of Touba are "sadists" and "bloodthirsty".

These cases eventually convinced Coumba that she needed to leave her marital home. If the women of Touba were capable of such cold-blooded acts of violence, she was putting herself in danger by being in marital competition with one. She felt so

unwelcome in her husband's home by his sisters and his first wife that she feared for her safety and that of any eventual children.

Five years after her divorce, Coumba is living in her grandfather's house in Touba and still working at the hospital, but says that every two weeks she travels to Dakar. She is looking for a new husband there; she claims that she will never marry a *villageois* [a village-dweller] again, nor will she marry a migrant. "I went down that path once, but I will never go there again," she said emphatically. "And I wouldn't advise anyone else to either."

Non-Migrants with Transnational Strategies

Many of my interviewees, both divorced and still married, told marital tales of struggle and frustration. Multiple women echoed Coumba's sentiments about not recommending or wishing to repeat their choice to marry a migrant. With stories of the travails of marriage to migrants in the papers, on the radio, and in their neighborhoods and families, why do so many women continue to opt for transnational marriage? Most of the women I interviewed who were married to migrants or had been married to migrants in the past claimed they had not sought such a relationship. They differentiated themselves from women who marry for *intérêt*, financial interest, or out of a desire to get abroad. When asked about the choice to marry a migrant, each framed her own circumstances as relating to her husband's character, religious duty, or an obligation to family. Yet further discussion with these women about the difficulties of finding a *goor jaarin* or a "good man" in Senegal who can support his wife (see Foley and Hannaford,

forthcoming), indicate that more particular calculi underline the decision to marry a man who lives abroad.

Levitt (2001) has argued that migration is not a prerequisite for transnationalism, claiming that those living in a transnational place are inherently transnational, including those who migrate and return *and* those who remain behind. Like the migrants, non-migrants members of the sending community interact with and depend on money, people, ideas and resources in another setting. Non-migrant Senegalese wives of migrants are living in a transnational space as well, operating in a cultural system of values in which access to overseas wealth and goods has particular salience. Thus migrants' wives are by extension transnational actors. In choosing marriage to a migrant, they are attempting to achieve their own transnational goals.

Access to the kinds of goods and status markers that are associated with *l'exterieur* [fr. li. The exterieur, fig. the world outside of Senegal] is highly desirable among all Senegalese, but particularly young women, and these items are an important element of display at ceremonies and family gatherings. In transnational Senegal, this kind of display marks inclusion into an international community of consumption. Many of the women's tales of their courtship with their migrant husbands were punctuated by detailed accounts of the types of gifts and markers of status and wealth associated with overseas migration. Two different women told of how they first met their husbands in the street when he rolled down the window of a fancy car that he had rented for his vacation home from the U.S. or Europe, and offered her a ride. Others recounted being swept off their feet with gifts like imported perfume and leather handbags. Migrants speak of the intense pressure to provide these items for sisters, mothers, aunts, as well as girlfriends

and wives. In the lead up to marrying a migrant, most women were given a glimpse at a future in which they would receive these gifts regularly, and this made marriage to a migrant seems like an appealing strategy to achieve that particularly transnational type of social status. If bring abroad confers status, having a husband *la-bas* (Fr. lit. "over there," abroad) gives a *jabaaru immigré* a corresponding status. Women who marry migrants hope this status will enable them to play a respectable role in social life as elegant and generous members of their social networks.

* * *

In the previous two chapters we have explored what motivates men and women to enter into transnational unions. For migrant men, the advantages are multiple—marriage to a non-migrant Senegalese women helps to achieve specific transnational goals of reputation-building in the homeland, pleasing or appeasing non-migrant relatives, and preparing for an anticipated (however elusive) permanent return to Senegal. For migrants' wives, the advantages of marriage to a migrant are both individual—the fulfillment of their own financial and social goals—and intricately connected to the larger social climate in Senegal in which overseas migrants have achieved newfound status that elevates them as desirable potential spouses.

With the remaining four chapters we turn to the quotidian experiences within transnational marriages and the complex micro-relations that these marriages engender. The following chapter explores Senegalese marital ideals for material provision, emotional closeness and sexual intimacy with a particular focus on conceptions of marital

love. I examine these ideals in light of transnational marriage, arguing that couples who forge transnational marriages are sacrificing key elements of spousal support in favor of other social and financial considerations.

CHAPTER 4: Sang, Dëkkal, Dëkkoo (To Clothe, House, and Sexually Satisfy)

After our interview in an outdoor café in Northern Italy in 2011, Seydou—a 32-year old Senegalese migrant—asked me if I knew where he could get film negatives developed. His wife had recently sent the negatives of their wedding photos from Senegal through another migrant traveling back to Italy[36], and Seydou wanted to print a few to see who had attended. On the day of his wedding, Seydou himself had worked a full day on the assembly line in a mechanics factory thousands of miles from the mosque where kola nuts were exchanged in the traditional Senegalese Islamic marital rite. Now, almost eight months later, he was preparing to return to Senegal and see his wife for the first time since before their marriage.

Seydou's wife offered to make him an album of the wedding photos, but he preferred to have her send him the negatives so he could just print a few of the photos himself. She also sent him DVD of the event, filmed by a semi-professional videographer. These DVDs are very popular among in the diaspora and migrants often watch them together. The wedding videos can be instrumental in helping Senegalese bachelors select their own wives from among the beautifully dressed attendees. Albums, however, are more the domain of wives.

A Senegalese wedding album might seem peculiar to an American audience. Its pages are filled with glamorous portraits of the bride. She wears heavy, almost kabuki-

[36] This is a common form of delivery back and forth between Senegal and the diaspora for Senegalese migrants, as the Senegalese post is slow, pricey and unreliable. The Wolof term is *yobunte* or things you carry with you. I myself have transported hundreds of Euros, fabric, millet, shoes, dried hibiscus flowers, and even a DVD player between Senegal and Europe for migrants and their family members.

like makeup. Her face is powdered to give the impression of lighter skin; her eye shadow extends to the exaggerated painted-on eyebrows that sit about an inch above her brow bone. The bride wears multiple outfits in the different pictures, and her hairstyle is intricate and ornate—there are usually long hair extensions involved, shaped into swirls, sometimes with rhinestones glued to the scalp. The bride does not smile; her look is disaffected and serious, sometimes sultry. Pictures of the bride standing next to each guest at the reception, either individually or in groups, usually follow the portraits. No one is smiling and the bride especially tends to have a joyless or dour expression.

The casual observer will note that groom is almost never present in the album, and this is not only in cases in which the groom is a migrant. This reflects the fact that the event itself is not about the groom, but the bride and the couple's families. Neither the bride nor the bridegroom is present for the actual marriage ceremony. Male representatives for each meet at the mosque and exchange kola nuts and symbolic gifts. The bride and groom are usually absent for most of the reception as well. The groom rarely attends at all and the bride is at the salon perfecting her look for most of the party, while her relatives and her new in-laws publicly exchange gifts, and the guests eat and drink their fill, admiring one another's finery and commenting on the value of the gifts exchanged between families.

For the bride a wedding is more like a debutant party than a celebration of her love for the groom. When she arrives she is the center of attention and the groom is hardly mentioned. As soon as she enters, she must greet her guests and have her picture taken with each of them. Her closest friends, sisters and cousins, who have been with her all day at the salon, follow her around like a coterie of ladies in waiting. The bride

comports herself with studied modesty as she makes the rounds at the party, avoiding eye contact and curtsying while shaking the hands of their elders. She hopes to impress her new in-laws with her air of virtue and humility. Many brides seem miserable at their weddings, and this is an expected posture to take. Marriage in Senegal, though a religious duty and a social expectation, is both desired by and dreaded by unmarried women.

A Senegalese bride arrives at her wedding reception, accompanied by her uncle (photo by author)

In this chapter, I seek to put transnational marriage into context by explaining more traditional expectations for and understandings of marriage. I explain the feminine virtues of *muuñ*, *miin*, and *sutura*, as well as the husbandly duties of *sang, dëkkal,* and

dëkkoo as I tease out the role of material support, intimacy, and sexuality in Senegalese marriage. I then discuss how transnational marriage necessarily unbalances many of these marital values and priorities. I analyze what this trend in marriage illuminates about love and marriage in late capitalism, drawing from two key discourses in contemporary anthropology—on companionate marriage and on transnational kinship.

Wishing and Hoping and *Muuñ*ing and Dreading

Marriage is an obligatory rite of passage for men and women in Senegalese society and a necessary milestone to achieve social adulthood. As Muslims, Senegalese believe marriage is a "divine directive" (Dial 2008:42) and women in particular are eager to marry and have children as a means of honoring God and gaining social status. Despite their eagerness to marry, women look upon marriage with considerable trepidation. Marriage in Senegal is not expected to be a pleasurable experience, but rather a long test of a woman's ability to stoically endure whatever obstacles she encounters (see Foley and Hannaford, forthcoming, Dial 2008).

One of the most important virtues in a Senegalese woman, but particularly a wife, is that she be able to *muuñ. Muuñ* is to be patient, the ability to suffer and endure. *Muuñ* reflects religious piety; faith in Allah and his superior knowledge should allow you to be able to put up with whatever trials He puts you through. A woman's ability to *muuñ* is essential to the longevity of her marriage. A good wife must remain patient, stoic, and uncomplaining as she endures the hardships of married life. The fundamental understanding of marriage especially for women is that it is difficult, and something to be

endured. A wife's capacity to *muuñ* is seen as essential to the longevity of her marriage (see Foley and Hannaford forthcoming).

The Wolof adage *"jigeen du bëgg dafay miin*" is one of many illustrating the gendered subtleties of marital life. Roughly translated, it means that women do not fall in love, they acclimate. Whereas men may impulsively fall for women and feel love at first site, women are valued for their reserve and temperance. Traditionally, a woman marries a man because she is told he is a good match for her by her family and then slowly over the course of a marriage, through honoring him and serving him and through his efforts to please her, she comes to love him.

The values of *miin* and *muuñ*, which are still widely lauded in discussions of marriage in Senegal today, co-exist with a contemporary dating culture, pop songs about love and loss, and wildly popular Latin American and Indian *telenovelas* of passion and intrigue. Young women in Senegal talk about loving [*bëgg/ nob]* their boyfriends, young suitors court their girlfriends with amorous phrases (often in French) about desire, longing and love. But love in marriage is, and has always been, something different from this. Marriage is emphasized as a religious duty for young men and women, as something not to be entered into lightly as a climax of individual passions, but as a family project with a view towards the long durée.

This should not imply, however, that there is little expectation for love in marriage. On the contrary, marital love is much discussed and lauded in Senegalese culture, the subject of much folk music, fables, and popular culture. Senegalese Muslims often mention the Prophet's love for his wives—particularly his first wife Khadija and the affectionate partnership the couple shared—as a model for married life. But love is

the result of marriage, not the cause of it. Love grows within a marriage, must be carefully nurtured and cultivated by both spouses, and it is essential for a happy home.

As a woman begins to *miin* (acclimate to, get used to) life with her husband, she comes to love him. Through her attempts to please her husband through her domestic abilities and sexual attentiveness (see below), through affection, and stoicism in the face of challenges, she desires to win his good favor and comes to love him. A husband recognizes her efforts and comes to love her too. Gradually, he starts to rely on her as his helpmate, caretaker, and partner and rewards her loyalty with affection and material support. The material, the sexual, and the romantic are all connected in the Senegalese conception of love[37].

In the next section, I look at the way that women *toppatoo* (care for) their husbands, as an illustration of the way that love is carefully and deliberately nurtured in a Senegalese marriage. I focus on two of the main domains of this kind of care/seduction—the kitchen and the bedroom.

Seducing Your Husband

When my fiancé, came to visit me during my last year of fieldwork in Dakar, in 2011, every woman I knew would ask me teasingly if I was going to "*toppatoo*" him well. Did I have my incense ready?, my friends and even female strangers would ask when they heard my "*jekker*" (lit. husband) was on his way. *Toppatoo* (Wf), means to

[37] As they are in conceptions of love elsewhere (c.f. Giddens 1992, Cole 2009, Illouz 1997)

"take care" of your husband, please him, and make him feel like a king. For a Senegalese woman this includes feeding him tasty dishes until he's full, making his home comfortable and stress-free, and ensuring that he knows he is your one and only.

In Senegalese marital life, there is a close connection between food and sexuality. A woman in a plural marriage always cooks for her husband on the night that he sleeps with her, and the nightly meal is seen as the beginning of the night's activities, the first in the series of her working to please him. If a wife is angry at her husband, she will not cook for him, and if he is angry with her he will not eat her cooking (Gueye 2010: 70). A woman seeking to sabotage her co-wife's relationship with their husband will often spoil the other wife's cooking—adding handfuls of salt or turning up the flame while she is not looking (*ibid:* 70). To *toppatoo* your husband means cooking his favorite dishes just the way he likes them.

It also involves incense, suggestive jewelry, and sexual technique. On the cover my January 2011 issue of Thiof[38] magazine—the Senegalese cross between Cosmopolitan and People—a headline reads, "Women and Incense: Scents, Eroticism, and Danger." Incense, or "*thiouraye*" plays an important role in a Senegalese woman's seduction strategy. It is part of the traditional marriage trousseau, along with the strings of beads women wear around their waists called "bin bins" and the peek-a-boo slips called "béthios" or "petit pagnes" that hide beneath their skirts. The article in Thiof calls incense the "*arme fatale*" of women, who perfume their bedrooms to set an amorous

[38] Thiof is the slang Wolof term for a hunk and also the name for the pricey, prized white grouper fish.

mood so they can "*ferrer*" (Fr: "hook" as one would a fish) their men.[39] Men, the popular wisdom goes, smell incense and know instantly that their wives have something special in mind and this creates the kind of anticipation that makes everyone excited.

Hooking one's man through the seductive arts is a central preoccupation for Senegalese women. Of course the article in Thiof makes clear that the targeted men in question are the women's husbands. Hooking your own husband may seem redundant, but seducing your husband and keeping him happy in bed is a constant preoccupation and source of pride among women in Senegal. In Senegal where polygamy is common, a real anxiety exists among married women that neglecting your husband, or not working to earn his affections, will make him seek a second (or third or fourth) wife. Gaining a co-wife means the important loss of authority in your marriage and also a dwindling share in your husband's resources. As Senegalese sociologist Fatou Binetou Dial asserts, sexually satisfying your husband is as important a wifely duty as housework or childrearing (Dial 2008:81).

Senegalese women are proud of their mastery of the seductive arts. Maty, a 36-year old woman whose husband lives in Germany with his first wife, a German woman, told me smugly that she knows exactly why her husband decided to take a second wife in Senegal. His first wife couldn't take care of him properly when it came to sex. Though a Senegalese co-wife is generally seen as a threat to a marriage, a *toubab* co-wife doesn't have the tools or know the tricks to use to satisfy her man. "A *toubab*[40] woman," she

[39] The danger the article alludes to is physical danger from improper use of incense. Do not sleep in a smoky room all night, a physician warns readers, or you could develop respiratory problems.
[40] White, or European.

began, then catching herself, kindly amended her statement for my sake, "a *toubab* woman who has never been to Senegal, that is, she can't know anything" about pleasing a man.

An unmarried friend once told me that all Senegalese young women know the trick of the *tangal mente*. *Tangal mente* is a peppermint hard candy that is in every corner store in Senegal and often used as change when small coins are not available. This friend, who had very little sexual experience and certainly never put the following into practice herself, told me to keep the menthol candy in my mouth while performing oral sex on my fiancé for an unforgettable tingling sensation. When I laughed at this tip, she got very serious and said to me sternly, "Dinah, you have to keep things interesting. You have to try new things and show him new things." If not, she implied, I was in grave danger of losing him.

A wife's inability to keep her husband interested and satisfied in bed is a commonly suspected reason for men taking new wives. Dial notes that an obedient wife who keeps a good household but does not satisfy her husband in bed is at risk of losing her status in the home (2008: 81). Conversely, couples that fight constantly but stay together may well have a fantastic sex life, thereby keeping their marriage strong (*ibid*: 81). My *tangal mente* tutor asked if I ever seen a very ugly woman and wondered how she got her husband? "It's because of what she does in the bedroom," she informed me knowingly.

If a husband's sexual satisfaction is a crucial ingredient of a successful Senegalese marriage, the wife's sexual fulfillment is no less central. The sexual needs of women are taken very seriously in Senegal to the extent that a husband is expected to meet them as

one of his chief marital duties. The Senegalese maxim about a husband's duties is *sang, dekkal, dekkoo*—"to clothe, house, and sexually satisfy." These three responsibilities highlight the way that materiality, sexuality and love are intertwined in marriage in Senegal. In the next section, I examine these duties individually and how they articulate with transnational marriage.

Waaref: A Husband's Duties

Mame Fatou, 58 years old and mother of six, did not hesitate when I asked her about the duties of a husband. "*Jekker, waar na dundal. Waar na sang. Waar na dëkkal, waar na dëkkoo.*" "A husband, he must provide [financially], he must clothe, he must house, he must *dëkkoo*." I asked her to tell me what *dëkkoo* meant. She gave me a skeptical look, rightly suspecting that I knew perfectly well that this word referred to sexual satisfaction that a man must provide for his wife. She said, "*Yow tamit*, you don't know what *dëkkoo* means? I have to spell it out for you?" I nodded coyly and she said, "If you have a wife, don't you have to live [*dëkk*] with her? That's what *dëkkoo* is. You house her, you clothe her, you live with her *inside*. You know, Wolof is subtle, it has its places where it just leaves off."

Sang, dëkkal, dëkkoo, or some variation on the theme, is a common Wolof expression that sums up expectations for a good husband. Most women and men I interviewed used the expression as shorthand when I asked about a husband's role in a marriage. The tenets of "sang, dëkkal, dëkkoo" are even inscribed into Senegal's Code de la Famille, the civil document that governs familial rights and responsibilities (Dial 2008: 15). Historian Cheikh Anta Babou translates his version of the maxim thusly: "*dëkel,*

dundal, dëkoo… 'to shelter, feed, and sexually satisfy'" (2008: 11). Celebrated Senegalese singer Thione Seck, in his hit song "Wareef" or "Duties," sees the three husbandly duties as "*dundu gu doy*," support her adequately; "*cangay lu doy,"* clothe her adequately; and "*jamm ju sax,"* give her never-ending peace. "That," he assures his listeners, "is what marriage is all about, boys."

Sang: to Clothe

In the previous chapter, I discussed women's expectations for material provision from their husbands and the importance of clothing in representation. Elegant dress is a sign not only of a woman's wealth, but the strength of her social networks. Dressing well can also be a way that a woman represents her husband's economic success and capacity to provide.

This kind of representation can be especially important for migrant's wives, whose husbands are not present to advertise their own success. Many women I interviewed told me that when remittances were low, they made an extra effort—through loans, personal savings and credit—to dress elegantly to hide the fact that their husbands were struggling. By doing so, these women are displaying the characteristic of *sutura*, or discretion. *Sutura* is another extremely valued quality in a woman; a woman must be discrete—particularly about her family's financial problems. Keeping up appearances and not airing one's dirty laundry in public is continually emphasized as one of a wife's central duties. A woman who finds ways to dress well even when her husband is failing to send her the remittances to do so is keeping the fiscal difficulties of her family out of the public eye.

For migrants' wives, the pressure to live up to social expectations of the *jaabaru immigré* (wife of a migrant) is great and most of my interviewees discussed this pressure as a major source of stress in their lives. The tension between rendering the "service" of providing a display of wealth that reflects well upon your absent husband, making a respectable showing among peers, and mitigating the tremendous expectations that fall on a migrant's wife, can be difficult to navigate for many women. Migrant's wives are believed to have ample resources from husbands' remittances, so they are often called upon to give and to lend by family and friends. Refusing these requests by claiming to not have enough to give looks especially suspicious when wearing elegant new clothes. One woman who hadn't received support from her migrant husband for a number of months bragged that her ensemble for the Eïd holiday (*tabaski*) was unmatched—"I looked like a millionaire and I had nothing. I didn't even have the money to buy breakfast."

After telling me proudly and in great detail about the ornate garment she had ordered from her tailor for the upcoming holiday, Aby, who is 25 and lives in the lower class neighborhood of Grand Dakar, began to complain that her *njekke* (sisters-in-law) take all the pleasure out of dressing well. Certain that their brother must be sending the bulk his wealth from abroad to her and not to them, they comment obsessively—and passive-aggressively—on everything she wears. In their exaggerated cries of admiration, Aby hears their bitterness and jealousy about what they assume is her unfair share of their brother's resources.

Aby says her situation is particularly frustrating in light of the fact that her remittances from her husband have been steadily decreasing in the five years since they

married. Her husband, like many migrants in Italy, is suffering from the economic crisis that has characterized the past decade in that country. Aby has heard about the crisis from her brother as well and commiserates with her husband. "He explains, and you understand. But them [the *njekke*], they don't understand."

She said that for her looking good is deliberate goal. She wants to *sagou* (Wf. keep up appearances and hiding unpleasantness). "You may have problems, you're tired, you're troubled—but you dress well. And the others say, 'she is in peace,'" Aby explained. She is protecting not only her reputation, but that of her husband as well. Like many migrants' wives, she worries that letting herself go and not dressing well would be an indictment of her husband's manhood, his ability to provide for his family, and his success as a migrant.

Despite their insistence that they are dressing well in partnership with their husbands, many migrants complain that their wives are too focused on buying fancy clothing—particularly on *lu rey, lu bës* (something grand and new) for every social event. Though men acknowledge that clothing their wives is one of their core duties, most disagree about the parameters of adequate "clothing" allowances. They particularly express frustration that their non-migrant wives redirect remittances that are intended for other purposes towards their own adornment and for elaborate gift displays during ceremonies. For migrant husbands who are conducting several saving and remitting projects at once (as I outline further below and in chapter 5), a wife's preoccupation with elegant dress can seem frivolous and frustrating. While migrant men publicly complain of this use of remittances, Buggenhagen maintains, they secretly encourage it and contribute to its cause (2009: 192).

Party guests arriving for a baptism in the outskirts of Dakar (photo by author)

Dëkkal: to House

Buggenhagen makes reference to a perceived tension between husbands and wives concerning homebuilding in her 2012 book as well. Describing an interaction she had with a migrant's wife, she recounts:

"She then stopped, faced me, took my forearms, and said, "Many of the men neglect to send their wives even housekeeping money during their sojourns, and then they return home and invest all of their earnings in constructing villas so that other people can witness their success abroad" (2012: 98).

For the majority of the migrants' wives I spoke to, however, this divide seemed to be less of an opposition. While they did complain about insufficient housekeeping

money, homebuilding was a priority for these women as well as their husbands. As I show in the next chapter, women living with their in-laws for the most part are anxious to get out of that living situation. A husband's homebuilding can (though doesn't always) mean escaping the stressful, tense environment and constant scrutiny of living with a husband's female relatives.

Migrants' wives who lived in rented apartments felt the crunch of the monthly rent payments. Women whose husbands' earnings were unstable and whose remittances did not come with regular frequency (especially true for husbands who were in trade or otherwise self-employed) or fluctuated in their amount (true for almost every migrant), felt rent day was always just around the corner. In contrast, women who lived in homes that their husbands owned, separate from their husbands' natal family homes, seemed overall to bear their husbands' absence with more comfort. Several women who lived with in-laws or in rented housing reported encouraging their husbands to skip a visit to Senegal or two in order to use the saved money towards their shared project of home construction.

Though the migrant's wife in Buggenhagen's anecdote frames the goal of migrant homebuilding as "so that other people can witness their success abroad," the motivations for building a home in Senegal for migrants are much more complex. Certainly, establishing such an iconic physical representation of their success, masculinity and social maturity in the community is part of the motivations, but providing housing for a wife and children in one's absence is part of the fundamental duties of a husband. Building a home is also crucial to other transnational goals.

As I show in chapter 2, migrants generally desire to retire in Senegal or, better yet, to return once they have accumulated "enough" money. Returning is the ultimate dream and building a home to retire to is a necessary part of the process. One woman, 43 years old and mother of five children, whose husband has been barely scraping by in New York for ten years without visiting home, says that when her husband feels like giving up and moving back, she discourages him. Though she misses her husband terribly and has dealt with a number of tragedies on her own in his absence—including the drowning of their oldest son—she feels it would be foolish and irresponsible of him to return to their rented apartment in Dakar before building a home. "If you come," she tells him, "the home that you're coming to, you don't own… If you come what home will you move into? You'll come to move into someone else's home." Without job prospects in Senegal or savings, the wife reasoned, her husband would be coming home to rapidly accumulating bills (for rent, water, electricity, telephone) and no way to pay them. Better that he stay where he (from her non-migrant perspective) had more of a possibility of covering the family's expenses until he could begin to pay for the construction of a family home.

In Senegal, migrants and most non-migrants alike do not save up a lump sum for the entire project, but rather build homes piecemeal. First comes the acquisition of a *terrain*, a plot of land on which to build the house. Once this has land been purchased, it will be marked off until the owner can afford the first load of cement and workmen to begin making bricks. The construction will stop and start as the money for more materials and labor comes in and dry up. Half-finished villas punctuate the landscape of Dakar—

especially its outskirts—and the rural areas that represent the major sending regions of migrants.

In many cases, family members are deputized to oversee construction projects for their overseas relatives. This does not always go smoothly, as Fall et al. (2006) also discovered in their research. Many migrants and non-migrants alike told me firsthand or anecdotal stories of migrants coming home to find that no progress had been made on their homes and that all of the funds that they had sent towards the construction had been consumed by the family members in charge, repurposed to their own ends, and gone forever. One migrant in Italy told me of a friend of his who dutifully sent money to his brother year after year, while the non-migrant brother spent the money himself and sent photos of another person's villa in progress, passing it off as the migrant's own.

During an interview, Soda, a migrant's wife in the *banlieue*, pointed to the cracks and leaks in her ceiling and explained that her husband's older brother, who supervised the construction of the home while her husband was out of the country, had pocketed a good deal of the money her husband sent and paid only for shoddy construction. It's not even an old house, Soda said angrily, and you can see that it's falling apart. She was particularly worried about the safety of the house for her children during the rainy season. To fix all the problems in the house's foundation, she feared it would be necessary to raze the whole structure and reconstruct it, something that seemed unfeasible now that her husband had been out of work in the US for the previous nine months.

Soda's husband had been gainfully employed and legally resident in Italy, and was one of the few migrants who did feel that he had accumulated enough to return home to "*realiser dara*" (Fr./Wf.: make/achieve something). He felt he had enough put away

("*des millions,"* his wife indicated—the equivalent of thousands of dollars) to start a business in Senegal. In the two years that he was back in Senegal, he depleted his savings. The business failed; his wife attributed the failure of the business to corruption in Senegal and the fact that his friends and extended family made incessant demands upon his finances that they never repaid. After two years, discouraged, frustrated, and broke, he felt he had no choice but to go abroad again. Though he had built a home—what many migrants feel is the most important step towards a return—this wasn't enough to make coming home permanently a viable option. The expenses and the claims to his resources never faded and he could not keep up with the demands.

It is this relationship between long-term projects, like homebuilding and the daily and monthly expenses of life in Dakar that can cause friction between husbands and wives. Rather than women being uninterested in or opposed to their husband's goals of constructing a family home, most non-migrant wives simply have more immediate priorities that they feel their husbands do not adequately meet. This becomes clearer if one thinks about that second element of *sang, dëkkal, dëkkoo*— "to house"—as not simply meaning giving shelter, but also to keep a household running[41]. Including the *dépenses*, the Senegalese household spending that a husband is supposed to provide for his wife, helps illuminate one of the most critical ways in which wives of migrants feel their husbands are failing them.

Traditionally, even in non-migrant marriages, a husband gives his wife a lump sum (Fr: *dépenses*, Wf: *yor*) and she is expected to make ends meet in the household on

[41] This is the idea of *dundal*, that Mame Fatou in the opening of this chapter and Senegalese historian Cheikh Anta Babou include in their version of the husbandly duties—to support financially, to provide for.

that amount. A good wife is resourceful and discreet and she will do her best to stretch whatever amount exists and not make her husband feel that he has given too little. Whatever is leftover is for her to keep and use at her own discretion. Husbands and wives in transnational marriages, however, often clash over how the *dépenses* are used.

The most common complaint that wives of migrants gave about their situation was that remittances were simply not enough to keep up with the expenses of running a household. Though many women expressed that they knew that their husbands were doing the best they could, others felt their husbands were desperately out of touch with the realities of rising costs in Senegal. One woman, frustrated with her paltry remittances, said she was sure that her husband would be more generous with the *dépenses* if he lived here. He could go to the market himself, she reasoned, and could see with his own eyes what things cost.

It would hardly be surprising for men who have lived abroad for years to be out of touch, as the inflation and price hikes on staple items in the past decade have been staggering. Most Senegalese citizens have been struggling to stay afloat with the rapidly increasing costs of daily purchase items, such as oil, rice, bread and milk. Women can usually tell you with remarkable accuracy what the previous four or five prices for each of those items had been, when they changed and in what increments. Stretching a weekly budget to cover the necessary costs to feed a family with these increases becomes a process of intricate calculations, juggling, and resourcefulness. Because Senegalese homes are always open to unexpected guests who come for a meal, a night, or even longer visits without a warning, even the best-laid calculations can be instantly upset.

Migrant husbands suspect, often correctly, that funds requested for certain purposes aren't always spent accordingly. Buggenhagen found that many women used remittances towards their own credit unions and ritual associations, as well as to finance trade, buy clothing hair products, and give away in family ceremonies (2012: 141). Blanchard (2013) shows that a small number of migrants are so concerned about having greater control over the way their remittances are spent that they use a new website that lets them purchase foodstuffs in Senegal online and have them delivered to their loved ones rather that entrusting their loved ones with the purchases themselves.[42]

Wives argue that they simply must use the money at their disposal towards their own ends, particularly to maintain an image of respectability and generosity at social events and privately to their family. This includes, but is not limited to, spending money on clothing. Additionally, the women I interviewed spoke endlessly about the constant pressure they feel to host, to lend, and to give, due to their status as migrants' wives. Countless women said that the general assumptions about their access to wealth because of their husbands' residence abroad make both their own extended families and that of their husbands come to them with never-ending requests for assistance. Like the migrants themselves, wives complain that any refusal to give is seen as stinginess or disrespect, as family cannot imagine that a migrant's wife does not have unlimited access to foreign riches. Navigating these obligations is stressful and painful for the majority of migrants'

[42] See also the husband in chapter 6 who sends wire transfers to his friends and had them purchase and deliver groceries to her home and pick up and pay off her utility bills directly. Though this is an extreme example, it points to widespread suspicion and concern among migrants over how their remittances are consumed.

wives, most of whom are already struggling to make ends meet on remittances that fall far below their expectations.

While non-migrant wives struggle to keep up appearances and keep households running, their husbands must navigate their wives demands in addition to those of his and her family as I detail in the next chapter. Multiplying a wife's requests by the multiple family members who think of that particular migrant as a benefactor, the potential to disappoint everyone—including one's own wife and children—is great.

In the next section of this chapter I turn to the third element on the husband's list of duties—the requirement to sexually satisfy his wife. In transnational couples, where husbands live miles away and only visit periodically, the potential to disappoint one's wife in this arena is obviously especially great. After a discussion of the central role of sexuality in Senegalese marriage, I analyze what it means for couples to knowingly sacrifice this element of conjugality in favor of other marital priorities.

Dëkkoo: to Satisfy Sexually

Just as important as feeding and clothing a wife is a husband's obligation to meet his wife's erotic appetites. So important to a marriage is a man's ability to perform sexually, that sexual insufficiency is officially grounds for a woman to ask for divorce in Muslim law and in the Senegalese *Code de la Famille*.[43] This is not only because of the importance of procreation, Senegalese insist, but because of the importance of "*l'intimité du chambre*" for a happy marriage.

[43] Dial notes, however, that that when impotence is a cause for divorce, usually the couple claims another reason to protect reputation (2008: 120).

Women's sexuality is taken seriously in Senegal. Married Senegalese women, when among women, talk bawdily about their own sexual needs. There is no seeming incompatibility with being a pious Muslim women and enjoying and needing sex. Indeed, public displays of female eroticism are an integral part of ceremonial occasions. From *Sabar* to *Lembeul*, Senegalese women perform provacative dances for crowds of people, kicking their knees up high in the air so their *petit pagnes*, or underskirts—and occasionally what is under the underskirt—is on display for the eager crowd to glimpse (Castaldi 2006, Gittens 2008).

A sitting judge who has presided over many divorce and family law cases in the courthouse of Pikine, a *banlieue* of Dakar, noted that although women in cases of divorce from migrants usually complain in court about financial neglect, it is sexual neglect that is the more serious matter. A woman, he explained to me very solemnly across the desk in his judge's chambers, once she has experienced sex, cannot live without it in her fertile years. It does unnatural things to her body, and can result in serious psychological breakdowns. If she has never had sex, she won't know what she's missing and she won't be affected; but if she has, she will really suffer. It is a natural human phenomenon, he concluded.

Even unmarried women, when among other women, cite the importance of sex in married life. Once, in the privacy of a friends' bedroom among two other unmarried young ladies in their early thirties, I listened to the older one lecture the younger one about the importance of ascertaining whether her boyfriend was able to get an erection before she considered marrying him. It's important to see it and see it get hard before you get married, she instructed, or else you could wind up with an impotent husband. Or he

could be tiny, she continued gravely. So small you can't even feel it when he enters you. She told of a friend who married a man who was impotent. Their marriage only lasted two years before she asked for a divorce. This woman was in no way suggesting the younger friend have sex with her boyfriend—that should be reserved for marriage alone. But before marriage, it was important to assure her future happiness by getting a good look at what the man was bringing to the marital bed.

The necessity of sexual harmony between a husband and wife goes beyond simply pleasing each party. It is said that the mood of the sex act itself will have an impact on the kind of children that result. Happy sex will produce happy children, and Senegalese contend that Islam forbids sex between angry couples (Dial 2008: 81). Senegalese men and women alike emphasize the Islamic dictate that a husband and his wife should have no taboos in bed. No sexual act (except "sodomy") is forbidden between married couples (Dial 2008: 82). So important is the bedroom in marriage, that Islam stipulates that in a polygamous marriage, the number of nights spent with each wife must be equal. Polygamous families I knew kept close count of whose night it was and were careful not to skip turns.

There is an extensive Senegalese philosophy surrounding what happens in the marital bedroom and it has central importance to the success of a marriage and a family. The bedroom's centrality is not exclusively about sexuality; the bedroom also serves as the epicenter of emotional intimacy between a married couple and a crucial arena for companionship, dialogue, and deliberation. This fact is overlooked by some foreign researchers who have used homosociality in Senegal to argue that "the level of conjugal interaction is quite low" among Senegalese married couples (Findley 1997).

The centrality of time in the bedroom to a Senegalese marriage is not just about sex and reproduction but also about emotional intimacy. The bedroom is the space where couples can escape the crowded communal households in which they live and where their connection can grow. A husband and wife can use this time for mutual sharing, discussing intimate matters in quiet tones, and, as Beth Buggenhagen notes, wives often use this time when their husbands defenses are down to curry favor and make requests. This is where seduction strategies like binbins and insence come into play. "By preparing for the conjugal visit in this way, women wield their power of influence so that their spouses will be more willing to consider their requests for everything from an addition to the house to an increase in the housekeeping budget" (Buggenhagen 2012: 114). This kind of deployment of power is also what necessitates rules for equal time among co-wives. Where plural marriage is concerned, having the space and time to plead your case to the head of the household is crucial, as jockeying for power in a polygamous household can be particularly contentious.

Sang and Dëkkal, but no Dëkkoo?

If a mainstay of Senegalese marriage is that women *miin* (acclimate) and gradually fall in love with their husbands, Fatoumata, a 24 year-old mother of two, married for eight years to a migrant in Marseilles, points out that marriage to a migrant gives a woman no time to *miin*. "Marriage," she explained to me,

before it is neex *[Wf: enjoyable, fun, nice], you have to live with your husband. He has to get to know your* jukkoo *[Wf: character, manner], and you get to know his. That's what marriage is. I cannot tell you that I know my husband's* jukkoo*. I don't know his* jukkoo *and he doesn't know mine.*

Fatoumata's husband, who is much older than she ("he could have been my father," she put it), visits in two-month intervals every two to three years. In those months, his first wife who lives in his natal village towards the south of Senegal, travels north and they all live in Fatoumata's father's house, where Fatoumata and her daughters live permanently. These two-month visits, split between his two wives, aren't long enough for Fatoumata to fall in love with her husband. "As soon as you just start to *miin*," she says, he returns to France for another two to three years.

Though many women looked forward to their migrant husbands' returns home for vacation as a time of excitement, celebration, and romance, many others expressed profound ambivalence about these periods. A husband's return meant an adjustment to their daily schedule and an endless stream of visitors—usually with demands for souvenirs or cash and expecting hospitality that can strain the resources of the household. One woman even complained that her husband's return meant relinquishing command of the remote control. As I noted above, several women I interviewed encouraged their husbands not to make the trip home, calculating that they would be able put the resources they would save on gifts and plane tickets to better use on more important projects like homebuilding. This meant extending their husbands' absence for another year or more, but these women prioritized those other benefits over time in the company of their husbands.

One of the most obvious characteristics of transnational couples is that they miss out on regular bedroom time. As such, they lose out on not only the sexual intimacy that characterizes that part of a marriage, but the emotional intimacy as well. This can result in more strained or less open communication. As I've mentioned elsewhere, fully a third

of the women I spoke to could not name the cities in which their husbands live, and many had all but the scarcest details of their husbands' employment, living conditions, or daily lives (see Appendix B). This was a great source of the conflict related above—in which wives assume that their husbands are making money hand over fist and are simply not sharing it out of parsimony. Because they are so removed, and are not informed about the details of the husband's earning and his quality of life, they are unable to form more realistic expectations and find more compassion for their husbands.

These numbers of women who know little to nothing about how their husbands live abroad include couples that communicate everyday by telephone. Because of the cost of communication as well as the constraints placed on couples by time differences and lack of privacy, these conversations tend to be short and relatively perfunctory. There is none of the bedroom's slow and intimate setting to draw out a husbands confessions about money troubles or how hard things are.

Women for their part, when they are refused requests for additional remittances, think their husbands are out of touch with realities at home—or worse, simply cheap. As I mentioned before, one woman told of the frustration she had with running her household on her husband's paltry remittances. She mused that it would be different if he lived here; he could go to the market and see what things cost. It is unlikely that her husband would ever go to the market even if he lived at home—the market is an almost exclusively female space. What she may have meant was that each night before bed, in the quiet, incense-filled air of their bedroom, she could tell him what she spent on that days groceries, on school fees, etc, and he could hear her without reacting immediately,

could take it in and understand and perhaps help her figure out how to manage more easily.

In transnational couples, there is none of this gentle negotiation; rather, the phone calls about money are strained and frustrating for both parties. Men are exasperated by their wives' lack of understanding about their situations; wives are irritated by the refusals, which they take to be harsh or ungenerous. Each think the other is out of touch and greedy. Frustrations pile up without having an outlet, and the next time the two are in each other's presence to have an intimate face-to-face discussion could be years.

Women also have less control overall because of this lack of bedroom-time. Buggenhagen sees the bedroom negotiations as a hugely important locus of wifely power. "Although it is said that men are *boroom kër ga* (heads of household), women are *boroom neeg* (heads of the bedroom), which is to say that they influence men's decision making in matters private and public in the intimacy of their bedrooms. These bedroom secrets enable each party to save face in public by relegating contentious issues to private conjugal space" (2012: 114). Without this bedroom time, husbands and wives lose complicity of being on the same team.

Nene and Assane, a Senegalese couple who eventually reunited in Italy (as detailed in the final chapter), fell into this pattern, where Nene felt her husband's 150,000cfa (about $300) in monthly remittances from Italy were pitiful. Though she lived with her father and only made small contributions to the household expenses, she expected to be able to dress and give away money in a manner befitting a migrant's wife. She was frequently annoyed at her husband and thought of him as tight-fisted and stubborn. Assane, meanwhile, had trouble communicating to his wife that he was giving

her everything he could spare. It was only when Nene and Assane were reunited in Italy, when they had the time and privacy to discuss matters in depth without the charged tone of a hurried phone call that Nene began to understand and appreciate how much 150,000cfa was to her husband. They have grown much closer since her relocation, and finally feel as though they working towards the same goals—a complicity that was hard to find when they rarely shared a bedroom.

Some couples supplement their telephone time with tools like Skype, and in a few cases, this leads to more intimate, face-to-face encounters. Mariama, who lives in her mother-in-law's home in a village three hours north of her native Dakar, tries to recreate the intimate bedroom space via Skype. She closes the door to her bedroom once her kids are asleep, and she and her husband speak to one another, both lounging on their beds with their laptops, without any pressure to hurry their conversation before their credit runs out. For the two of them, this Skype time is integral to maintaining their bond. This dedication to creating an atmosphere through Skype is uncommon, however, and as I show in chapter 6, Skype and other communication technologies can be a wedge between a couple as much as a connector.

Family conflicts can lead to divorce much more easily when a husband and wife do not have the crucial time to define their relationship for themselves in the absence of family scrutiny. Chapter 5 illustrates how living with in-laws is often incredibly stressful and fraught for new wives. In a non-migrant marriage, the husband and wife depend on the privacy of the bedroom to talk through conflicts and reaffirm their bond. A wife can use the low-pressure environment of the bedroom to recount her fears or frustrations with her in-laws without her husband reacting sharply to defend his mother or sisters. In that

moment the two are partners; he will work to reassure her and urge her to be patient and forgiving to his family (to *muuñ*), and she will feel supported and encouraged by his compassion. Without these opportunities for release and regrouping, family conflicts can come to a boil and ruin a marriage that might otherwise have survived.

So many of the conflicts that plague transnational couples stem from the lack of intimacy that results from sacrificing bedroom time. Family pressures, grudges, miscommunication, and bad feelings can all simmer and build without opportunity for release. The bedroom is where a couple strengthens their connection, reinvigorates romantic feelings, and recommits to their married life. Without that crucial space for mutual sharing, understanding, compassion and companionship, marriages suffer.

"Modern" Love, Transnational Kinship

Senegalese marriage has long been characterized by conjugal intimacy, by mutual sharing and a deliberate cultivation of affection and intimacy in the home, both in the kitchen and in the bedroom. Today, many Senegalese men and women are opting for transnational marriage, eschewing that kind of relationship in favor of other priorities. For men, the demands of transnational reputation-building, duty to kin, and a desire to reach social adulthood in Senegal push them to sacrifice the benefits of a marriage that offers daily companionship, sexuality, and emotional intimacy. For women, similar concerns about status, reputation, and social support take precedence—leading them to prioritize the promise of *sang* and *dëkkal* over *dëkkoo.*

The phenomenon of transnational marriage suggests an economic and social climate that fails to offer marriages that operate on all of these registers at once.

Contemporary Senegal shapes and is shaped by a culture of transnationalism that pushes its citizens to look outside of Senegal's borders to live their lives. Senegalese men and women must stretch even the most intimate social relationship across national borders to make marriage tenable. This phenomenon also presents an opportunity to reexamine contemporary theories about a global shift towards companionate marriage. In this section, I use the case of Senegalese transnational marriages and other studies of transnational kinship, to make a possible counterpoint to these theories. I suggest that the Senegalese example illuminates how global labor restructuring and neoliberal globalization may discourage, rather than encourage, the prioritization of emotional closeness in marriage.

In their edited volume, Hirsch and Wardlow (2006) note a particular way in which young people the world over are breaking with tradition and causing friction with older generations. "Around the world," they note, "young people are talking about the importance of affective bonds in creating marital ties, deliberately positioning themselves in contrast to their parents and grandparents" (2006: 1). There has been, they posit, a global "shift to a companionate ideal" (2006: 14) in marriage, in which emotional closeness and sexual attachment becomes the primary motivation for and goal of marriage. This shift has entailed "a privileging of sentimental choice, and individualism over social obligation and complementary labor" (2006: 20).

This global movement hinges on the "the widespread emergence of the idea that marriage should be a partnership entered into by two individuals and sustained by their emotional and sexual attachment" (2006: 26). Whereas obligations to kin and economic considerations may have been the prime motivator for spouse selection and investment in

marriage in the past, according to the authors, now is the era of "prioritization of and greater personal investment in the marital bond over other relationships" (2006: 24).

The contributors give examples of this observed phenomenon in their various chapters on Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, Mexico, India, Singapore, Brazil, Pakistan and Hong Kong. In each of these locales, they document and argue for some iteration of a move towards mutual partner choice and aspirations to emotional intimacy. These shifts, they insist, are directly related to the respective changing political economies in each of these regions. Macro-level forces are shaping micro-level transformations in romantic and marital ideals.

The book's admirable and indispensible approach of analyzing conjugal relations through the lens of political economy inspires my own work's analytical method. Like the authors of Modern Love, and other similarly minded volumes that have emerged in recent years[44], I too seek to foreground local and global economic fluxes in my exploration of love, courtship and marriage in Dakar. My own analysis, as detailed above and in the earlier chapters, suggests that although economic and social change in Senegal has indeed played an influential role in shaping marital ideology, expectations, and practice it seems to be having the opposite impact than that observed and contended by the Modern Love paradigm.

Rather than moving away from a view of marriage as a kin-oriented project towards one based on romantic tropes and desire for emotional companionship, Senegalese marriages seem to be reversing the pattern. The preponderance of migrant marriages in which husbands and wives willingly live in separate countries for years at a

[44] e.g. Padilla et al.'s Love and Globalization, Cole and Thomas's Love in Africa.

time suggests that Senegalese couples are opting for other considerations in place of emotional closeness, romance, and especially, physical intimacy. Dwindling local opportunities for social mobility and economic security make looking outside of Senegal for the means to find success within Senegal—in the form employment or spouses—compelling and increasingly compulsory.

What's more, as I signaled above, conjugal intimacy has long been a traditional part of Senegalese marriage. Whereas the authors of Modern Love take for granted that companionate ideals are a product of globalization and a way that young people make claims to modernity, in Senegal people speak nostalgically of a time when companionate ideals were more emphasized and respected. That Senegalese couples are opting for transnational marriage signals not only the absence of a move towards companionate marriage, but a potential move away from companionate marriage.

This is not to say that love in marriage is declining in value as an ideal, rather that in practice making marriage tenable in insecure times involves pushing marriage to be further flexible and elastic (Foley and Hannaford, forthcoming). This move is similar to other settings where intimate relationships are being stretched across national borders to make them tenable. In addition to other studies of transnational marriage I have mentioned (Thai 2008, Ong 1999), a key site of research on this kind of transnational kinship has been the literature on transnational mothering.

Multiple studies have emerged in recent years on migrant women and mothers (c.f. Parreñas 2005, Barber 2008, Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila 1997, Lan 2006), with a particular focus on how their role as mother motivates and shapes their migration trajectory and how they enact the role of motherhood from abroad. For many of these

women—whether Filipina or Latina—the choice to migrant is tied up with their vision of responsible motherhood. These women seek through migration to earn the resources that would allow them to provide a better life for their children. From abroad, through remitting money and gifts and through transnational communication, they attempt to continue to nurture and care for their children.

Most note, however, that the migrant-parent experience is a decidedly ambivalent one for both the mothers and their children. Many migrant mothers find that their physical absence is hard on them and their children, that the dual burdens of caretaking at home (through remittance-sending, calling, and worrying) as well as abroad (as nannies and housekeepers as they are often employed) takes a tremendous toll on their energy, happiness and well-being. They find their efforts rewarded with resentment, frustration, and loneliness from their children.

Parreñas points to the important gendered inequalities that "shape the quality of intimacy in transnational family life" (2005: 318). Because of the ease of communication and wire bank transfers, women's migration out of the Philippines fails to upset existing gender norms. Migrant mothers' ability to continue to nurture and manage the household from abroad counteracts potential "gender reconstitutions" (2005: 334) their breadwinning might spur, as husbands rarely take up domestic duties in their stead.

Like Senegalese transnational couples, these transnational families are pushed by local poverty, a shrinking time-space compression, and a world-market that pushes their labor into global circulation to stretch and redefine what it means to relate to kin. Like the couples I discuss in this dissertation, the stretching is often uncomfortable and unpleasant, filled with stress, frustration, resentment and regret. These kinds of

relationships are equally reflective of what it means to show love and care in a modern world. They point to a world in which flexibility is required in the most intimate realms of life.

In the next chapter, I continue the discussion of transnational family life as I examine the amplified role that kin play in transnational marriage. Migrant husbands juggle their roles as sons, brothers, nephews, cousins and sometimes fathers as well and these competing roles often lead them into conflict with their loved ones. Migrants' wives also have difficulty navigating their lives as daughters- and sisters-in-law with their own desires for closeness with their partners. When bride and groom live in separate countries or even continents, kin relations become one of the most important prisms through which the marriage operates.

CHAPTER 5: Close Kin

Recent studies within anthropology bring a gendered analysis of kinship into studies of transnationalism (c.f. Pessar and Mahler 2003, Parreñas 2005, Levitt 2001, Ong 1999, Gasparetti and Hannaford 2009, Thai 2008), asking how familial and romantic relationships are being stretched across national boundaries. These studies take seriously the idea that caring often goes unacknowledged in migration theory as a motivator for migration (Ackers 2004: 390), leading us to misunderstand or ignore important migratory choices and arrangements. In this chapter, I hope to build upon these studies to show how duty, caring, family, and finances are inextricably linked in Senegalese transnational marriages. The evidence presented in this chapter reveals that kin play a central—if not *the* central—role in Senegalese long-distance marriages. The influence of family in any Senegalese marriage is key, but in long-distance marriages this influence is amplified to the extent that a family's satisfaction can overtake even the relationship between a husband and wife as the most important dynamic in a marriage.

This chapter is divided into three sections: in the first I discuss how Senegalese migrant men make choices that alternately prioritize their roles as husbands, sons, brothers, and sons-in-law from abroad. In performing these roles alternately and simultaneously, they often disappoint in all roles. In the second section, I explore the *seeyi* period—when women move in with their in-laws—in greater depth and show how transnational marriage can exacerbate existing tensions between a wife and her in-laws that are inherent in this living arrangement, in ways both physical and supernatural. In the third section, I turn to a discussion of plural transnational marriage and its myriad complications which play heavily into the success or failure of a marriage.

Providing for Someone Else's Daughter

In a focus group I held with a group of factory workers in Lecco, Italy on their transnational family relations, several of the men began mocking the only unmarried man in the group who was complaining about pressures from home. "You don't have any problems," they teased. "You don't have a wife; you have no problems at all."

When the laughter died down, one of the married men, Moussa, continued seriously. He said that it is not only your financial burden that increases when you marry, but the psychological pressure as well. Migrants struggle to save enough money to return to Senegal to visit. Collecting enough means not only covering transportation and living expenses for the trip, but also the funds for an impossible number of gifts and cash handouts expected from a migrant on his return. For migrants who struggle to live and remit on meager blue-collar salaries, saving for a month-long trip can take several years. "But if you've left a wife behind, for one, two, three years, because you can't go home," Moussa explained, "your family starts to say, 'hey, you have to come visit this *doomu jambor* [daughter of another/a stranger] who's in our house.'"

In all Senegalese marriages, husbands seek to prove to their wives' families that they are pious, hardworking men and good providers. In transnational marriage, migrant husbands seek approval and admiration from their in-laws even as they live and work miles away. The migrant men I spoke to had their in-laws and their own relatives very present in their calculations and plans for their wives.

A man's own family members represent him in not only negotiations for the marriage and in the exchange of kola nuts at the mosque on his wedding day, but also throughout the marriage. When conflicts arise, it is family members who are expected to make peace and settle the dispute. Thus a migrant's family also feels responsible towards his wife's family when a groom's absence begins to seem like neglect. "Her family starts to say, 'hey, what's he doing over there? He's been there a long time.'" Moussa made clear that as a migrant husband, you not only worry about your wife's feelings of abandonment, but about what that abandonment might mean for your reputation and that of your family in the eyes of her family and the community at large.

Such concerns led Badou, another migrant in the focus group in Lecco, to wait years to finally marry his intended. Before he left for Italy in 2000, he gave her family what is known as the *premiere cadeau*, or first gift in a marriage negotiation—the cash that symbolizes a deposit on a wife, reserving her for marriage. He said he was reluctant to officially marry her before he left Senegal because he could not predict what awaited him in Italy. He did not want to tie up[45], as he also put it, "someone else's daughter" before he knew what his situation would be. He moved in with his uncle who had been living in Italy for several years and, through his uncle's help, found work and got his paperwork in order rather quickly. Still, it took him until 2004 to save up enough money to make his first trip home to Senegal and finalize his marriage.

Their attempts to visit as frequently as possible lead some migrant men to prioritize saving for future visits home. While balancing the need to send remittances to a wife (or wives), family and friends, they must also take care to put some of their money

[45] The Wolof verb to marry, or *takk*, literally means to "tie up."

away for the future. This causes conflict with wives and family, as migrants struggle to meet outsized remittance expectations while also saving for periodic returns.

Intimate Remittances

Feminist scholarship on transnational migration shows that remittances act as a medium for playing out gendered and familial roles, and are a key instrument of "transnational family maintenance" (Parreñas 2005: 324). By sending money home to their wives, Senegalese migrant husbands are fulfilling their gendered duty as providers. As I mention in the previous chapter, a Senegalese husband must provide for, or *yor*, his wife. Even when a woman works and makes a salary of her own, it remains the husband's duty to shoulder the household expenses. "For us," Seydou, a Senegalese factory worker in Lake Como explained, "even if your wife is a minister of parliament, you have to provide for her. She can contribute if she wants, but if she refuses, you have to provide for her, clothe her, take care of the kids, give her *dépenses*." Though women increasingly do contribute money of their own to the maintenance of the household, most see this as their choice, not an imperative, and frame this participation as helping their husbands rather than doing their share.

Many wives complain that the realities of marriage to a migrant do not live up to their expectations of the flow of remittances. One migrant's wife I interviewed in 2010 expressed her disappointment about her husband's remittances and framed the issue as migrants generally skirting their responsibilities to provide:

Migrants, they want it too easy. They don't want you have money. You know, he calls and says "it's hard here, there's no money here," then I tell him, "Hey you, you just love your money too much." He says, "Oh, but there are problems here." So I talk and talk until he realizes I have bigger problems! And then he gives me that money.

Seydou, who I interviewed in 2011, explains how hard it is to get the message across to those at home about scarcity abroad. "Sometimes when you try to tell people that what you make per month isn't that much they think, this guy is just trying to keep things from us."

The demands from other relatives are multiple and migrants struggle to not to disappoint them or develop a reputation as a selfish person who has forgotten those at home. Because few non-migrants understand how (and how little) money is made overseas, they tend not to see small gestures of generosity from abroad as meaningful. Seydou explained that when he does want to make a large gesture for a special relative at home, he finds himself hard-pressed to do so.

Take your uncle for example. You want to make a big gesture for him—not 5000 or 10,000 cfa because in Senegal today, 10,000 doesn't buy you anything[46]*-- maybe two days of household expenses, or three. If you give him the expenses for a whole month it's much better. But you can't do that, because you have to give to your mom, dad, etc. Your niece wants school supplies, you say yes. And sometimes you send and it's not enough, because "school supplies" also now means new clothes, shoes, notebooks, books, etc.*

[46] 10,000cfa is equivalent to about 20USD.

Migrants feel pulled in many directions by the demands from home. Seydou says that migrants get themselves into trouble because "saying no isn't pleasant." In their efforts to perform acts of caring and provide for those at home, they end up agreeing to more than they can possibly accomplish on meager factory salaries or money made from trade. "Eventually, you're going to say 'yes, yes, yes' and you just can't," Seydou explains, "So sooner or later it's like you're just lying. Even though that's not your intention."

Bruce Whitehouse (2012) discusses how a key motivator for migration is the desire to accumulate far from the eyes of relatives and dependents. As Whitehouse puts it, the "entrepreneurial ethic" clashes with the "dutiful kin ethic" (p79-81) in a communal society, and individuals are unable to advance their earning projects because they are constantly distributing the little capital they can accumulate. As a migrant, they foresee having a better chance of accumulating privately and selectively disbursing the amount of their choice.

While this may be possible for the West African migrants of Whitehouse's study who have migrated within Africa, specifically to Brazzaville, Senegalese migrants in Europe and the United States contend with increased pressure to distribute resources at a rate that would be unthinkable for non-migrants. Because the West is associated with interminable wealth, migrants face pressure to remit even before they begin earning. In the case of migrants to Europe and the United States, migration paradoxically decreases their ability to meet the expectations of their "dutiful kin ethic" because the expectations inflate astronomically as soon as they become *immigrés*.

Wives of migrants express frustration that the remittances they receive from abroad do not meet their needs. The ILO estimates that Senegalese non-migrants use 75% of remittances for everyday consumption (IRIN 2012). Like other non-migrant Senegalese, wives of migrants have high expectations for the possibilities of wealth accumulation overseas, and thus interpret a failure to remit as an act of selfishness and a failure to care on the part of their husbands rather than a lack of resources. Yet husbands are involved in projects of caring for wives as well as many others. Indeed, their acts of caring as sons and brothers frequently compel migrants to make choices that explicitly go against the wishes and demands of their wives.

In addition to providing for their wives, men must fulfill their masculine duty to provide for their parents' as well. This joins becoming a head of a household (*borom keur)* as a major motivation for migrants to marry. Migrants and non-migrant, men and women aspire to support their parents financially in their old age. In addition to sending money and building homes for mothers, sons sometimes marry as a way to care for and support their mothers. Though the practice of *seeyi*—where a new wife moves in with her in-laws—is declining in some circles, in transnational marriages it remains commonplace. Of 51 women I interviewed in 2010-2011 in Senegal, 20 of them were living with in-laws at that time, and many others had previously lived in the home of their mothers-in-law (see Appendix B). Migrant husbands may prefer to have their wives move in with their mothers for several reasons—to provide someone to care for and tend to their mother, to assert some kind of control over her mobility (see chapter 6), but also to consolidate the recipients of their remittances into one household rather than paying the expenses of multiple homes.

Mothers of migrants have more to gain from a daughter-in-law living with them than having company, a young woman to cook and clean, and do her bidding. With a daughter-in-law living in their home, a migrant's family retains some confidence that remittances will continue to flow to their household. A mother living with her daughter-in-law has reasonable grounds to argue that her son send the daily *dépenses* (Fr: funds for household expenses that a husband must provide for his wife) directly to her, as the young girl will be provided for in her household. Alternatively, a mother (and a migrant's unmarried sisters) can be assured a front row seat to scrutinize when her daughter-in-law receives remittances and what she does with them, and thereby recognize when the mother is getting comparatively short shrift from her son.

As we see in the next section, who a migrant appoints as the direct recipient of remittances—who he sends sums of money to—can be an important factor in relations between transnational couples and their families. In cases where a husband sends household funds to his mother-in-law and she disburses a share to her daughter-in-law, this can obviously have unfortunate consequences for the daughter-in-law.

Seeyi

As I have mentioned in previous chapters, Senegalese society is patrilocal— a husband and wife living together in a mother-in-law's home is an important stage of married life (Poiret 1996). Though many couples only live with the husband's family for a temporary period, and others not at all, *seeyi*—the practice of living with your in-laws—is dreaded by and expected of most married women at some point in their marriage. In

this *seeyi* period, which can last anywhere from months to the duration of the marriage, the bride must demonstrate that she is virtuous, obedient, modest and pious.

The *seeyi* period is extremely grueling for young wives. Not only must they perform domestic labor, be respectful at all times and do their mother-in-law's bidding, but they are under constant scrutiny by everyone in the household. If a wife feels that her in-laws are mistreating her, there is little point in complaining to her own family. In most cases they simply will not sympathize—*seeyi* is not meant to be easy, and her role is to *muuñ* (to be patient, uncomplaining, and stoic) and to please her in-laws no matter the personal cost (see Gueye 2010: 81). Differences in family philosophies about how households are to be run come into relief during this period and the bride's approaches to housework and childrearing are often seen as errant and in need of correction. Brides cook and clean for the family, and are criticized for the amount of pepper they put in the food, the technique or the speed at which they do laundry by hand, their habits of talking too much or too little.

Penda, a 33 year old migrant's wife, lives with her mother-in-law, who she describes as *compliquée* (difficult). Penda's husband sends his remittances from Spain directly to his mother with the idea that his mother will share with his wife. Yet Penda insists that her mother-in-law only gives her a small amount. "His mother takes a little and—" [she makes a gesture of pinching off a piece and throwing it]. "A tiny bit she gives to me." Though Penda does not know how much her husband sends to his mother, she is certain it is much more than the trivial amount she receives.

When asked how her husbands responds to her complaints, she replies she would never tell him because she is certain he would simply defend his mother. She tells me

knowingly that she thinks they have "*dem serigne di ma ligeey"* (gone to a *serigne* or religious healer to cast a spell) to make her husband fall out of love with her. She complains she hasn't heard from her husband directly in a while. "*Giig na ma woo."* (Wf: He hasn't called me in a long time.) For Penda, his lack of sending money to her directly, his lack of calling, all amount to the same thing—he must have stopped loving her. To send remittances is—like calling—an act of caring. She is certain it took a spell from his mother and sisters to make him lose motivation to call and to care.

This suspicion of supernatural interference in a relationship is not unusual among Senegalese transnational couples. Though wives of non-migrants who run into conflicts with their husbands—or who have difficulty conceiving—also fear that some outside party has attempted to *ligeey* (Wf: lit. work, fig. cast spells) their relationship, in transnational marriages this fear is even more common. A wife in a transnational marriages lacks the traditional means of winning favor with her husband by cooking for him (see Gueye 2010: 81 on the particular connection between food preparation and marital love) and spending the night with him (see the previous chapter), nor does she have opportunities to reaffirm her place in his heart through these means. Thus transnational wives feel themselves particularly vulnerable to meddling from others jealous of her relationship with her husband, both through words and through what Peter Geschiere has called the "dark side of kinship"—witchcraft (1997: 212).

In cases where the wife is the direct recipient of remittances, the dynamics of a household can still be fraught with suspicion and ill will. Traditionally, a husband supplies his wife with a lump sum for her *dépenses* and she uses her discretion to divide

the sum among the various demands for food, cleaning supplies, and other housekeeping expenditures. She may make additional requests from her husband, but a wife is valued for her ability to stretch whatever sum she is given. Because Senegalese households are crowded and always open to unexpected guests who come for a meal, a night, or even longer visits without a warning, even the best-laid calculations can be instantly upset. By managing the household budget and covering for any shortfalls in her husband's donations, a wife exhibits not only resourcefulness, but *sutura* (discretion). *Sutura* is extremely valued quality in a woman; a woman must be discrete particularly about her family's financial problems. Keeping up appearances and not making family difficulties visible to outsiders is continually emphasized as a wife's central duty.

Adja's husband sends her remittances from Venice and leaves it to her to run the household in which she lives with his mother and sisters, as well as the couple's two children. Adja struggles to make ends meet with the remittances she received, while at the same time playing the role of a dutiful daughter-in-law. On the first day I came to visit Adja at home, we ate separately from her in-laws, and Adja said she never eats with them. She apologized repeatedly for the small amount of fish in our plate of *ceebu jën,*[47] and seemed embarrassed that she couldn't offer me more. Hospitality (*teranga)* is one of the central Senegalese virtues, and guests are usually treated with extreme generosity. Adja hadn't expected my visit that day and on a normal day in her home, the largest pieces of good quality fish always went to her in-laws.

Adja recounted a day when her husband called her from Italy to say that his mother would like her to cook chicken more often. Though Adja was just down the hall,

47 *Ceebu jën* is Senegal's national dish, composed of rice and fish.

her mother-in-law had called her son in Italy to complain about not being fed properly[48]. Adja, embarrassed and annoyed, told her husband that she was already stretching the budget in order to feed everyone in the house, but promised she would try to feed her mother-in-law more chicken.

On another occasion when we were out of the house and safely out of earshot of her in-laws, Adja told me that she thinks her sisters-in-law (*njekke)* have also tried to practice black magic on her. She believes that her sisters-in-law have gone to a *serigne* and bought some kind of potion or amulet designed to poison Adja's relationship with their brother. Once Adja had left the house on an errand and returned immediately because she had forgotten something. She saw her sister-in-law burying something at the front door of the house. Adja immediately assumed this was some kind of *maraboutage* aimed at her. She waited until the next time that she was alone in the house and uncovered a *tere*, or talisman, at the doorstep. She didn't dare dig it up herself, but turned to the only guaranteed substance known to break a *tere* or a spell—urine. She peed into a bucket then poured the urine over the front stoop of the house.

Adja recounted to me on another day that she couldn't find the keys to her bedroom for several hours. When she finally found them again in a location she had previously checked, she was suspicious that one of her *njekke* had taken the keys and then returned them. She suspected the *njekke* had done so to hide a *tere* or sprinkle an enchanted powder in her locked bedroom. She searched the room but could not find any kind of talisman. For safety's sake, she once again peed into a bucket later in the day,

[48] Chicken is more expensive than other proteins in Senegal and considered a treat.

filled it up with water and soap, and washed her whole bedroom with the mixture, just in case.

Peter Geschiere has said of witchcraft that it represents the "dark side of kinship: it is the frightening realization that there is jealousy and therefore aggression within the family, where there should only be trust and solidarity" (1997: 11). In cases like that of Adja, it arises in the most intimate of places—the home—making daily life a negotiation of threat and danger. Adja's fears and suspicion of witchcraft from her in-laws reveals the atmosphere of resource competition and jealousy in her home, and reflects how in-law competition and distrust can be heightened in cases of transnational marriage.

About five months after Adja told me this second story, her husband announced that he was taking a second wife. Though Senegalese Muslim women will usually support the idea of polygamy as a part of Islam, most fear and dread their addition of a co-wife to their household. Not only does this feel like a reproach and a reflection on your quality as a wife, but it also has material consequences, as it reduces your material resources. Though Adja was already struggling to run the household and feed her children and in-laws on the funds that her husband sent, he was now taking on another recipient of his remittances. Furthermore, as a wedding gift, in addition to a fancy cell phone and other gifts, her husband was giving his second wife a million and a half francs (roughly $3000US). To learn that her husband had been saving so much money for another woman, a sum that could have been going towards Adja's considerable household expenses, was devastating for Adja. For the first time in her marriage, she questioned her husband's affection for her.

Adja was convinced her sisters- and mother-in-law had persuaded her husband to take a second wife, whether through their conversations with him or through the kinds of black magic she had discovered. She couldn't believe that he would do this to her on his own, as she had been convinced of her husband's love and of their happy marriage. Adja was sure that when her new co-wife moved in things would get harder for her in the house, as her in-laws would surely champion second wife and convince her husband to favor her more. Adja was sure that her mother- and sisters-in-law were doing all this simply to be spiteful, but they may also have felt that by leveraging their influence over the second wife, they would have greater access to the way that their son/brother's remittances were used. Two co-wives competing for their in-laws' favor were likely to redouble their efforts to please their in-laws and give them costly gifts (Gueye 2010: 81).

Long-distance husbands, close quarters in-laws

Because the husband's family plays such a crucial role in any Senegalese marriage, the *seeyi* experience of living with in-laws is intense for the bride in non-migrant marriages as well as long-distance marriages. In several critical ways, however, the experience of *seeyi* for a migrant's wife is very different.

Moving from one's childhood home into a household of strangers with the sole mission of pleasing them is not an easy feat. Usually a husband is a wife's biggest, or even only, ally in the home. With the husband present to defend, console, and reassure his wife that she is wanted in the home, she can find some respite from her daily frustrations with her new family. Husbands often play the role of peacemaker between

their wives and families, confronting sisters when they go too far, telling mothers what they need to hear to find a fondness for their new daughters-in-law. The mere presence of the husband in the home can stop some conflicts before they begin. Furthermore, the husband is present to observe and appreciate the wife's efforts to *muuñ* (Wf: endure, be patient) and confirm that her exertions are not in vain.

Wives of migrants lose out on this all-important ally. Without husbands present in their new homes, they are forced to contend with their new families alone, often losing sight of why they are there. As one migrant's wife, now divorced after a difficult multi-year *seeyi* experience, put it, "the one I was *muuñ*-ing for wasn't there to see it."

It is not uncommon for a migrant to insist that his wife *seeyi* with his family in his absence. Migrant husbands might prefer that their wives move into their mother's homes upon marriage for several reasons, including, as I mention above, providing companionship and caretaking for their mothers, and consolidating the recipients of their remittances into one household. Another reason that men may prefer to have their wives *seeyi* at their mother's home even in their absence is that a man can trust that his wife will be well supervised in his mother's home. He can be assured that she will not be allowed to come and go as she pleases, but will be under the strict surveillance of his mother. For many migrant men, fear of infidelity in their absence is strong (see chapter 5), and moving a wife into their mother's home can seem like an ideal way for the men to minimize this anxiety.

Many migrants find, however, that unhappy *seeyi* situations create additional stress for them. One migrant living outside of Venice was repeatedly pulled into his

mother's disputes with his wife. Rather than discuss her dissatisfaction with her daughter-in-law directly, his mother would call her son in Italy to complain about how his wife was not living up to her expectations. He had to call his wife to relay his mother's complaints, making the terse and unpleasant calls between the short breaks in his grueling factory schedule, and driving a wedge between himself and his wife.

As pleasing their mothers is often a major reason that migrants marry women in Senegal in the first place, a mother's satisfaction with her new daughter-in-law is extremely important. One Senegalese hotel clerk that I interviewed in Milan in 2011 explained to me that he had to divorce his wife because she was coming into conflicts with his mother. Though he himself had no other complaints about his wife, his mother's dissatisfaction was grounds for him to divorce. "You know how it is in Senegal," he said to me with some resignation, "the mother is *numero uno*."

Without a husband present to mediate in quarrels between his wife and his family, some domestic disputes spin out of control. One migrant's wife showed me huge scratch marks on her cheek from where her mother-in-law had torn at her face. She told me her mother-in-law, with whom she lives, curses at her constantly and if she dares to respond her mother-in-law will beat her. "She says, 'you're here to *seeyi*, so close your mouth when I talk,'" the woman recounted, imitating her mother-in-law's deep voice and wagging finger. I asked if she ever told her husband about her treatment, but the woman replied that her husband would never believe her. Afraid that he would side with his mother and divorce her, as the hotel clerk above divorced his wife, she keeps quiet. She told me she doesn't even bother to tell her own family, for she knows that they will tell her that it is her job as a wife to *muuñ*, *masla*, and suffer her lot in humble silence. *Masla*

is another important quality in a woman and especially a wife. *Masla* entails the ability to smooth over conflicts, to not be provoked into stoking the flames of a fight, and keeping family disputes under wraps. This abused migrant's wife fears that if her husband divorced her for reporting what was happening to her in his absence, her own family would not accept her back into their home, as she would have failed her obligation as a wife.

Physical violence against migrants' wives by their mothers-in-law is not common, but not extraordinary. Adja—whose mother-in-law had made transnational requests for chicken—faced not only the threat of *maraboutage* from her *njekke* (sisters-in-law) but physical intimidation as well. She recounted to me story of how one of her *njekke,* Fatou, had once hit her while family was together in front of the television watching a Senegalese wrestling match.[49] Adja and Fatou were rooting for opposing wrestlers, tensions grew as they each cheered on their wrestler and Fatou became so enraged that she struck Adja across the face with a great deal of force. Fatou, a former professional basketball player, was physically imposing and towered over the diminutive Adja. The results of that blow were still visible months later when Adja told me the story; she had trouble fully opening her left eye.

Wujju: **Competition Between Co-Wives**

49 Senegalese wrestling, *la lutte senegalaise* as it is know in French, or *lamb* in Wolof, is a bit like sumo wrestling; it has become increasingly popular in recent years and the various wrestlers are big celebrities. Most Senegalese have a favorite wrestler whom they root for passionately.

Adja had further reason to fear the presence of a new wife in her home: jealousy between co-wives can be intense and even dangerous. Stories of co-wife competition, mistrust, and violence abound in Senegal. Not all co-wives (Wf: *wujj*) live in the same home, but even when they do not, their competition can have an important impact on a woman's life. In cases where they do live together, married life is a daily negotiation of this relationship.

Polygyny is sanctioned by the Senegalese interpretation of Islam as well as by Senegalese law, and the practice cuts across the social classes in Senegal (Antoine et al. 1995). It is a sign of wealth and status to have multiple wives, and this is true for university professors, ministers of parliament, farmers, and even tailors. Unlike in other Muslim contexts, in Senegal there is no clear sign that the practice is on the decline.[50] In fact, there are several reasons why polygamy is strategically advantageous for migrants, thus migration may be making the practice more common. Though it may seem counter-intuitive that a man who is home so rarely should need multiple wives, being polygamous is a way of earning social capital and building a reputation as a successful Senegalese man. Roughly a third of my female interviewees were part of polygamous marriages (see Appendix B).

There are several ways that migrants practice transnational polygamy. Some migrants have wives in the host country (either Senegalese of host country nationals) as

[50] It is hard to get clear numbers on polygamy as not all marriages are recorded at city hall; many, especially second, third, and fourth marriages, are contracted only in the mosque and thus not recorded publicly. Divorces are common in polygamous marriage and are also not always performed legally, so a man who is recorded as marrying multiple wives is not necessarily polygamous. Estimates from the 2002 Senegal Census put the figure at about a quarter of marriages.

well as at home in Senegal. Others have multiple wives in Senegal, who may or may not cohabitate. There is generally less conflict when the wives do not cohabitate. It is not unusual for a migrant man to have one wife in the rural area of his origin, perhaps a relative, and a wife in Dakar whom he met and wooed on a visit home.

When co-wives cohabitate while their husband is abroad, however, tensions can mount. There are a few particularities of plural marriages with migrants that can make them more volatile than plural marriages when the husband lives with his wives. They are similar to the difficulties between in-laws in the absence of migrant husbands. Firstly, the migrant himself is not there to diffuse conflicts. This can result in (occasionally extreme) uses of violence or *maraboutage*, as we will see below. One migrant's wife, in a monogamous marriage for seventeen years, described her observation of how in polygamous transnational marriages minor disputes such as a fight over a remote control can escalate to the point of one co-wife stabbing the other, "parce que seen jekker nekkul fa" [Fr./Wf. Because their husband isn't there]. "It's not safe," she continued, "it's anarchy."

As between in-laws in transnational marriages, remittances raise the stakes of competition between *wujju*. In some cases, migrant husbands will send remittances in a lump sum to one wife to be distributed between his wives, thus avoiding paying expensive transferring fees multiple times. This situation may be necessary because only one wife is literate and can fill out the necessary Western Union paperwork, or may simply be a way to avoid paying processing fees on two transfers instead of one. When one woman distributes to the other, the power dynamic is generally unbalanced and accusations and suspicions of foul play are almost inevitable.

Khadija was already having problems with her co-wife when her husband switched from sending each wife her remittances separately to sending them in one wire transfer. Khadija lived with her husband's first wife and some of her husbands' relatives in a rural town a few hours north of her home in Dakar. When her husband stopped sending money to her directly, and started sending it all to his first wife, an already tense relationship between co-wives took a turn for the worse.

The first wife would not give Khadija her half directly. Rather, she would hold on to the entire sum remitted, and Khadija would have to go to her co-wife to ask for money for her daily household expenses, much as a wife would do to her husband. "It was as though I was married to my co-wife!" Khadija complained. Whenever she fell ill, Khadija would travel back to her own mother's house in Dakar, preferring to have her mother pay for prescriptions and doctor's visits rather than go through the humiliating process of disclosing all of her personal needs to this other woman and arguing with her for the money that she felt she was owed. As a married woman, particularly a migrant's wife, Khadija found having to depend on her mother financially for personal expenses like healthcare to be demeaning.

In addition to the money troubles, other aspects of her life with her husband's first wife were tense and unpleasant. Khadija felt that her co-wife was trying to sabotage her marriage. Sometimes when her husband would call, Khadija 's co-wife would lie and say that Khadija was not home, hoping to give her husband the impression that Khadija was often out of the house and up to no good. Khadija tried to put up with her frustration, knowing that her family and society at large expected her to *muuñ.* This was *seeyi*; it was supposed to be difficult, and her duty was to endure it passively and patiently.

One day, however, she went to visit a fortune-teller who foresaw a barren future for Khadija if she stayed in her husband's home. The fortune-teller said that her husband's first wife had planted a *tere* (Wf: talisman) in the home to prevent Khadija from having more children. Khadija was already having problems with her husband, and this news broke her resolve to stay in the marriage. She and her son moved back in with her mother in Dakar and eventually, after a long and painful process, her husband granted her a divorce. Khadija told me with some satisfaction that her ex-husband has since remarried and that new marriage may also be headed towards divorce because of problems between the new wife and the first wife. She is not surprised.

Though Khadija was also having problems with her husband, it was ultimately her frustration with her co-wife and her fears of sorcery from the latter, that pushed her to leave her marriage. Just as problems with in-laws can supersede problems between husbands and wives themselves, so too can problems with co-wives lead to divorce even in the absolute absence of conflicts between the couple. Because it is the in-laws themselves, and/or the co-wives, with whom the wife lives on a daily basis, problems with these women are in some ways more important to a woman's quality of life than disputes with a husband who lives far away and visits infrequently. Like the hotel clerk who divorced his wife because of his mother's disapproval, wives may not feel much loyalty to distant husbands once their household disputes become unbearable.

Among the migrants' wives I interviewed, Codou was one of the few who seemed satisfied with the way remittances were handled in her family. Codou's husband sent his remittances from his work in trade in Dubai directly to Codou and it was she who distributed the amount to her mother-in-law, unmarried sister-in-law, and co-wife. As the

only one among them with a state-issued identity card, it was Codou who picked up the money at Western Union and portioned it out to the others. None of the other women in the house had any formal education, so she was left to manage all the family finances and this suited her fine. Not only was Codou able to wield a certain amount of power over the other women in the household, she was assured of the justice of her share of the remittances by being in no doubt of the amounts given to others. There were no conflicts regarding remittances in her household, she claimed, though I was not able to confirm this with her co-wife, who may well have told a different story.

***

Even in cases when relationships between in-laws are harmonious, the importance and centrality of this relationship is still apparent. Fanta, an eighteen year-old living with her own mother in one of Dakar's most historic working class neighborhoods, the Medina, married her husband when she was only 14 years old and soon gave birth to a daughter. Shortly after she gave birth, her husband married a French woman living in Dakar, and together he and his French wife moved to France. After his move to France, Fanta's husband abandoned her. He never called or sent remittances to support Fanta or their child. Fanta suspects his French wife never knew that her husband had a first wife or a child, nor would she have married him if she had, and thus he had to cut Fanta out of his life completely to hold onto his second wife.

Fanta works at Medina's fish market, cleaning and selling fish, and barely earning enough money to live on. Fanta is worn out and exhausted, and appears much older than her eighteen years. Until she divorces, she has no hope of finding another provider for her

and her child. When I asked if she had plans to divorce, Fanta sighed, and said she did not. She had resolved to stay in the marriage out of a sense of affection and love for her mother-in-law. Though she doesn't live with her mother-in-law, she visits her everyday, cares for her like a mother, and makes sure the woman plays an active role in her granddaughter's life. "She loves me so much that I know that I can't do anything about this marriage," Fanta explained with resignation.

Once again, kin ties, and not the relationship with a husband, were the determining factor of the tolerability of a long-distance marriage. Though her husband offered her neither financial support, emotional intimacy, or even simple contact, Fanta's relationship with her mother-in-law made her marriage what it was. Her husband came second in importance in her married life to the influence of his family, who constituted her daily life, her identity as a wife, and the lived reality of her marriage.

***

Roger Ballard, who has written about the context of Punjabi migration and long-distance marriage, has argued that difficulties in transnational marriages are "better understood as the outcome of the micro-politics of interpersonal relationships within the spouses' immediate kinship networks than of the phenomenon of transnational marriage per se" (2004: 1). I agree with Ballard to a certain extent, but I believe that he fails to recognize the way that transnational marriage per se can intensify and alter the micro-politics of kin networks. The cases above do not suggest radically different kinds of family tensions from those that exist within non-migrant marriages. *Maraboutage*, the

general strenuousness of experiencing a *seeyi*, and co-wife competition all feature in stories of marriages between non-migrants as well. The difference, as I have shown, however, is one of scale.

Kin relations far outweigh conjugal ties in their importance for long-distance relationships. In long-distance marriages, kin relations are *the* central paradigm determining the success or failure of a long-distance marriage. When a husband and wife live in separate countries, families have an unbridled influence on all aspects of the marriage from the choice of a spouse, to the daily experience of a marriage, to, in some cases, its eventual dissolution. Family relationships supersede the conjugal bond as the fundamental unit in a long-distance marriage. The fact that Senegalese men and women are increasingly opting for these marriages, which locate the central meaning of a marriage outside the relationship between husband and wife or being "in love", is contingent upon the phenomenon of transnational marriage.

This finding again troubles the expectation for modern marriage as presented in Hirsch and Wardlow's Modern Love. The authors argue that whereas obligations to kin may have been of central import to marriage in the past, now is the era of "prioritization of and greater personal investment in the marital bond over other relationships" (2006: 24). Marriage is becoming "a form of kinship in which the conjugal partnership is privileged over other family ties" (2006: 4), they insist. Yet in this altogether modern form of marriage in Senegal, transnational marriage, we find that other kin relations can take precedence over the conjugal bond at every stage of the marriage, from the decision to marry to the decision to divorce.

In the following chapter, I discuss one of the ways that transnational couples

attempt to keep their connection alive—telecommunication. Though new advances in communication technology—such as voice-over-internet services and email—facilitate the ability of transnational spouses to be in contact frequently and cheaply, these technologies do not necessarily lead to increased emotional closeness and intimacy. As I show through case studies, these technologies can create barriers to conjugal intimacy and breed frustration and distrust.

CHAPTER 6: Technologies of Intimate Surveillance

Aminata spoke openly and easily about her divorce. We sat in the living room of her grandparents' home in a bustling, lower class neighborhood of Dakar, Senegal's capital. The house was full of relatives and visitors coming to celebrate the send-off of her grandmother who was departing on a pilgrimage to Mecca. Our conversation was punctuated by short exchanges of greetings with the various visitors, but Aminata never lost her place in her story of frustration and disappointment with her migrant ex-husband.

The remittances her husband sent from Germany were never enough, Aminata complained. 75,000 fCFA (about $150) a month was insufficient to meet her children's basic needs, so Aminata took up work buying and reselling merchandise to make ends meet. Her frequent absences from home to pursue her work led to conflict with her husband. "When he calls on the phone and doesn't reach you, he creates problems. You know? It becomes a problem. He wants you to be sitting in the house, so when he calls you pick up. And he doesn't give you enough [money]! If you go out, when you get back he says, 'you've got a boyfriend!'"

While some migrant husbands return periodically, most cannot afford frequent trips to Senegal to visit their wives and family. Their marriages are carried out over the phone, across email, Skype, wire transfers, and instant messages. The stress, tediousness, and constant mistrust in her long-distance marriage eventually led Aminata and her husband to divorce. "Where there is no trust, you may as well drop the whole thing," she

said, reflecting on their mutual decision to separate. “It really wasn’t a marriage; it was a *mariageu telephone*—a telephone marriage.”

Scholars of transnationalism have long touted the rapid advance in communication technologies in the last quarter of the 20th century as an essential facilitator of transnational migration (Portes et al. 1999, Vertovec 2004, Baldassar 2008; Castro & Gonzalez 2009). The ability to easily keep in touch with loved ones at home has allowed migrants to maintain social, political, and economic ties in both the host and the home countries, simultaneously participating in two (or more) local spheres (Basch et al. 1993). The tendency in the literature on transnationalism has been to acclaim these communication technologies and their powers of connection. Along with the relative affordability of air travel in recent decades, advances in electronic communication and the drop in cost of international phone calls allow for a far more dynamic and concentrated exchange across borders than earlier circumstances would allow.

Does this concentration necessarily lead to more intimate and tighter-knit relationships? In this chapter, I argue that these same technologies can also be a source of tremendous emotional strain, stress, and disconnection in transnational couples. Far from providing emotional closeness, the increased and immediate contact leads in some cases to suspicion, frustration, and discord.

In chapter 4, I mentioned a transnational couple’s use of the voice-over-internet service Skype to create a sense of intimate togetherness that mimics the bedroom. The majority of migrants and migrants’ wives I interviewed, however, had less success creating intimacy through the use of technology. The case studies of transnational

marriage featured in this chapter further trouble the easy equation between rapid and easy electronic access to loved ones at home and emotional closeness often found in literature on transnationalism. In these marriages, communication technology is not a simple instrument to bring wives closer to absent husbands. Rather, the constant threat of surveillance that such technology enables puts a great deal of stress and strain on these transnational couples.

Ndeye

Ndeye and her husband were married for 11 years before he moved abroad to work in Ohio. She says they have a happy marriage, but that the distance is difficult for them both—she misses him and he misses her and their three kids very much. Like many Senegalese migrants, Ndeye's husband has opted to leave his wife and children in Senegal rather than applying for family reunification from the U.S. government and bringing them over to live with him, a relatively common choice for Senegalese migrants (Gasparetti and Hannaford 2009). He prefers to send money to them in Senegal where they can live more cheaply and where his children can be raised with Wolof language and Muslim values.

Ndeye's husband works legally in the United States in an Ohio factory. His work schedule and salary allow him to come home to visit Ndeye and their three children for three months every two years. When her husband comes home on vacation, Ndeye says that they live like newlyweds, going to the beach or out dancing in nightclubs with live

music. Ndeye puts extra energy into cooking his favorite dishes and the mood in the house is celebratory. When he is gone, however, Ndeye says that her husband becomes very jealous. Ndeye's husband, like Aminata's ex, will call her randomly throughout the day on the house's landline phone to ensure that she is always at home.

Traditionally, the ideal Senegalese wife is the one who is at home as much as possible. The Wolof expression for a woman who misbehaves or acts promiscuously is that she *dox rekk* or "walks too much." A married woman's movements are customarily subject to the supervision of her husband or his family in this patrilocal society. In contemporary Senegal, particularly in urban areas and middle class households, this practice is less strict. A wife might inform her husband or mother-in-law of her destination before she leaves the house to demonstrate faithfulness, but this is generally out of courtesy rather than to evade active suspicion of promiscuity. Migrants' wives, however, find that their movements are paradoxically more restricted when their husbands are no longer present to watch their behavior. Like Ndeye, many women expressed that jealous husbands at home could be pacified, reassured, and comforted easily, whereas absent husbands let their lack of physical access lead them to more tightly assert other means of control. As we will see below, the electronic gaze of the migrant husband can be intensely disciplinary, in disproportion to the husband's physical gaze when he is at home.

When her husband is home on visits, Ndeye says, "He's not jealous then. We don't have problems then." It is only when her husband is gone that he grows angry and suspicious whenever he calls and finds she is not at home. Ndeye feels compelled to wait

by the phone in case her husband calls, but she occasionally tires of her post and slips away to visit with neighbors down the street. She confessed that when her husband calls her cell phone when she is at the neighbors' home, she will lie and tell him that she's at home. Lately, her husband started testing her by asking to speak to one of the children. Ndeye has been known by her neighbors to sprint up the street towards home, screaming her son's name, hoping to convince her husband she is merely calling to the back of the house. Ndeye, and many other wives of migrants, find themselves effectively tethered to their homes by the telephone cord.

ICTS and Transnationalism

Scholars of transnationalism have seen advanced communication technology as a central element of transnational migration and a crucial tool for the kind of "time-space compression" David Harvey (1989) proposed. Alejandro Portes and colleagues, argue that technological advances in communication are as important as those in transportation in providing "the basis for the emergence of transnationalism on a mass scale" (Portes et al. 1999: 223-227). Levitt points to the ways that the internet and advances in long-distance calling "permit easier and more intimate connections" between those who migrate and those left behind (Levitt 2001:22). Steven Vertovec even calls the cheap long-distance calling that emerged in recent decades "the social glue of transnationalism" and insists that the easy accessibility of these calls to migrants has made it "common for a single family to be stretched across vast distances and between nation-states, yet still

retain its sense of collectivity" (Vertovec 2004: 222). These families, alternately called "transnational families" (cf. Bryceson and Vuorela 2002, Lima 2001, Chamberlain and Leydesdorff 2004) and "split-households" (Yamanaka 2005), depend on technologies of communication to create "a feeling of collective welfare and unity, namely 'familyhood,' even across national borders" (Bryceson and Vuorela 2002: 3).

Many scholars of migration take these ICTs, or "informational and communication technologies" at face value as tools that bring migrants closer to those in the homeland (c.f. Baldassar 2008; Castro & Gonzalez 2009). Portes and DeWind use the example of early Italian immigrants to the U.S at the turn of the last century who, despite their commitment to their native land and their loved ones there, "could not possibly send remittances, make investments, visit, or communicate with kin and friends with the ease and speed made possible by air travel and the internet" (2007: 11). Now with these advances, their assumption follows, displays of love and commitment are made possible.

Yet just as early scholars of transnationalism such as Featherstone warned against mistaking the "intensity and rapidity" of global flows for the rise of some kind of "global culture" (1990:10), we should be wary of equating intense and rapid communication between migrants and those left behind with a kind of sharing of experience, mutual understanding, or intimacy. Contact and connection are not one and the same.

Left-behind wives of Senegalese migrants often find intense and rapid communication technologies to be a stumbling block towards intimacy in their marriage. Senegalese women do not necessarily understand more about their husbands' lives

because of increased communication, nor do they always appreciate attempts by a migrant husband to be involved in the daily happenings of their own lives. The constant virtual presence of their husbands in their lives is not equivalent to a physical presence in cohabitation and, as in the case of Ndeye and Aminata and the women whose stories follow, often becomes a nuisance, a source of discord, and a threat to the stability of the marriage itself.

The bulk of the literature on transnational migrants and ICTs has focused on transnational caregiving (Barber 2008, Bohr & Tse 2009, Horst 2006, Parreñas 2005, Lan 2006, Madianou & Miller 2011). Recently, some of the contributors to this literature have pushed for a more critical assessment of the amplified technology and its specific impact on the lives of migrants. Pessar and Mahler (and others such as Barber 2008, Glick Schiller and Fouron 2001) have drawn attention to the ambivalence that some migrants feel about how mobile technologies make them constantly accessible to those in the homeland. Remittance-hungry relatives and domestic problems unsolvable from abroad now can punctuate the day of the hard-working migrant. Pessar and Mahler sympathize with male migrants whose wives call collect to plead for more of their already-overdrawn resources (Pessar and Mahler 2003: 824). Barber laments that Filipina migrant women are also "on-call" twenty-four hours a day for their families at home, doubling their caregiver work abroad, and making them susceptible to stress and relentless financial demands from non-migrants (2008: 38). Pei-Chia Lan also points to the continued burden of the cost of international phone calls, which is almost always shouldered by migrants and not their families left-behind (2006).

Certainly, the same arguments could be made about the Senegalese migrants abroad (and Tandian 2009 has touched on this in the Senegalese context). Like other transnational migrants, my Senegalese interlocutors abroad discussed their complex negotiations of the accessibility a cell phone enables. Many Senegalese migrants reported never answering calls from unknown Senegalese numbers, assuming these calls will be from a distant relative or friend with a request for remittances. As is the case for Lan's migrant domestic workers in Taiwan (2006: 181), Senegalese migrants also field requests from home to send the newest, priciest cell phones as remittances or status-laden gifts.

Rhacel Parreñas (2005) makes a significant contribution to this literature, examining the gendered inflections of communication between Filipina migrant mothers and their families in the Philippines. She points to the important gendered inequalities that "shape the quality of intimacy in transnational family life" (2005: 318). Because of the ease of communication and wire bank transfers, women's migration out of the Philippines fails to upset existing gender norms. Migrant mothers' ability to continue to nurture and manage the household from abroad counteracts potential "gender reconstitutions" (2005: 334) their breadwinning might spur, as husbands rarely take up domestic duties in their stead.

Parreñas's study reminds us of the importance of gender, generation, and status in determining the experience of transnational communication. Like the other aforementioned studies, she concentrates this lens on the migrants' experience and leaves relatively unexplored the ambivalent impact that migrants' use of ICTs can have on those at home. For all the talk in recent literature on transnationalism of how non-migrants are

an active part of the transnational social field (cf. Levitt 2001), studies of transnationalism still tend to place the migrants themselves as the heroes of the story. This study seeks to use Parreñas's gendered critique as well as Lan's use of "power geometry" (below) on the non-migrants at the other end of the telephone line.

Power Geometry

Pei-Chia Lan's study of Indonesian and Filipina domestic workers in Taiwan offers an avenue through which to explore an important aspect of the Senegalese transnational marriage. Though Lan, like others who focus on transnationalism and technologies, does not trouble the assertion that "workers lessen the constraints of spatial segregation and physical distance" from their families through technology (2006: 182), she does expose another fascinating element of techno-mediated relationships for migrants. Lan refers to Doreen Massey's (1994: 149) concept of "power geometry" to highlight how the kind of mobility that wireless technologies can create are unequally distributed across "divides of class and citizenship status" (Lan 2006: 175-75). She shows how employers in the host country might try to restrict their migrant domestic employees' access to means to call home or make connections with other migrants. The live-in domestic workers resort to surreptitious use of mobile phones, on days off or under their bed sheets. Other employers use mobile phones as a way to track their employees' movements, intruding on the workers' leisure time and providing another reason to hide mobile phone use from bosses.

Lan limits the use of the "power geometry of time-space compression" analytic (Massey 1994: 149) to her evaluation of the employer-employee relationship, but this concept provides an equally productive way to think through relationships between migrants and the "transnational villagers" at home. Lan says, "To sum up, mobile phone technology can empower people though facilitating communication, but the benefits of emancipation are mediated by the social positioning of phone users. The increase in freedom and autonomy often comes hand-in-hand with growing personal responsibility and exposure to new forms of social control" (2006: 182). In transnational Senegalese marriages, the expectations inherent in a wife's social positioning—that she remain at home and be easily accessible to her absent husband at all times or face the suspicion of promiscuity—certainly mediates the potential benefits of virtual accessibility. Wives depend on their husbands for financial remittances and—as I show in the previous chapter—are sometimes forced to leave their jobs and move from their family homes into the homes of their in-laws. They depend on their reputations as faithful wives for familial and social status. The cases here demonstrate that wives may feel anything but emancipated by the role of communication technology in their lives.

Jealous Husbands

In my seven years of fieldwork in Senegal and among Senegalese migrants in Europe, I have never had an informant tell me a first-hand account of a left-behind wife's infidelity. While I did not knowingly encounter migrants or left-behind wives who had

experienced female infidelity, I found the talk of such a situation to be ubiquitous. Left-behind wives I interviewed would explain their husbands' jealous behavior by alluding to the common occurrence of women getting pregnant while their husbands were gone. Migrant men would also assure me this happened all the time. Stories of wives conceiving babies in their husbands' absence populate the local news, described as a crisis of epidemic proportions. Whenever I pressed informants for actual cases of women getting pregnant while their husbands are abroad, no one could ever give me an actual account. They would either vaguely reaffirm that it happens all the time or say that a cousin's neighbor's friend knew someone to whom this had happened. This was hardly for the sake of discretion, as interviewees were happy to gossip in great detail about friends, relatives, and neighbors, and rarely felt compunction about identifying them by name and other details. Rather, I believe that the perception of a widespread trend of left-behind wives getting pregnant in the absence of their husbands circulates in Senegal and in the diaspora as a sort of urban legend with the particular consequence of subjecting migrants' wives to increase suspicion and social control.

This is not to say that cases of female infidelity do not exist. Foley and Drame's (2012) fascinating study of female infidelity in Dakar, while it does not feature wives of migrants per se, suggests the phenomenon is not entirely uncommon among married Senegalese women in general. Sociologist Siri Suh, in her fieldwork on Post-Abortion Care in Senegal, has encountered wives of migrants who are seeking to terminate pregnancies conceived while their husbands were abroad (Suh 2013). Yet the prevalence

of this phenomenon seems hardly high enough to justify its frequency and infamy in popular discourse.

The preoccupation in Senegalese society about the infidelity of migrant wives may have more to do with a general societal discomfort or anxiety about the fact that so much of its male workforce is leaving the country. Fretting over female infidelity is a way of displacing other kinds of fears about social reproduction. As in many other countries dealing with rapid new rates of migration (cf. Lutz 2011), women's bodies become pubic sites of moral panic.

Regardless of whether or not these cases are as widespread in reality as they are in the Senegalese popular imagination, the specter of female infidelity had serious consequences for the women I interviewed. Fear of their infidelity had an impact on their living situation, their capacity for movement in the public sphere, and most importantly for the purposes of this chapter, their interactions with their husbands abroad.

Adama: Misconnections and Disconnections

When I asked Adama if her husband calls from Italy everyday, she made a loud exclamation—"*shiiii*!"—and said he sometimes calls 4 times a day. "If you keep sitting here a little longer, he'll probably call," she told me in her well-appointed living room in the outskirts of Dakar. Adama says her husband calls each day before they've finished breakfast, and every night before they go to bed. When I asked about jealousy, Adama

was quick to assure me that her husband "just loves his kids... He likes to know what's happening with the kids." She was looking into putting in an internet connection in the house so that, through Skype, he'd be able to see his kids every day and witness their development "*face à face*."

Increasingly, the women I spoke to in Senegal who had husbands overseas were turning to Skype and instant messengers like MSN to keep in touch with their husbands. Internet usage in Dakar is gaining wider diffusion across Senegal and almost every Senegalese person over the age of 12 has a cell phone. Africa generally has been the fastest growing cell phone market in the last decade, particularly the North and West regions of the continent (Tandian 2009: 291, Amédé 2009). While telephone centers and cyber cafés were on every corner in Dakar and in immigrant neighborhoods of Europe when I began my research, now most are out of business as cell phones and personal computers have become more affordable and are considered basic necessities. The diffusion of cell phones and laptops are just one visible trace of the enormous impact of migration and migrant remittances across Senegal over the past two decades. Cell phones and laptop computers are common gifts for migrants to give to friends and family, and it is the migrants who pay for monthly internet.

A few days after my original interview with Adama, she accompanied me on some interviews with other women in her neighborhood. A certain point she excused herself to answer her cell phone. A minute later, she ducked her head back in to the room to say that she had to run home. "The connection isn't clear, so he [my husband] is going

to call me on the landline." I arranged to meet her back at her house and she scurried out of the room.

Later that day, Adama confessed that there was no problem with the cell phone's reception. Her husband had been calling on the house phone and when no one responded he called her cell. She told him she was with the neighbors and he told her to prove it; he would call her on the house landline in two minutes and if she picked up then he would know she was telling the truth. That was why she had to run out so abruptly. She said that her husband calls her from morning to night, more than any other migrant's wife that she knows. "*Barki yaarasulaay!*" she exclaimed, "I swear to God!"

Like Ndeye's husband, Adama's husband wasn't satisfied with cell phone contact because he couldn't be absolutely certain where she was. Adama said that if he calls on the cell phone and she says she's home, he will sometimes hang up and call her right back on the landline to see if she's really there. Occasionally when she wants to escape the constant calling, she'll go as far as to unplug the landline, but her husband will call the hardware store across the street or a neighbor's house and ask them to go see if she is there and to make sure the phone is well connected.

Adama says the surveillance does not stop even when she travels to the rural area where her extended family lives for a baptism or some other ceremony. Adama's husband will call someone else at the event, and ask him or her to pass the phone to his wife. When she's home and needs to make a trip downtown or to visit a friend or relative, she calls her husband to ask his permission. She told me of a recent occasion when she

wanted to visit her ailing aunt, but her husband denied permission, reasoning that other relatives who lived closer could take care of her. If he does agree to let her go somewhere, he'll call her cell phone at some point during the day to tell her it is time to go home, then call the house every half hour until she gets home to know exactly the hour she returned. “Every half hour,” she repeated with emphasis. “You can't lie. If you tell him you arrived at a certain time he'll tell you what minute he called and no one answered.”

Though Adama never indicated that she was considering a divorce, she was clearly exasperated by her husband’s controlling behavior. She said she was so sick of her cell phone ringing that she went as far as to take the SIM card out the other day and consider selling it or giving it away. She knew, however, that this move would only further limit her ability to leave the house. One of the topmost sources of frustration for Adama was her inhibited freedom to participate in social celebrations.

As we note in earlier chapters, celebrations of religious holidays, baptisms, weddings, and even funerals are the highlight of most Senegalese women's lives. The chance to dress up and socialize, to be right in the center of social action, are the moments that punctuate the otherwise routine working, cooking and cleaning rituals of many women's lives. Women travel great distances to be present for these events, spending hours on uncomfortable public transportation to pay their respects and attend a party. At these events, there is often drumming and raucous dancing, but Adama is no longer able to enjoy this part of the festivities, thanks to the transnational circulation of another form of media.

Most big celebrations in Senegal are now caught on film by self-employed videographers. DVDs of these parties are usually sent overseas to relatives who could not attend the party. As I noted in chapter 4, these DVDs often end up circulating among Senegalese migrants in France, Italy, and elsewhere in Europe and are watched by migrants in the diaspora for entertainment. These DVDs have even been used as a way for some migrants to select a potential spouse. Having seen a pretty young woman on the tape, the men might inform themselves about her marital status and phone number and then call her to strike up a relationship.

Adama's husband had warned Adama that if he ever saw her dancing on one of these tapes she would be in big trouble. Adama told me that once when she was at a friend's baptism party she got caught up in the drumming and began to dance. The Wolof say that drumming, particularly the sabar drum, is very "*satanee*," meaning devilish and intoxicating. At that baptism, Adama was intoxicated by the drumming, forgot herself, and jumped into the large circle of women to dance. She danced and danced and then spotted the cameraman. She went to him and begged him to edit out the footage of her dancing, but he refused. The day after the event, she and another married friend who also didn't want her husband in Italy to see her dancing visited the videographer at his home. They begged and pleaded with him, telling him that if their husbands saw the DVD in Italy, they would divorce them. The impassive cameraman felt no pity, but finally relented and promised to edit the film after Adama and her friend paid him 5000cfa (about $12—a considerable sum for these women) each. Adama said it was worth every

penny, because if her husband ever saw that footage, she may as well pack her bags and leave the house.

On Modern Power

Other authors (e.g. Freeman 2000 on the data-entry industry in Barbados) have drawn on Foucault (1977) to discuss the disciplinary use of surveillance cameras and computer monitoring. Through Foucault's discussion of "technologies" of surveillance of course did not refer to technology in the sense that we employ here, these authors have found his analysis of the mechanisms of surveillance that lead to self-policing instructive in studying how literal technologies are used to discipline workers. Though the domestic relations in these cases of transnational marriage obviously do not taking place in institutional settings, the specifics practices of surveillance render Foucault's conception of discipline apt for these cases.

Andrea Westlund (1999) brings Foucault's analysis into the domestic sphere by drawing parallels between the kind of power exercised by modern disciplinary institutions and in domestic violence. She tempers this correlation, however, by associating the brute force of domestic violence[51] with the kind of pre-modern power that Foucault describes. Says Westlund, "Despite the fact that domestic violence takes place almost entirely behind closed doors, it is characterized by relations of visibility that are

[51] It is not my goal in this chapter to determine whether or not the kinds of disciplinary monitoring of migrants' wives presented here represent domestic violence. My use of Westlund serves to bring an analysis of Foucauldian discipline into the domestic sphere.

more pre-modern than modern, according to Foucault's definitions: the batterer is painfully present to members of the household in much the same way that the sovereign is to members of the pre-modern state" (1999: 1049).

By contrast, in the cases described here, the enactor of power is not present and the disciplinary force not a physical one. Rather, as in the case of Benthem's panopticon as described by Foucault, the presence of the powerful is felt, but unseen. The "unequal gaze" that Foucault emphasizes in the structure of the panopticon, accurately captures the one-sidedness of this kind of surveillance relationship. We may think of these migrants' wives in the same way Foucault's disciplined subject is seen but does not see (1977: 200). The electronic eyes of absentee husbands play the role of the anonymous supervisor. As I noted above, many wives had no way of knowing about their husbands' lives. Several women told me that they did not even have their husbands' phone numbers and simply waited for their husbands to call them.

A major focus of Foucault's panopticon is the way that it acts upon the subject. "He who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them apply spontaneously upon himself…he becomes the principle of his own subjection" (1977: 202-203). In many ways, as we have seen above, ICTs render the wives of migrants as docile bodies, observable at any moment by their husbands' virtual eyes--be they video cameras, computer screens—and thus the wives begin to police themselves. They absorb and reproduce the surveillance upon themselves. Adama says she never even thinks of dancing now even at family gatherings. Though her husband is miles away, she behaves herself as though he is in the room

watching her. The risk that video footage may be taken and then arrive on his doorstep thousands of miles away is great enough in her mind as to keep her from engaging in one of her biggest pleasures in life.

The video camera of a stranger becomes her husband's omnipresent and disciplining gaze. The landline in her home becomes another tool of gauging her presence, another set of "eyes" that "see" whether or not she is home during the day. When she disconnects her phone, even her neighbors can become instruments of surveillance, sent over by her husband to see about her whereabouts.

In Benthem's original conception that Foucault invokes, the panopticon prison would be open to the public, so "the eye of the public would watch over its inner eye" (Miller 1987: 9). Similarly, Adama sees her neighbors in the hardware store and relatives at out-of-town family gatherings as agents of her husband's surveillance. In the story that follows, Rama believes all of her neighbors and even her own family are potential spies for her husband. Whether or not this is true, she modifies her behavior in front of his brother who lives with her and her neighbors. The eye of the public is upon her at all times, she feels, and as a result, she self-regulates—one of the fundamental ambitions of the panopticon.

Rama

Rama's apartment was so pretty that I was very unprepared for what was to come. After several interviews with women whose husbands had abandoned them financially, I took the surfeit of material goods and stylish décor as an indication that this absentee marriage was a happier one, or at least fulfilled more of the premarital expectations of prosperity of women who marry migrants. I scanned the flat-screen television, DVD player and stereo, and the sturdy and expensive-looking baby-carrier and made assumptions about Rama's quality of life. The apartment itself was bright and airy and decorated with tasteful furniture and billowy, colorful curtains, and I surmised that Rama's husband must be a man of some taste and education. Later I would look back and feel embarrassed about the quick judgments I had made based on appearances and objects. Like so many others in Rama's life, as I was to learn, I allowed the gilding to distract me from the cage.

After some small talk in the living room, Rama and I left her eight-month-old son napping, and entered her bedroom. We sat on the large bed and she began to answer my standard questions about how she met her now husband. She told me that she used to own a restaurant, a small *ceeb*[52] shack where her husband came to have lunch on his vacation home from Paris. She was quick to point out that her husband is not a *modou modou,* the term for migrant that conjures up images of uneducated men of rural-origin who work in factories of Europe or as ambulant sellers. "He has a job, and [immigration] papers and everything. He's a stable immigrant." After a month of dating, he returned to France and

[52] *Ceeb* is a prepared rice dish usually consumed at lunch. Small, no-frills restaurants across Dakar and other Senegalese cities sell one or two types of *ceeb*, usually to working men and women who can't make it home for lunch with their families.

they continued their relationship for two months before he asked her to marry him. Her family was happy about the arrangement, seeing that he was gainfully employed and a legal resident of France. Rama stressed that her family was well educated and open-minded, not merely seeking to hook a migrant in-law for prestige or advancement as lower class families might do (see Hannaford 2011).

Rama told me that in the beginning it was a very happy marriage. She lived with her family, he would come to Senegal each year on vacation, and they began the process of getting her the paperwork to join him in France. “Then the problems began...” she said. It started with her husband’s growing disapproval of her job. “A married woman shouldn’t be getting home from work so late,” he would say, and soon he insisted that she get someone else to manage the restaurant so that she could come home earlier. Her husband demanded that she turn on her family’s computer each morning and stand in front of the webcam so that he could approve of what she was wearing to work. She explained that because he had met and fallen in love with her at the restaurant, he hated the idea that other men might meet her the same way. He wanted to be sure that she was dressed modestly and wearing no makeup to enhance her beauty. Indeed, Rama was incredibly beautiful. Even among Senegalese women, who are generally quite poised and attractive, Rama was especially striking and graceful. Finally the restaurant began to fail without Rama's constant presence; the new manager was skimming money off the top and couldn’t be trusted, and eventually it closed altogether, to her husband's satisfaction.

Shortly after the restaurant failed, Rama said, her husband announced that he had stopped trying to get her papers to come live with him in France. It no longer seemed like

a good idea to him; he said he'd seen many marriages break up when the wife came abroad and so he'd rather she stay in Senegal.[53] Rama had no say in the matter and she passively accepted her husband's wishes. Her husband's jealousy continued to intensify and she said she arrived at a point where, like the women above, she no longer wanted to pick up the phone when he called. "As soon as I'd pick up it would be, 'Where are you? Who are you talking with?'" Eventually, suspicious of the way that her relatives would cover for her when she snuck out of the house to visit friends and attend ceremonies, Rama's husband decided to move her out of her family home. He declared one day that he'd rented an apartment in another neighborhood across town and an unmarried brother of his was moving in with her.

As I have noted in previous chapters *seeyi*, in which a new bride lives with her in-laws and proves herself to be submissive and obliging, is practiced even in most absentee marriages, as women move alone into their in-law's home. I asked Rama why her husband moved her into her own apartment rather than having her live with his mother. She explained that her mother- and father-in-law both go to work each day, and thus her husband concluded that there would be no one to monitor her presence in the house. "There is no control there," she said matter-of-factly. "He needed control."

"I never leave this place," Rama told me, gesturing to the walls around her despondently. Her husband forbids her from even going to the market. His friends, to whom he sends money directly from France via wire transfer, deliver all her groceries to

[53] Babou (2008) and others have indicated that divorce rates in the Senegalese diaspora are indeed higher than at home (2008: 13).

her doorstep. These men also go make the payments for her utility bills. He never gives Rama money for bills or groceries directly out of fear that she'll save some of it and use it for taxis to leave the house and meet men.

Rama is not allowed to have a cell phone and he calls her on the landline at random times throughout the day to ensure that she is home. If she asks to go visit her mother, he calculates that it will take her 35 minutes to travel to her mother's house and calls her on that landline after that amount of time, to be sure that she hasn't stopped anywhere else along the way. When she does visit her mother, or if a friend or relative visits Rama at her apartment, her husband calls and keeps her on the phone the whole time so she can't talk to others and perhaps be influenced by them. He has effectively calculated all the ways that she could escape his influence and his surveillance.

I commented that her husband was very organized. “Super organized,” she said with wide eyes. “And super-intelligent.” It was clear that Rama was terrorized by her husband's jealousy. She told me her suspicion that her husband may be paying some of the neighbors to keep tabs on her and make sure she never leaves the house. She tries not to even stand on the terrace and look out, in case they see her and report back to her husband. She described the look of pride and satisfaction on her husband's face on his last visit to Dakar, when the neighbors complained to him that they never see Rama. “Tell your wife to come visit us,” they said to his great pleasure. “She never visits.”

In the middle of telling her story, Rama opened a drawer beside her bed and pulled out a gold ring. She told me that her husband takes off his wedding ring before he

goes back to France and leaves it in Senegal. “Do you find that normal?” she asked me. Unlike her husband, Rama has no sense of what goes on in her husband’s life in France. He tells her few details and gets angry when she asks. Though they phone, Skype, or instant message one another day after day, she has no clear picture of his life abroad and like many migrant husbands, he shares very little information.

As I have discussed earlier, the majority of the women I spoke to in Senegal, despite in some cases daily contact with their husbands, had little information or understanding about the realities of life in the diaspora. In addition to being ignorant of their husbands occupations and towns of residence (see Appendix B), few knew anything about the cultures or economies in which their husbands lived, beyond the vague assertions about life being expensive and *difficile* that most non-migrants can parrot. Glick-Schiller (2012) and Peggy Levitt (2001) have argued that residents of transnational locales are inherently transnational, including those who migrate and return *and* those who remain behind. Like the migrants, non-migrant members of the sending community interact with and depend on money, people, ideas and resources in another setting. For these migrants’ wives, the transformative aspects of “being transnational” and of receiving social remittances is hardly the edifying cosmpolitanization hinted at by Levitt. Instead, the central message they receive is one of the dominance, authority, and thanks to ICTs, omniscience and virtual omnipresence of their husbands.

This finding further challenges the idea that constant contact leads to intimate closeness and connection transnationally. When many of the wives have no concept of how and where their husbands are living, they cannot empathize with their husbands’

struggles or offer emotional support for them in their myriad trials and tribulations as immigrants in Europe or elsewhere. Most of the migrants I've interviewed in France and Italy complain that their wives and families don't understand the hardships they suffer, and yet few attempt to explain these difficulties to those at home.

Rama has no real sense of what her husband's life is like in France, but she knows it must be far superior to hers. "He stole my life. Because he's out there living. He's traveling, he's going places. But me, I'm between four walls." She insisted that her family was of no help to her. "If you talk to my mother on the phone today she'll tell you that he's the best husband in the world." Not only does he send them money, but he calls them dutifully (a very important sign of respect) and says all the right things. Rama said that her family believes that her husband provides her with all the material things a wife can hope for and all he asks in return is that she be a modest woman and stay at home. She feels they would see her frustration at her limited mobility as a sign that she wants to *taxawalu*, the Wolof word for loiter, walk about, with connotations for women of impropriety.

Rama also no longer thinks of her family as potential allies because of an incident involving MSN, the Microsoft instant messaging platform. On a routine check of her instant messenger account—her husband has all her passwords and monitors her accounts—he found a lewd picture that a stranger had sent her. Rama insists it was a random spam image, but her husband was unconvinced. He immediately phoned Rama's mother and called a family meeting to discuss Rama's betrayal. Rama was humiliated and now worries that if she leaves him, her family will assume that she has earned whatever

bad treatment her bad behavior has incurred and that her reputation will be ruined, reducing any chance she might have had for remarriage.

Parenting and Husbanding

Much has been made of the way that ICTs can create the sense that relatives and loved ones are present even in their physical absence (Alonso & Oiarzabal 2010; Brinkerhoff 2009). This certainly seems to be true for the wives of migrants I've presented here, but in these cases this physical presence is often an unwelcome one and even an intrusion. It would be hard to argue, as other researchers of transnationalism claim (Baldassar 2008; Castro & Gonzalez 2009; Vertovec 2004), that the interactions these women have with their husbands facilitate closeness. On the contrary, even in cases like that of Ndeye in which husband and wife get along well in each other's presence, their ICT-mediated interactions are fraught with mistrust and frustration.

The regulation of a Senegalese wife's movements is not something unique to transnational marriages. Traditionally, Senegalese wives make their husbands aware of their comings and goings. In cases of *seeyi*, when a married couple moves in with her husband's family, the mother-in-law might play the custodial role, whether or not the husband is in the country. Sometimes these relationships are strained and wives feel frustrated by their new limitations. When a husband is present, however, there is paradoxically more flexibility for a wife. Few men suspect a wife's trip to the market as being an escape to rendezvous with a lover. Because of heightened fears of infidelity that

accompany the long-distance marriage, migrants' wives are subject to intensified scrutiny and suspicion both by their in-laws and, virtually, by their husbands themselves. The ease of telecommunication makes these women more vulnerable to direct control and surveillance by the husbands.

It is not only the cell phones and landlines that these women find to be tools of control, but voice-over-internet technology, instant messenger software, and the increased ease of wire transfers of money also give their absent husbands the ability to circumscribe their wives' independence. Rama's webcam allows her husband to see her wardrobe and assess its appropriateness. MSN lets him monitor any potential socializing she might do and limit any attempts she might make to use the internet to escape her homebound solitude. Rama's husband can easily use Western Union to send money to her parents to maintain their goodwill towards him, to his friends who then run her errands for her, and, she believes, perhaps to her neighbors so that they will be his eyes and ears while he is away.

Wilding (2006), in her study of "everyday interactions" between family members who live across borders in many different contexts, argues that we should not place too much emphasis on ICTs; they are merely being incorporated into familiar patterns of daily life, not transforming them (2006: 126). I would counter that in this case the ability of Senegalese migrant men to have constant access to their wives via telephone, Skype, instant messaging, Western Union and even the circulation of DVDs in the diaspora, does indeed transform their relationships with one another. While it is certainly true that non-migrant Senegalese marriages can also be characterized by the subjugation of a wife's

movements to her husbands' control, the physical absence and virtual presence of a migrant husband that these ICTs allows what is in most cases a relaxed and respectful dynamic to become one fraught with tension and mistrust. As we see in the case studies presented here—such as that of Ndeye who insisted that when her husband is home on a visit, their relationship is satisfying and drama-free—the introduction of technological mediation heightens tensions, creates suspicions, and causes strain and bitterness to form in marital relationships.

With constant calls, messaging, international directives of surveillance from neighbors and family members, and the possibility of access to video of their wives at parties, the wives presented here never feel hidden from her husband's gaze. The advancements in technology—which make long-distance calling cheap enough to call the neighbors and family members, make wire transfers of money to collaborators and agents, make cell phones affordable and provide reliable network service, allow for Internet-mediated messaging and viewing, and make DVDs easy to reproduce and distribute—have provided a means for migrant husbands to maintain a constant presence in the lives of their wives in Senegal. It would be difficult, however, to claim that these advances have brought the wives and husbands in this study emotionally closer or made for a "more intimate connection," as Levitt would have it (Levitt 2001:22). On the contrary, these women greatly resent their husbands' control over their life from afar. Adama, Ndeye, Rama, Aminata, and many other women I interviewed, found themselves hiding more and more from their husbands and giving false information about their

whereabouts or daily activities just to create a space that was concealed from his disciplinary gaze.

The explanations for why women remain in these marriages that cause them these feelings of distress are complex. Though the divorce rate is steadily rising (Dial 2008), and stigma is slowly but surely decreasing, it is still not an attractive option for most women, particularly when (as in the case of Rama) they feel they will not have the support of their families to return to once the marriage is dissolved. Furthermore, though divorce is increasingly common in Senegal, it is not straightforward for women. Husbands must approve of and grant the divorce for it to take place. In cases when they do not concede, they must be taken to court, no easy feat when they do not reside in Senegal. For women who have married in the mosque alone and not with a civil marriage, no such legal recourse is possible and they must rely on family members to pressure their husbands for a divorce. Many women I interviewed had endured long, painful processes of divorce from their migrant husbands that drew out for years. Over the course of the process, the women were no longer receiving remittances from their husbands and were of course not able to remarry.

Techniques of marital surveillance are not unique to marriages between migrants and non-migrants. Most Senegalese marriages include some aspect of infidelity prevention. Wives generally inform their husbands about their comings and going or ask their permission to attend gatherings and religious ceremonies. When women live with their in-laws, those family members may play the role of custodian in cases of a husbands' migration. Thus surveillance is not the domain of long-distance marriages

alone, but as this chapter has shown, the technologically-mediated surveillance that long-distance marriages involve and new technologies enable is a new and intensified form. Unlike literature on online communities, which is much more measured in its assessment of these tools as connectors (cf. Boellstorff 2010, Markham 1998, Rheingold 1993), transnational migration literature can be overly optimistic about the connecting power of technology. When there is some critical analysis about technology use among transnational families, it tends to focus on the migrant experience alone, remaining uncritical about the reception and use of these technologies by the non-migrant members of these families.

Despite the transnationalism literature's claims about ICTs and their ability to bring people closer across great physical distances, the ICTs employed in this case are the key factor in widening the emotional gaps between Senegalese migrants and their left-behind wives. A close examination of the "power-geometry" of technologically mediated transnational relationships helps to illuminate the potentially disruptive and disconnecting influence of international communication technologies. Examining how non-migrants experience the mobility of their migrant spouses and kin is an essential element of our understanding of how the possibilities and promises of transnationalism are always unevenly distributed and mediated by the social positioning of migrants and non-migrants alike.

If the potential for discord and disconnection are so strong when transnational couples live separately, what happens when they reunite? When a couple goes from a telephone- or computer-mediated relationship (perhaps punctuated by short visits) to

living side-by-side, how does the relationship change? The next chapter focuses on this reunification, looking closely at one couple that made the move to live together in Italy after having spent the whole of their marriage to that point in separate countries.

CHAPTER 7: The European Reunion

A majority of the migrants' wives I interviewed in Senegal wished to travel abroad themselves—though several said they only wanted to visit, not settle permanently overseas. A 2011 study by Baizan et al. found that most couples do not reunite, and that those that do are more likely to reunite in Senegal than overseas. Some women do join their husbands abroad, however, and these wives, like other migrants, find their circumstances abroad to be far from their pre-migratory expectations. In this chapter, I show how husbands and wives negotiate the complications of reuniting. I compare the experience of reunification in Italy with that of Senegalese couples in the United States where important differences in the labor market create distinctive gendered dynamics. When life abroad proves to be lonely and expensive for migrants' wives, returning to Senegal is not always an easy option. In the best-case scenario, reunification abroad can provide more opportunities for emotional sharing and companionate marriage for transnational couples.

Nene gave me memorable instructions about how to take the bus from the train station to her house. The instructions did not involve street names or landmarks, but included that I should stay on the bus when all the old ladies get off at the cemetery and keep going until the driver turns around to see why you haven't gotten off yet. She said to call her when the old ladies (*meres yi*, she called them in franco-wolof) got off and she would know to come outside to meet the bus.

I had never seen Nene before, but there was no mistaking her tall, black, and hugely pregnant frame among the yellow buildings in this quiet suburb in the Lombardy region of Italy. She leaned down to give me Italian style kisses on the cheeks and led the way into the apartment building behind her with that signature Senegalese woman's sashay. Nene, her husband Assane, and their five-year-old daughter Kine lived on the first floor, in a small but pleasant one-bedroom apartment with new couches and a big TV. Nene explained that Assane had moved into the apartment just before she and Kine had flown over from Senegal to join him one year ago. Until then, and for most of his 15 years doing factory work in Northern Italy, Assane had lived with fellow Senegalese factory workers in cramped apartments that lacked the homey charm of the present one.

Nene told me to sit in the living room and immediately turned on their large TV. Senegalese hospitality dictates that the television must go on the moment a guest arrives, to make guests feel comfortable and to smooth over any potential silences in conversation. She tuned it to one of the two Senegalese channels that their satellite provided and headed into the kitchen to finish up the lunch she had prepared in honor of my visit. The sounds of the news in Wolof blended with the sounds of chopping in the kitchen, and just like that I felt like I was back in Dakar.

Five year-old Kine peeped around the corner curiously at the white stranger in the living room who could speak Wolof with her mom. "*Ciao*," I said playfully, uncertain whether to address her in Wolof or Italian. "She's pretending to be shy," Nene called from the kitchen, "but don't let her fool you." Indeed, by the time the delicious *ceebu jën* was served, Kine was in my lap, braiding my hair, and chattering at me in a constant stream of Italian. "Do you like pirates?" she asked me intently, pausing in her recitation

of her school friends' names and character traits. "Yes," I responded with studied seriousness. "*Anche a me piacciono*," she agreed nodding, glad that we had that matter settled between us.

Kine's Italian, and her Italian-ness—"I simply adore the music of Vasco Rossi!" she later declared—astounded me. One year in preschool with a diverse group of classmates (Italian, Moroccan and Eastern European) and Italian *maestre* (It: teachers) was enough to make her at ease in her new surroundings. But then, children her age are sponges and countless studies have noted that young children adapt to the migrant context more easily than adults (c.f. Zhou and Bankston 1998). For her mother Nene, who doesn't have the luxury of daily preschool immersion, the adjustment was still in process.

A year into their stay, Nene spoke very little Italian; in fact, she barely spoke a word of it in front of me in the days I spent in their home. Often, Kine would address her mother in Italian and, though she usually understood through context clues, Nene would occasionally look to me for translation. This frustrated Kine and she said to me several times in Italian in front of her mother, "She doesn't understand ANYTHING."

Showing me around their neighborhood on my first visit marked the first time Nene had left the house in a week. Her eighth month of pregnancy kept her home much of the time and she complained that it was too hot to go outside. I teased her that'd she'd been out of Senegal too long if she thought this was hot. She had a few friends, mostly Senegalese wives of her husband's colleagues who lived in the same building or a few blocks away, but mostly she kept to herself in her apartment in front of Senegalese TV.

We visited some of these women while I was there and I understood immediately why Nene doesn't see them more often. Visits to girlfriends or family houses in Senegal have a leisurely pace to them and never have the feel of interruption or disturbance. In Dakar, a social visit feels like an act of altruism, providing a welcome bit of company and entertainment for the hosts. In Italy with Nene, I always felt as if our female Senegalese hosts were accommodating us strictly out of politeness. One upstairs neighbor sat in her towel at her kitchen table with us for ten minutes, while a pot of spaghetti boiled on the stove, and her kids ran around us in circles, insisting only halfheartedly that we should stay when we made our excuses to leave. Another woman's seven children sat politely in silence (and shared shy giggles at my Wolof), while we took up precious space on the couches in their crowded apartment and made small talk with their mother. Nene later told me that the family had received that subsidized housing from the government due to the number of children that they had had. The husband, a Joola from the Casamance region of Senegal, had earned Italian citizenship—a relatively rare feat among Senegalese migrants there. As an Italian citizen, he was eligible for housing benefits in place for large families that the government created to encourage couples to have more children and combat a declining birthrate[54]. I somehow doubt lawmakers had this Joola family of nine in mind when they created the subsidy to boost population numbers.

Nene is lonely and she told me so repeatedly throughout my visits to her in Italy. "*Fii dafa weet*" she'd say. "It's lonely/deserted/isolated here." In Dakar, Nene lived in her paternal home, a large, family house in a relatively prosperous neighborhood. The

[54] See Conforti 2007 on Italy's extremely low birthrate and its impact on immigration policies.

house was the social center for her extended family and always full of the bustle of people dropping by to socialize and gossip. She never lacked for company and never even imagined the kind of loneliness that she now felt. Now, while her daughter is at school, Nene sits for most of the day in front of Senegalese television programming, with no one to talk to and not much to do beyond laundry, cleaning their one-bedroom apartment, and preparing dinners for her small family.

Senegalese migrants in Europe complain of loneliness almost without exception. In Senegal, especially in Dakar, one is almost never alone. Houses are always full of life and open to visitors at all times. Neighbors and friends stop by to pay visits at any hour of the day, never fearing disturbing the privacy of a family home. Family homes are open to the world, unlike in the US and most of Western Europe where family homes are private and open on an invitation only basis. Nene told me ruefully that in the year that she has been away from Dakar, both her brother and her sister were married. She missed all the excitement of the festivities, all the preparations, visits from family, and general flurry of activity that accompanies these celebrations.

Migrants in Europe—women and migrant men—inevitably complained to me about Europe being *weet*, their loneliness and isolation, and missing the constant social interactions that fill up days in Dakar. They miss the leisurely pace of life in Dakar, where despite the hustle and bustle of the city, no one is in too much of a hurry to stop and chat. In Europe, migrants complain, busy work schedules and general exhaustion, as well as a general sense of discouragement from authorities about migrants loitering in groups in the street, means people do not socialize much at all. I knew a pair of Senegalese cousins in a small Italian town who shared a two-bedroom apartment and yet

hardly ever interacted. One worked the day shift at a factory, the other the night shift in another factory, and between commuting and sleeping, their waking hours almost never overlapped and they went days without even catching a glimpse of one another.

This sense of Europe as a place of loneliness is a message that trickles down to non-migrants in Senegal too. When I asked women in Senegal whose husbands were abroad what life in Europe is like, one of their first responses is that it is "*calme*," "*weet,"* or that the prevailing attitude is "*chaqun pour soi*" (Fr: every man for himself). The depth of their understanding about this sense of loneliness is unclear, however. Having only lived in Senegal's communal society, it is difficult to even conceptualize what solitude of this order really entails.

Mariama, a non-migrant who dreams of going abroad to join her Senegalese husband in Italy, said she was not afraid of being lonely in Europe. She had heard stories of the loneliness from the wife of an in-law who had gone to Italy and returned disillusioned, but Mariama is confident this wouldn't be the case for her if she joined her husband in Milan. She has a plan.

Inshallah, if I go abroad, it will be so I can work. I don't want to stay home to cook all the time. I'm going to find a good job… If you do something, if you work, it's better than to stay at home and cook for your husband's friends. Because that's what it's like over there, dey. If you cook and you don't work, your husband will invite his friends over every day.

She acted out her husband's proud call to his friends. "'*Venez,* my wife makes a good *ceebu jën*[55].' Like that. 'She'll cook some *cere*[56]*.' Waaw*. Everyday, everyday,

[55] A Senegalese dish of rice and fish.
[56] A millet cousous, usually served with meat.

everyday, you cook everyday." Even Mariama's imaginings of "lonely life" in Italy includes a perpetually full house of dinner guests and friends.

***

After a year in Italy, Nene shared Mariama's idea of work as a way to escape the loneliness. This place is good if you are working, Nene told me of Europe generally. If you work, you're at work all day with people and with things to do. If you don't work, you stay at home alone, no one visits you, and you are lonely. I recalled a similar sentiment from another Senegalese women named Ouly who I had met outside of Novara, Italy, where she had joined her husband two years earlier. Ouly's husband's work as a truck driver took him on the road for 5 days a week, while Ouly sat alone in their small apartment in a non-descript commuter town, without access to a car, and nowhere to go if she had one. The only Senegalese people nearby that she knew were men, she said, and they worked all day.

The saddest thing about her situation, she told me as she emptied the leftovers of our delicious dinner into the garbage, is that they waste so much food. She made large meals for her husband on his days off from work, but he could only eat so much. At home in Senegal, there is always someone to eat leftovers—the children, family members who miss lunch, the teenage boys who come home from playing soccer with a large appetite. And if nothing else, she laughed sadly, at least the goats will eat it! In Italy, her apartment had none of the comings and goings of the communal Senegalese home and the evidence of her isolation was scraped sadly into the trash.

Like many wives of migrants—including the non-migrant Mariama—Ouly and Nene had lobbied their husbands to be come abroad and join them in Italy. Having only a vague sense of what awaited them there, both relied on the common Senegalese "El Dorado" myths associated with life abroad (see chapter 2, Melley 2011) and decided that living there would be superior to life in Senegal. Of my non-migrant interviewees, nearly all said that they would like to join their husbands overseas. Like Nene, Mariama, and Ouly, most had plans to work and send their own remittances back home to their families. For women, as much as for men, becoming a breadwinner and a source of financial support for parents and other family members was a major life goal (Babou 2008: 13).

Like most migrants, male or female, both Ouly and Nene were disappointed to find that this plan to begin earning did not materialize immediately upon their arrival in Italy. Ouly explained vaguely that her husband still needed to work out some of the details of her immigration paperwork[57] and Nene's pregnancy soon after her arrival delayed any efforts toward employment. When I asked both women what they planned to do when it was time for them to work, neither of them had any specific ideas of what jobs might be realistic for them. Neither had worked in Dakar, neither spoke Italian, and when I asked what jobs they might pursue, both said they "just wanted to work", "*ligeey rekk"*. This is the usual response from aspiring migrants in Senegal who have no idea about what kinds of jobs exists and aren't especially proactive about finding out—"*ligeey rekk*," they say, "I just want to work." After a year and two years in Italy, respectively,

[57] Though Ouly did not speak about children, it is probable that the couple were hoping to have their first child, which would delay the process of finding her employment.

Nene and Ouly had little more understanding of where they fit into the Italian economy than non-migrants.

Unlike in other parts of the diaspora, particularly the U.S. where Senegalese women make viable and profitable careers out of hair-braiding (Babou 2008, Ba 2008, Kane 2011), Senegalese women in Italy don't have a clear foothold in the Italian labor market. Of the Senegalese women in Italy I interviewed who held or had held some form of income-generating employment, one worked in a factory, one was a tailor, one did elder care, one owned a cyber café and phone center, two were hotel maids, 2 worked in a hair salon, several sold in the market or bought goods from and to Senegal, and the remainder worked in food service, either in Italian restaurants or migrant-owned *gastronomias* or selling Senegalese food they made in their homes on the street to fellow migrants at the lunch hour. As opposed to Senegalese female migrants in the US, in Italy there was no clear and easy pathway to employment.

Not only is non-migrant Mariama's plan to work in Europe quite optimistic about the ease of finding employment, it also frames the decision to work as her own personal decision. Her scenario places the choice to stay home to cook or go out to work being entirely up to her and without challenge or negotiation from her husband. The reality is that many women come abroad and find that their husbands are not keen for them to enter the workplace. It is common for Senegalese men in the diaspora to wish or insist that their wives stay home (c.f. Babou 2008). Fatou, a longtime resident of Italy, noted that "many Senegalese men would like to bring their wives here and not let them work, leave them alone at home to take care of the house and children." Fatou, who divorced her Senegalese migrant husband of three years, disapproved strongly of this approach. "You

may as well leave her in Senegal if you want to bring her here just to continue to live like that!" she said exasperatedly. She noted that many Senegalese women spend years alone and bored before they finally defy or convince their husbands and find a job.

This finding differs somewhat from the conclusions drawn by Baizan et al. (2011), who found that women who were more likely to join their husbands abroad were those with a higher level of education. They surmised that this must be because these women could more easily enter the workforce and thus husbands determined that bringing their wives abroad would be financially advantageous (2011: 17). My ethnographic work suggests instead that many men who bring their wives to join them in the diaspora do not do so with the intent of having their wives work outside the home.

The motivations for men keeping their wives from work include having her perform reproductive labor like cooking and cleaning, but also include a continuation of some of the reasons for leaving a wife in Senegal discussed preceding chapters. Many migrants fear that their wives would lose respect for their husbands if they came abroad, saw the conditions of life in Europe and saw opportunities for their own financial and social independence.[58] An employed woman with her own salary would, according to these men's fears, have more independence to leave her husband (Kane 2011: 193). These fears are spurred on by cautionary tales that circulate in the diaspora and at home about wives who get to Europe and leave their husbands the day they find a job. If she has no options and no way to support herself and no family abroad, she will be more

[58] This perception of life abroad is similar to that of other diaspora communities as well (c.f. Hirsch 1999).

likely to stay with her husband and *muuñ* (Wf: endure) the hardships of migrant life alongside him, while maintaining her role as a modest and attentive wife.

Keeping their wives at home in Italy is also a way for migrant husbands to retain control over the household when aspects of their life abroad might challenge their masculine authority. The U.S. scenario that Cheikh Anta Babou describes differs significantly from that in Italy in that Senegalese women have a special niche in the U.S. economy, namely through hair braiding. The lack of a significant black population in Italian cities means that no such niche exists. In the U.S., through their sought-after skill and creativity in braiding, Senegalese women have found the means to earn a decent living and even—through salon ownership—become well off. Babou discusses the tensions in Senegalese migrant couples in the U.S. that result from the significant number of cases in which women out-earn their husbands. He says that conflicts over this important shift in household roles has lead to a very high divorce rate in the North American diaspora community (Babou 2008: 13).

Kane's (2011) research on Senegalese migrant wives in the United States suggested to him that migrant wives themselves may be wary of employment in the diaspora. He links this wariness to fears of their husbands becoming polygamous—if the wife can support herself through her own earnings, the husband may feel more financially free to take on additional wives. "Thus," he concludes,

from the perspective of many first-generation Senegalese immigrant women, an equal gender division of domestic labor and financial responsibility for the household may be less empowering than the maintenance of patriarchal norms of reciprocity. The latter can enable a woman to control her husband's income and, to some extent, his sexuality (2011: 170).

In addition to the reasons discussed above, a wife in Italy may not seek employment simply out of practicality. If the couple has children and both husband and wife are employed, childcare becomes a problem. In Senegal, where homes are intergenerational and maids are inexpensive, there is an abundance of free or cheap childcare. Working parents have relatively easy options inside the home. Childcare in Italy—where free state daycare only begins at 3 years old—is obviously more complicated. The only Senegalese migrants I met who employed domestic workers in Italy were diplomats.

As I have discussed elsewhere (Gasparetti and Hannaford 2009), many couples choose to send their babies home, at very young ages, to be cared for by Senegalese parents for this reason. Sokhna, a young woman in Lecco, Italy, was unable to afford private childcare for her one and a half-year old from the earnings of her employment as a hotel maid. Her young baby now lives with her mother in the outskirts of Dakar. She told me she misses her son very much, but she couldn't afford childcare and also didn't want him to be lonely. In Senegal, he'll grow up in a house full of people and age-mates to play with and it seemed selfish to her to force him to grow up without this convivial environment just to prevent her own sadness in being separated from her son.

Senegalese migrant parents who opt to keep their children with them in Italy must either send their children to daycare or have one parent stay home. Private daycare—for children under 3 years old or during after-school hours—in Italy is expensive, and the kinds of jobs available to Senegalese migrants in Italy hardly meet the demands of childcare payments. In most cases it is more practical for one parent to stay home. Though Babou notes that fathers in the diaspora in the US take over many of the

parenting duties when wives make a successful income in the braiding sector (2008), I have never observed that arrangement in Italy or France.

Nene and Assane's daughter Kiné lives with them and thus Nene must provide care for her. Kiné attends public kindergarten, which is free, but if Nene were to find a job that did not correspond to her daughter's exact hours of schooling, some arrangement for additional childcare would be needed. More importantly, Nene's pregnancy means that soon she will have an infant who could not be sent to public *scuola materna* until age three. While she waits to give birth, Nene has done little to improve her job skills or prepare herself for the job market. She has not thought much further about what kinds of jobs might be suitable or available and how to apply. Assane, who has considerable experience in the Italian economy and who has served as a liaison for many other Senegalese migrants who have arrived in Italy in need of employment, does not seem to find it urgent to educate his wife about job prospects, perhaps because he understands that it will be years before his second child will be in public daycare.

***Nio Faar*: On the same page**

Assane is a short, stocky man with a kind face. Even before I met him in Italy, I had a favorable impression of him from his reputation among his cousins in Dakar who rely on his hard work and remittances for many of their basic necessities. When I finally met him in Italy, I was struck by his sweetness and gentleness. Kiné shrieked and ran to him when he got home from work, and—after greeting me warmly, welcoming me, and asking after his cousins—he got on the floor with her, letting her crawl all over him and galloping around with her riding on his back.

Like many Senegalese migrants to Europe, Assane was employed in Senegal before he left, long before he met and married Nene. In fact, Assane had his own *atelier* (workshop) as a car mechanic in Dakar. When he tells me about this business, he stresses the fact that he had many people working under him and managed to make a decent living. He seems to anticipate my next question and says that there was no good reason for him to leave it all behind, except the promise of boundless financial gain in Europe that permeated the Senegalese zeitgeist. In 1996, this promise was closer to reality than today. Though Italy was certainly no Shangri-la, in the 80s and 90s there were jobs to be had in the factories of Northern Italy and Senegalese migrants were able to make a decent living (Carter 1997). A series of amnesty periods in the 1990s and the early 2000s also granted legal resident status to many illegal migrants that made it easier for foreign residents to get work (Carfagna 2002).

Today's Italian landscape looks very different to new arrivals from Senegal. Many of the factories that employ migrants and working class Italians alike in Northern Italy are being forced by the current economic crisis to close their doors. Working class Italian families who have worked in the same factory for generations now find themselves without a job. Migrants are feeling the impact of Italy's economic tightening acutely—and not just the factory workers. Ambulant peddling—the employment of choice for most illegal migrants—and hawking in Italy's markets have become increasingly unprofitable as Italians themselves cut back in spending in response to the economic squeeze. One Senegalese migrant joked to me that even the drug dealers are

feeling the effects of fiscal austerity, as Italians no longer have the disposable income to buy drugs.[59]

Assane has managed to hold onto his factory job in an industrial zone half an hour from where he now lives. As a skilled truck mechanic who has worked at the same factory for over ten years, he has more job security than most, provided the factory itself does not fold. It is grueling work and hard on his body, but he is proud to be valued by his employers. He is the only Senegalese man working at the factory, but he is friendly with his North African and Italian co-workers[60].

When he moved to Italy in 1996, Assane lived with his aunt and found work through migrant channels. Unlike many Senegalese migrants in Northern Italy at the time, Assane did not rely on a Mouride *dahira* for help finding work or for other social services, but relied on other ethnic channels of Senegalese Sereer.[61] In his first years of work in Italy, Assane steadily saved and sent home to his mother, to whom Assane was very close. He also sent money regularly to his siblings, including his beloved sister Kiné (after whom he named his daughter) and then to her child after her early death. Once he had put aside enough savings, Assane was able to make two separate month-long visits home to his family in a Sereer Village near Thiès, and in Dakar. On one visit to Dakar,

---

[59] In my research I came across many Senegalese who earned money through drug dealing in Italy, though none of these were .

[60] As I discussed in chapter 1, many of the Italians employed in the factories of Northern Italy are themselves migrants from Southern Italy. The *meridionali*, as southern Italians are called, were the traditional industrial workforce in the North. Gradually, as their children are raised and educated in the North and pursue higher education, the *meridionali* are replaced in factories by Italy's immigrant workforce.

[61] Though Wolof and Mourides receive the majority of the attention by researchers of Senegalese migration to Italy (Carter 1997, Riccio, Castagnone, and Bava to name a few), there are many migrants from Senegal that are not Mourides or Wolof, but Joola (St Jacques 2011), Soninke from the Senegal River Valley, Halpulaar, or Sereer, like Assane.

after nearly five years of residence in Italy, an imposing young woman caught his eye. Nene was then living in the bustling *quartier populaire* near Assane's old mechanic shop, and he met her while visiting his former neighborhood. Tall and striking, with a great zeal for fashion and a forward manner, Nene made quite an impression on the diminutive but solid Assane. After the long stretch of focusing on his career, and having accumulated some savings earmarked for bridewealth, Assane felt he was ready to marry. They courted briefly before his vacation came to an end, and soon Assane asked for Nene's hand in marriage.

The couple was wed in 2001, and though Assane could not attend the wedding, he planned to visit soon after. He called every two or three days from Italy and visited when he could, usually every two years. They had Kiné in 2006 and after her birth, Assane began visiting Senegal every August during the factory's annual closure for *ferragosto*[62]. Nene describes these visits home as full of joy after the long periods of missing one another. You know how it is, she said to me coyly, "*doo doyal"* (Wf: "you just can't get enough").

Eventually Assane saved up and bought a *terrain* (a plot of land) in Keur Massar, a rapidly developing, peri-urban area, in commuting distance to Dakar. As for many transnational migrants from other nations, attaining the land to build a home is a key goal (Buggenhagen 2009, S.M Tall 2002). For many migrants, the idea of returning home permanently—a central goal for the majority Senegalese abroad—is unfeasible unless they have a home to move into. A home symbolizes as well as facilitates the eventual return. Though Assane's home is far from complete, the project takes up a great deal of

[62] Ferragosto is the August holiday in which most of Italy shuts down for vacation.

his emotional and economic energy. It was his disappointing rate of progress on this project, in combination with acute longing for more time with his family, that led him to finally decide to bring his wife and daughter abroad to live with him.

After years of meeting her pleas with a calm "*dina niow"* (the time will come), Assane financially decided that it made more sense financially to bring his wife and their daughter to Italy. With Nene and Kiné in Italy, and now that his mother was deceased, he would no longer fly home every year. This would mean a great yearly savings that could be earmarked for the construction of his house. He explained to me that flying home to see her each year had been extravagantly expensive, not because of plane tickets but because of all the expectations that surrounded his returns.

Most migrants discuss visits home with a great deal of ambivalence. While they may spend their lonely, grueling workdays abroad fantasizing about a relaxing and triumphant return home, the reality of trips home is much less magical. Migrants home on a visit face intense scrutiny—the news of a return spreads like wildfire through family and neighborhood channels. Curious relatives and neighbors seek to evaluate if the migrant has "made it" or not, as Riccio (2005) recognizes in his discussion of the mix of suspicion and envy that non-migrants may feel for returning "heroes" from abroad. Saving for a trip home can take years, and not only because of the cost of international plane tickets. Migrants feel pressure—and desire—to make elaborate displays of wealth, from renting a car, to dressing expensively, to going out to clubs and restaurants to see and be seen, to wooing young women. After years of being on the bottom of the social totem pole in the host country as a migrant, a racial minority, and a marginalized "other,"

there is a thrill in being desirable, powerful, and comparatively (or at least seemingly) wealthy (Riccio 2005).

This display is not just about posturing and showing off, but has real importance for social status and earning a reputation of honor. As I have demonstrated in earlier discussions of female status, being generous is an important way for men to earn social standing and respect. On a migrant's trip home, non-migrants provide ample opportunities for the migrant to prove his generosity. Relatives are likely to drop in unannounced, including those distant relatives the migrant has never met. Each person who visits expects a gift or souvenir (*sorice)* of some kind, even those with whom the migrant has had no previous relationship. Most relatives who make the trip to collect a gift would be happy with cash, expecting the migrant to at least pay their fare from the village. In just a one-month visit, several of my interlocutors assured me, a migrant can blow through a year of savings or more. A Senegalese friend working in a *metal mechanique* factory in the lakes region of Italy told me he calculated that including plane fare, living expenses (including rent back in Italy), and gifts, one needs "at least 5,000,000cfa ($10,000) to go to Senegal for a month."

Raky, now divorced from her migrant husband who still resides in France, explained that many migrants get into debt on their visits home:

> By the time they've been here one month, by the second month they have to lebb [Wf: borrow money]. They are here calling the other [migrants] there so they'll send money, saying they'll pay them back. 'When I come back I'll work and pay you.' But when they return they have to pay insurance, pay their rent…

Upon their return, Raky explained, migrants not only find themselves with savings depleted, but also in debt and with their regular living expenses due and further remittances to be sent home.

Many migrants describe a mixed reception on their visits home. They report being told that they are not generous, that they have become too much like a *toubab*[63] (white person), when they cannot satisfy the endless requests for money. Many tell of being asked repeatedly when they will return to Europe. One friend of mine rents an apartment in Dakar for the month on his returns visits from Oslo, rather than live with his family. He never tells even his close family members where this apartment is, and thus has some respite from the endless demands, privacy to come and go as he pleases, and the chance for a real vacation.

On Assane's yearly visits to Nene and Kiné before he brought them overseas, he had an unconventional strategy for dealing with the incessant demands from his family and Nene's, as well as the pressures to *noss* (Wf. have fun), to go out and be seen enjoying the fruits of his success. To mitigate expectations from his wife, as well as to transfer to her the delicate responsibility of drawing boundaries with gift-seekers, Assane would give Nene a lump sum of money that he had available to spend over the duration of his visit at home. This money was intended to cover all living expenses, leisure expenses, and gifts and handouts to family and friends. He would place the money in Nene's care on the day of his arrival, and ask her for cash when he needed it for specific expenditures or direct others to her when he faced requests. It was Nene's job to make

[63] A *toubab*, the general consensus goes, is selfish and does not have communal family values.

sure the money lasted until the end of his visit. When it was gone, there would be no more, and she could keep whatever remained. This arrangement worked well for the two of them, relieving him of some of the pressures associated with disbursement, and giving her sufficient motivation for being judicious in her executions with his money. Nene's strong personality was better equipped to be the bearer of bad news for relatives whose needs they could not meet, and Assane was buffered from some of the negative dealings and accusations of stinginess and ingratitude while enjoying his vacation.

Assane has always been less circumspect with his wife about his financial constraints than most Senegalese migrants I have met. Most Senegalese men—migrant or otherwise—do not disclose their fiscal particulars to their wives and prefer to keep their financial details vague. By having his wife and daughter with him in Italy, Assane calculated, he could spend several years in a row saving before heading home. He communicated this to his wife and began the process of family reunification visas.

The pleasures and pressures of reunification

When couples do reunite after years of transnational marriage, the adjustment to a new phase of married life can be difficult. Not only are wives in a new place, without family or friends for what is in most cases the first time, but they are living in close quarters with a husband with whom they may only have spent a month at a time. I have already discussed the kind of loneliness Senegalese women feel upon migration, but adjusting to living each day with only a husband for company is also a challenge. In Senegal, the homosociality of everyday life means that even when a husband and wife live together, their bedroom at night may be the only time they spend time together alone.

As one Senegalese woman in Turin put it, when wives and husbands who are reunited begin to live together not just on vacation, "the true characters begin to show. You learn things about each other that you didn't know before." In cases discussed in chapters 3, in which husbands and wives come from vastly different class positions and levels of education, these differences come into sharp relief in the solitude and isolation that a reunited couple now finds themselves.

Nene and Assane had to adjust to life alone together. When they were first reunited in Europe, Nene said, it was just like when Assane used to come home on vacation. They were excited to be in one another's company and there was so much for him to show her about her new home. After a few months, however, the routine of real life in Italy set in and some of the passion the couple had felt for one another suffered under the strain of Nene's loneliness and frustrations. She laughs now thinking about how she used to pressure him to bring her to Italy. "I had no idea," she says.

Many women also have to face an extreme disappointment when they find out that their husbands aren't living in the luxury they imagined. This results from a combination of men not sharing many details about the realities of their lives abroad, or in some cases outright lying, and non-migrants in Senegal having unrealistic expectations about life in Europe due to what they see on television, what they hear through the grapevine, and their imaginations.

As one migrant explained, the responsibility for managing a wife's expectations falls squarely on the husband.

If you tell her you drive a Mercedes, the day she comes to Italy—God makes it so that she comes to Italy—you will be embarrassed… If you tell her you live in a chateau *[Fr: castle] and then she comes and sees your* monolocale *(It: studio apartment) with old*

furniture, or if when it rains there's a leak—this is just an example—you've just embarrassed yourself. She'll say, 'my husband's a liar.'

He contended that it is better not to talk at all about life abroad, and this is his tactic with his new wife, and that I found relatively common among migrants. As the previous chapter made clear, this tactic of taciturnity on the subject of their life abroad is one that many migrants take with their non-migrant wives, leading these women to know almost nothing about the realities of living overseas. This migrant conceded that a man might have to share some details, "because you know, she's your wife and she should know how things are" he counseled that,

if you talk to her, don't say you have things that you don't. Tell her what there is to the point that you decrease it, make it a little negative even. That way the day she arrives things will be a little better than she expected.

.

Besides hiding the unglamorous aspects of their lives abroad—living in cramped quarters in marginalized neighborhoods—many migrant men have other important aspects of life to hide. As I have already noted, the preponderance of men who take wives or girlfriends while abroad is high. Wives at home tend to expect this, as "men will be men," and most Senegalese women are aware of their husbands' additional marriages, be they Senegalese wives or host country nationals. Polygamy is common in Senegal and endorsed by Senegalese Islam. The social and religious sanctioning of the courtship that inevitably leads to taking another wife, however, is somewhat less clear. A husband will generally choose to keep details of an extra-marital relationship from his wife, whether or not he anticipates the relationship leading to a marriage or until the marriage is contracted.

When non-migrant wives notice a decrease in their remittances, they sometimes suspect that their husbands have taken a lover. Ndeye Astou, living with her in-laws in the Medina neighborhood of Dakar, had this suspicion of her husband in Spain who stopped visiting and sending regular remittances after her third child was born. Now eight years old, her son has never met his father. His calls have become more infrequent, and when I met Ndeye Astou it had been a full six months since she had received remittances for herself and her three children. She relies on the goodwill of her in-laws, and scrapes by selling perfume and incense she makes herself. She couldn't say what her husband's legal status was, and had heard that times were tough in Spain for migrants, but suspected the real reason for his long absence and financial retreat was that he was putting his resources into a new relationship. "*Est-ce que amul leenan foofu*?" she asked me rhetorically (Fr./Wf: "Don't you think he might have something else going on over there?"). She couldn't imagine a man who could stay abstinent for eight years on end. "It just couldn't be*, mwoo!"* His real problem, she said, is his propsensity to *nubb* (Wf: hide).

In Dakar one afternoon in 2010, I met the sister of a friend and neighbor, who was visiting from Spain and had stopped in to say hello. We talked at length about the high cost of childcare in Spain, while her two children played at her feet. After she left the house, my friends gave me an amused raised eyebrow and told me that the woman I had just met would make a great case study for my book. She got pregnant from a Senegalese boyfriend she met in Madrid, they said, only to find out that he was already married—twice, in fact, to a woman in Senegal and another Senegalese woman in Spain. Against her family's wishes, she became the man's third wife after she gave birth to the first

child, and they have been married ever since. Both of my hosts sneered at the thought of a man with two wives, one in each country, who feels the need for another girlfriend. They wondered aloud how he supports the households of three wives, two of them in Europe where the cost of living is so high. They agreed that the women probably had to largely support themselves.

Many male migrants confirmed that they observed fellow Senegalese men cheating on their wives while abroad.[64] Assane said that kind of lifestyle was never for him, but it seemed particularly unappealing when he had trouble supporting just one family on his salary. Spreading the already thin resources around to court additional women didn't make financial sense for him.

Though women tend to suspect infidelity when remittances begin to taper off, many of my migrant interlocutors explained that there were other reasons that the rate of remittances at the beginning of a trip or a marriage can't easily be sustained long-term. The tendency, they say, is to start off remitting large amounts as soon as they can. As many migrants use migrant channels and chain migration to stay with relatives or friends abroad, they do not have a great deal of expenses up front. Once they overstay the hospitality of their hosts, they must begin saving for their own living expenses. As migrants start to shift toward thinking about saving for their return, they will start remitting less on a monthly basis.

At the same time the grace period that a family may give a relative abroad before they begin asking for remittances, ends, and migrants face increased and wider demand

[64]Hirsch et al. find that Mexican migrant men in Atlanta were more likely to seek extramarital sex in the diaspora than they would at home, because of "the desire to buffer the loneliness of life far from one's family" (2009: 8).

from those at home. Migrants also must begin paying back debts they incurred for their journey. Their resources are increasingly spread thin, and their spending and saving goals become more multivariate.

As I showed in chapter 5, with a high cost of living, measly earnings, and the strain of saving and remitting simultaneously, migrants inevitably end up disappointing those who look to them for remittances. Those at home in Senegal who assume money simply falls out of the sky in Europe and the United States, cannot fathom the multiple demands and meager resources migrants negotiate. Migrants say that even when they try to explain that their wages are hardly substantial, they are accused of trying to hide the truth.

Nene had the same basic assumption that the money in Europe was never-ending. Though Nene says that Assane did not try to hide things from her and he had told her of the difficult aspects of life abroad, nothing could shake her conviction that Italy was a place of abundant riches. “Before I came, I thought there was a never-ending flow of money. He was in Europe; he was abroad.” When she was living in Senegal, she would complain about what she saw as his paltry remittances. Assane dutifully sent her 150,000fcfa (about $300) each month. “I thought it was nothing.”

Assane and Nene both told me separately about the remarkable reality check he gave her soon after her arrival in Italy. In the first month that she was there, Assane cashed his monthly check, took all the Euros and spread them on the table. He showed Nene the amounts allocated for all the various expenses, making little piles for rent, electricity, phone and internet, groceries, gas for the car, and other expenses. What was left amounted to less than 300 Euros, about the amount that Assane sent faithfully to his

wife and to his mother for almost the whole of their marriage, except for special occasions when he would send more. Until that moment, Nene told me, she never could have conceptualized that the money he made every month came to an end. That he had to carefully balance a budget each and every month and that he kept so little to himself (and certainly had nothing to spend on wooing other women), humbled Nene and gave her a new sense of respect and admiration for her husband.

It was also a turning point in Nene's sense of partnership with her husband. Now that she knew what the exact calculations were and how hard her husband worked for his money, she felt a new duty to help him stretch this modest monthly salary and no longer made demands upon him for things like new clothes with the same entitlement that characterized her role in the marriage prior to her migration.

Nene also feels a greater respect for Assane now that she is an *immigré* in her own right and is beginning to contend with the kind of requests for remittances which her husband has navigated for over a decade. Though Nene has no source of income whatsoever—and, in contrast to when she lived in Dakar and received remittances, no longer has a personal allowance at her discretion either—she now feels pressure to send money to her family. She felt called upon to make generous contributions to the celebrations of her siblings' marriages in Dakar, as befits a migrant relative, as not having employment is no valid excuse to those who think that being in Europe is equivalent to earning-power. Nene must rely on her husband for the money to send home, and she considers herself lucky to have a husband who doesn't hide things from her.

All this does not mean, however, that Nene is happy with life in Italy. She says she would move home tomorrow if she thought Assane would let her. The realities of life

abroad have not only crushed her romantic ideas about *l'exterieur*, but have made her consider her life in Dakar in a more positive light. The migrants' wives who seemed the happiest in their marriages and situations were the lucky few who had been able to live some time in both worlds. Sofy, for example, spends four months of every year on the Italian island of Sardinia with her husband who lives there full-time. For those four months, Sofy works as a *commerçante,* selling clothing and products she brings from Dakar and living with her husband. After that period she returns to Dakar with clothing she buys in Italy to resell in Senegal. Her husband also comes to visit her and their three children in Senegal once every six months. The couple is therefore not apart for long, and both partners have real understanding about the challenges and advantages of either location and the general pressures that migrants face from remittance-hungry relatives. Though Sofy laments this responsibility, she is well aware that her situation is close to ideal and that her partnership with her husband of 17 years is what sustains them both. "*Danu galerer nu niar"* she says, "We fight the good fight together."

Nene would prefer this type of arrangement, but the details of that balance are complicated. For now, she remains in lonely Italy. When we are out visiting friends of Assane's, one factory worker complains that his wife is always pressuring him to bring her abroad. Nene laughingly volunteers to call her and set her straight; she'll explain why the wife would be much happier staying at home.

Yet these kinds of messages rarely pass between those who are abroad and those who are home in Senegal. There is a curious gap that forms between those who are "*à l'exterieur*" and those at home, in which the realties of life overseas cannot possibly translate. I asked Nene what if someone else's wife had given her the warning she now

planned to offer someone else's, would she have heeded the advice? She laughs and says she wouldn't have. About the realties of life abroad "I had no idea," she laughs, shaking her head. "I thought I knew but I didn't know."

CONCLUSION

In other periods of Senegalese history, men were internationally mobile and left wives and families at home. Senegal boasts a long history of itinerant trade throughout the region and traders would often be gone for long stretches in other parts of Africa while their wives and families awaited their return. The majority of *laptots*, the French colonial subjects who served the administration, were Wolof from the coast of Africa and represent another example of early Wolof transnationalism. The *laptots* traveled for the colonial administration to other locations in the colonies, investing their earnings at home and returning home to use them even before their contracts were up (Whitehouse 2012: 26).

In other regions of Africa and across the world, in other periods of history, there are parallel stories of men leaving families at home as they journey for war or labor migration. That transnational marriage—and even Senegalese transnational marriage—is not necessarily new is not a challenge to the idea that the contemporary practice of transnational marriage is significant or interesting. Certainly, the proliferation of discourse in Senegalese popular media, music and everyday conversation about migration, migrants' wives, and their reflection of contemporary ideologies of marriage indicates that Senegalese themselves see something compelling or troublesome about current instances of transnational marriage.

Early scholars of transnationalism faced similar arguments that transnationalism itself was not a new phenomenon in migration, as other historical migrant movements also retained strong ties to their homelands. They maintained, however, that changes in technologies of transport and communication allow for a far more dynamic and

concentrated exchange across borders than earlier circumstances would allow, and thus for more immediate and intimate transnational connections for migrants. These changes made possible a new type of migrant experience and thus new ways of conceiving of the migratory project as a whole.

Certainly, most of the couples in my study are engaged in a kind of transnational marriage that could not have existed in earlier epochs. The fact that so many of the couples in my study spoke frequently—even daily—makes these relationships very distinctive from the kinds of transnational marriage that existed in other historical periods. My research shows that this does not necessarily equate to closer emotional ties. The opportunity for constant contact often creates and leaves unfulfilled the expectation for a deeper relationship mediated by communication technology. Furthermore, cell-phones, the internet, and wire-transfers also make migrant husbands more responsible and accountable to wives and family, and make their wives subject to increased control and discipline by their husbands.

Feminist theorist have pointed to a contemporary trend for commodification of intimacy, noting services are now commoditized like objects and intimate acts are expected to be consumable like other kinds of commodities. It is increasingly difficult to separate "globalizing constructions of love and intimacy" from the new kinds of commodification of love, care and sexuality in the marketplace (Padilla 2007: xvi). Romantic love, too, gets absorbed into the commoditization of intimate service and changes expectations for how love fits within our other ambitions.

More and more, relationships are expected to conform to our needs as consumers. Senegalese migrant husbands expect wives to be by the landline to expect their call, to

perform acts of representation, and not to ask uncomfortable questions about their circumstances. Migrants' wives expect their husbands to support them materially, understand their needs, and not restrict their freedom of movement. Unlike in non-transnational relationships, these couples don't have the opportunity to grow side by side. They compartmentalize the various elements of a marriage and are thus disappointed by the outcome.

It is tempting to view Senegalese transnational marriage as a story about global inequality. Indeed, as I have shown, Senegal's history of colonial occupation, its dependence on the loans and reform experiments of international organizations, and its citizens' conscription into the "new industrial reserve army" (Castles 2008: 28) on the battlefields of global capitalism are an important part of the story of how transnational marriage evolved in Senegal. In other locations in the developing world, for example in the Dominican Republic (Brennan 2004), southern India (Desai and Banerji 2008) and the Philippines (Parreñas 2005, Hondagneu Sotelo and Avila 1997), widespread poverty and lack of economic opportunities are pushing couples to make international choices to lead more successful local lives.

As Ong's (1999) study of mobile elite businessmen and their long-distance families makes clear, however, contemporary transnational marriage is not the simply domain of the poor and disenfranchised. For the men in Ong's study, the choice to enact their "flexible citizenship" means opting for flexible kinship as well.

For many of us, in all swaths of life, the virtual is a significant element of today's intimate relationships. Whether grandparents watching their grandchildren grow up over Skype or marriages resulting from internet dating, or even sexual interaction over text

messages, the virtual has become a mundane element of contemporary relationships. While some scholars celebrate the potential for time-space compression in relationships, others have projected that a world of screen-mediated human interactions could lead to "fragmentation," even "balkanization," and the "erosion of face-to-face community" (Nie & Hillygus, 2002)

My study suggests that while virtual connection can in fact exacerbate existing tensions and lead to emotional disconnection within couples, outside of these couples, long-distance marriages heighten the importance of face-to-face community. Long-distance marriages in fact strengthen the importance of social relationships of proximity, give mothers-in-law increased power over their daughters-in-law, give mothers' increased power over their sons, make community opinion an ever more pressing measure of marital success or failure.

Thus, though the introduction of virtual connection into marriages can be disruptive for the emotional closeness of the conjugal bond, it in fact creates some key continuities for other kinds of social hierarchies and social reproduction. This again goes against the grain of anthropological theories of a trend towards the primacy of the conjugal bond over other kinds of social relationships. The precarity of migration in this era, the weakness of a techno-mediated marital relationship, and the reinforced strength of community and familial influence circumscribes the possibility for conjugal supremacy and makes reinvesting in the extended family and the community for pathways to social success and fulfillment.

States and Transnational Marriage

In this thesis, I have shown how the post-Fordist labor reform and neoliberal economic policies create conditions that favor transnational migration and transnational marriage. Neoliberal policies in developing nations like Senegal disrupt linear narratives of advancement, withdraw social services and push workers to find economic opportunities abroad to advance socially at home. Post-Fordist labor policies and duplicitous immigration policies in developed nations pull workers from less-developed economies into migration but do not offer the stability needed to settle permanently. Many migrants thus live transnationally—investing at home from abroad, yet rarely returning conclusively to their native lands.

Both sending and receiving nation-states have much to gain from keeping migrants transnational. Transnational migrants unwittingly support the welfare state retrenchment that characterizes much of neoliberal Africa, while simultaneously supplying European economies with a perpetually expellable workforce that falls outside of states' social safety nets. Further research must investigate how the transnational imperative for migrants is reinforced not only on macro levels by policy such as deterrents to spousal reunification in host countries, but also on meso- and micro-levels by families and communities in neoliberal sending nations, through narratives of duty and honor that pose the migrant as hero/prodigal son, the conflation of masculinity, filial responsibility and travel.

States' interests, a growing consumer culture, new technologies, and the movement of global capital all create opportunities and imperatives to define new sorts of

relationships and meanings of intimacy. These new meanings are defined and apprehended in culturally particular ways. As they navigate their marital trajectories, Senegalese transnational couples are part of a sea change in human relationality, virtual intimacy and what it means to connect in our contemporary era.

APPENDIX A

The story of transnational migration and marriage that I have constructed since my first visit to Senegal in 2003 would not have been possible without my immersion and engagement in both ends of the migratory spectrum—in the diaspora and at home. In almost 30 months of "quite literally following connections, associations, and putative relationships" (Marcus 1995: 97) in France, Italy, and Senegal, I found that new layers of meaning and understanding always materialized once I had considered them both in the cold light of Europe and under the Senegalese sun.

My multi-sited approach to this project was at first a happy accident. I first visited Senegal as a study abroad student in the spring of 2003, after a summer of study in Paris, and a fall semester in the Veneto region of Italy. I spent those five months in 2003 living with a Senegalese family, learning Wolof and studying the history of Islam. Upon graduation from college, I applied for and was granted a Fulbright fellowship to combine my passions for Italian and Senegalese languages and culture by conducting an ethnographic study of Senegalese immigrants in Italy. My fluency in Wolof and my experience in Senegal allowed me to connect immediately with Senegalese migrants I met in immigrant-owned businesses and places of leisure in Turin and the surrounding areas, including a telephone center and a take-out counter in Turin, a cyber café in a small town near Lago Maggiore, and a Senegalese restaurant in Genoa.

These were transnational spaces, where migrants came to interact with home through fellowship and communication with fellow Senegalese, through phone calls and Skype calls home to Senegal, to send money through Western Union and Money Gram,

or to have a literal taste of home in the form of a plate of *maafé* or *soupukanja*.[65] In one telecenter[66] where I spent a great deal of my research time, regulars would be in and out everyday, sometimes to phone home or buy various products like the Maggi bouillon cubes used in Senegalese cooking, but usually just to schmooze with whomever was there and to watch the other customers come in and out. These spaces had the feel of *telecentres* (Fr.) in Dakar, where neighbors would hang out for hours and catch up at a leisurely pace.

Once the novelty of my presence and my Wolof wore off with regulars in these establishments, I was drawn into discussions about Senegalese politics, Italian immigration policy, dealings with other African migrants in the neighborhood, and the pros and cons of life in Senegal and abroad. I conducted semi-structured and unstructured interviews with approximately a dozen Senegalese women and men who owned and frequented these spaces, accompanied them to their homes for meals and *attaya*[67], and absorbed as much I could of their daily routines.

After a year of talking about, thinking about, and dreaming of Senegal alongside my interlocutors, I did what many of them longed to, but could not do—I moved back to Senegal and found a job. From 2005 to 2007 I worked in local NGO in Dakar, first running programs for their language school and cultural training center and later working for the public health arm of the organization. Though the directors were American former

---

[65] *Maafé* and *soupukanja* are two popular Senegalese dishes—the former peanut-based, the latter made with okra and palm oil.

[66] A shop front with phone booths where callers can pay as they go. In the years since my early fieldwork, these centers have begun to disappear—in Senegal and in migrant communities abroad—as cell phones, Skype and cheaper long-distance calling plans have made it easier to call home.

[67] A strong, sugary tea traditionally served in three rounds.

Peace Corps volunteers, ninety percent of the staff was Senegalese and the lingua franca of the office was Wolof. Though I did not conduct official research in this period, my ears were attuned to talk of migration, imaginings and longings of Europe and the United States, and the stories of transnational marriage I heard all around me. Teaching foreign visitors about Senegalese culture alongside Senegalese instructors, I deepened my understanding and appreciation of core Wolof values of *muuñ, sutura, teranga* and *sañse*. This cultural education, my expanding network of friends and contacts, and my total immersion in a Wolophone environment were key to subsequent fieldwork and analysis.

In 2007, I left Senegal to begin graduate school in Atlanta. I spent summers in Italy (2008), Senegal (2009), and France (2010) doing pilot research and conducting interviews, focus groups, and participant observation. In Turin and the surrounding areas in 2008 I sought to refresh my relationships with contacts from 2004-2005, seeing how their lives had changed in the interim and how worsening economic conditions across Europe were affecting their lives and the larger Senegalese community. I was particularly interested to see how my interviewees were approaching new stages of life—some had married or taken additional wives, one had brought his wife and children to Italy to join him, others had graduated college or transitioned to new cities and new jobs, and a few had left Italy. I conducted few formal interviews there or in Bordeaux in the summer of 2010, but my participant observation was an important source for insight into how economic fluxes can shape a migratory experience.

With support from the Wenner-Gren Foundation and the Social Science Research Council, I returned to Senegal for 11 months in 2010-2011. I spent the year living with a Senegalese friend and her teenage cousin, two blocks from my former host family, where

I still spent most evenings and weekends. In that year I continued my participant observation and conducted and recorded a core of 51 semi-structured, long-form interviews with women who were married to (or divorced from) Senegalese men living overseas.

My initial interviewees were identified by my friend Amy Diop who was eager to help in my research. Everyone I knew in Dakar—including me—knew numerous women who were married to migrants, but Amy was the first to make the offer of facilitating my contact with them as a researcher. She came along on these first interviews, introducing me and then staying and participating actively in our conversations. I came to appreciate her presence, as well as her natural ability to draw people out of their shells, and soon I appointed her as my "research assistant," and invited her along on many more interviews for company and participation. She had a knack for knowing how best to present me to hesitant participants, telling anecdotal stories about our friendship, about my experiences in Senegal, my participation in the lives of her family members over the previous seven years—including my special relationship with her oldest son Mohammed, whose third word was "Dinah." These stories subtly signaled both that I was trustworthy and also appreciative and respectful of Senegalese culture. She loved to laughingly tell potential research participants how I had cried during an interview while hearing one woman's story of mistreatment at the hands of her husband—this anecdote served both to make me look a little foolish and unthreatening, but also empathetic and disposed to feel compassion and respect for the women who shared their stories with me. I took pains to assure my interviewees that I was not a journalist, as many were initially wary of their stories getting back to their husbands. When they learned that my digital recordings were

for my records only—not to be played on the radio, a major concern—and that I would never record either their names or their husbands' names, they relaxed. Amy and I often shared details of our own experiences—including my long-distance relationship with my then-fiancé in the United States and Amy's adjustment to living with her in-laws—and the tone of interviews was generally confidential and intimate.

Most of my interviewees were identified by snowball sampling—at the end of an interview we'd ask the woman we were talking to if she had friends or neighbors who were also *jabaaru immigré* and who might want to talk to us. Often, the woman would stand up and take us there herself, introducing us to her friends or neighbors and sometimes staying to listen in and contribute herself. Thus several interviews became *de facto* focus groups, as they literally snowballed—gathering people as we went. These group interviews became especially rich as neighbors and friends would add to each other stories, remember aspects of their own stories they hadn't included in their own interview or expand on themes that others brought up. This is evident in the story of Adama in chapter 5 who told me during her interview that her husband was not jealous, but opened up about her husband's intensely jealous behavior the next day while participating in an interview of a neighbor who broached the topic. The relaxed and open conversation atmosphere of these kinds of group interviews gave me the opportunity to access a deeper level of conversation than a more formal one-on-one could achieve. When I felt that the presence of neighbors and friends took over the interview or prevented an interviewee from being able to speak freely, I tried to return alone or with Amy on another day to speak again in a more private atmosphere.

Though I followed the trails of snowball sampling, I also used my networks of friends and co-workers in Dakar to develop a broader representation from different neighborhoods of the city [see Tables G1 and G2 in Appendix B]. I was careful to include both middle class neighborhoods (Sicaps), lower class inner city neighborhoods like Medina and Ben Talli (*quartiers populaires*), traditional fishing villages (Yoff, Ouakam) and the lower class outskirts (*banlieue*) of Dakar such as Parcelles and Guediawaye. I also made a point to interview women living outside of Dakar, in three rural locations north of the capital city—each an important sending community for migrants. In Louga, Touba, and Kebemer, I found both continuities and distinctions between the experiences of women in rural and urban settings, several of the latter I detail in Chapters 2 and 3.

I did not select interviewees based on the country of residence of their spouse. Nearly half of my interviewees' husbands were living in Italy. I account for this fact in two ways: the first is that spousal reunification is much less likely in Italy and Spain than in other locations such as France or other African countries. Secondly, though a larger number of Senegalese emigrants are in other African countries, these migrants are not always considered in the same category of emigrants in Europe. When I asked people to identify *jaabaru immigré,* they thought first of people whose husbands are in Europe, the United States or the Middle East.

In the summer of 2011, I returned to Italy to conduct several interviews and focus groups with migrant men and women. My interviews with migrants' wives in Senegal gave me new perspectives on transnational marriage and new questions for migrant husbands. I sought out unmarried and married men to complement the stories from non-

migrant women about their motivations and approaches to marrying women at home. For the sake of privacy and discretion, I generally did not talk to both sides of the same couple, but rather sought out men whose migratory trajectories and marriages were similar to the husbands of my Senegalese interviewees. As nearly half of my interviewees' husbands were in Italy, I felt confident that I was getting a good counterpoint to the wives' testimonies. Doing these interviews back to back, traveling from Senegal to Italy in short succession, gave me great insight into the miscommunications between transnational husbands and wives. Seeing and hearing about the realities on both sides of the relationship brought many issues of parallel struggle into relief and gave my research an invaluable multi-local (Hannerz 2003) character that best allowed me to explore this truly transnational topic.

APPENDIX B

This data comes from 51 interviews with migrants' wives conducted in Dakar, Louga, Touba, and Kebemer in 2010-2011 (see Appendix A for more detail on methodology), with the exception of Table F1 which was sourced from Eurostat.

TABLE A . INTERVIEW DATA

	TOTAL RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS
HAS CO-WIFE/WIVES	15	29%
HUSBAND IS A RELATIVE	17	33%
HUSBAND IS AN IRREGULAR IMMIGRANT	11	22%
LIVES WITH IN-LAWS	20	39%
WORKS/IN SCHOOL	21	42%

TABLE B.

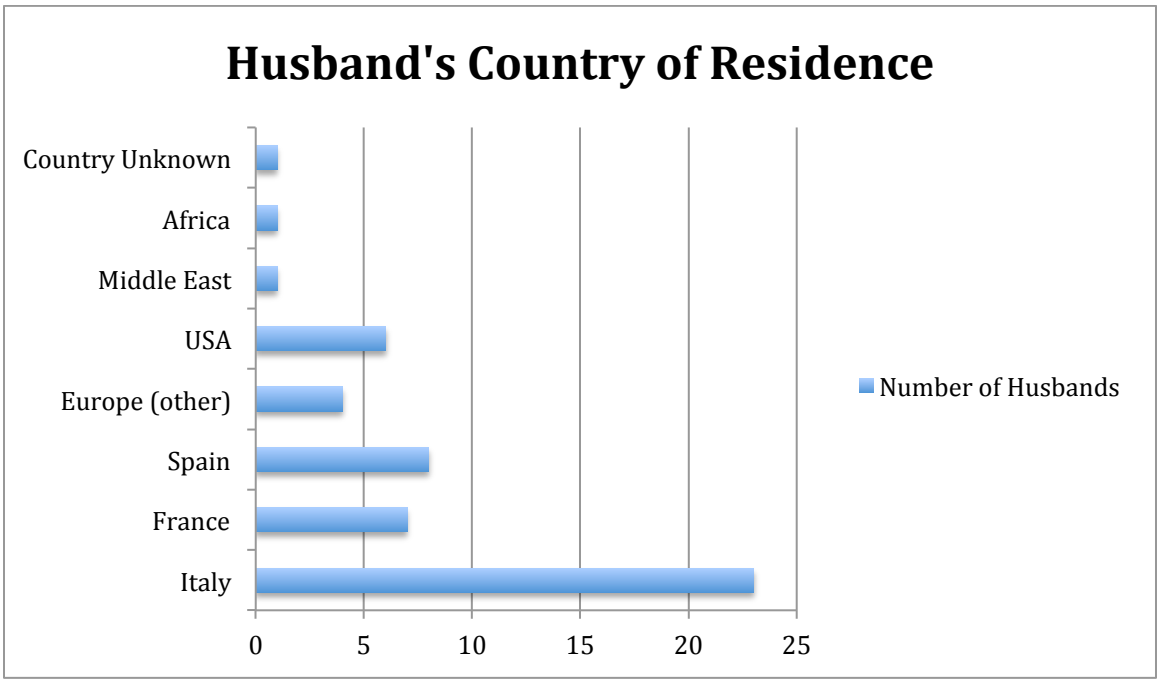


TABLE C. INTERVIEW DATA BY RESIDENCE

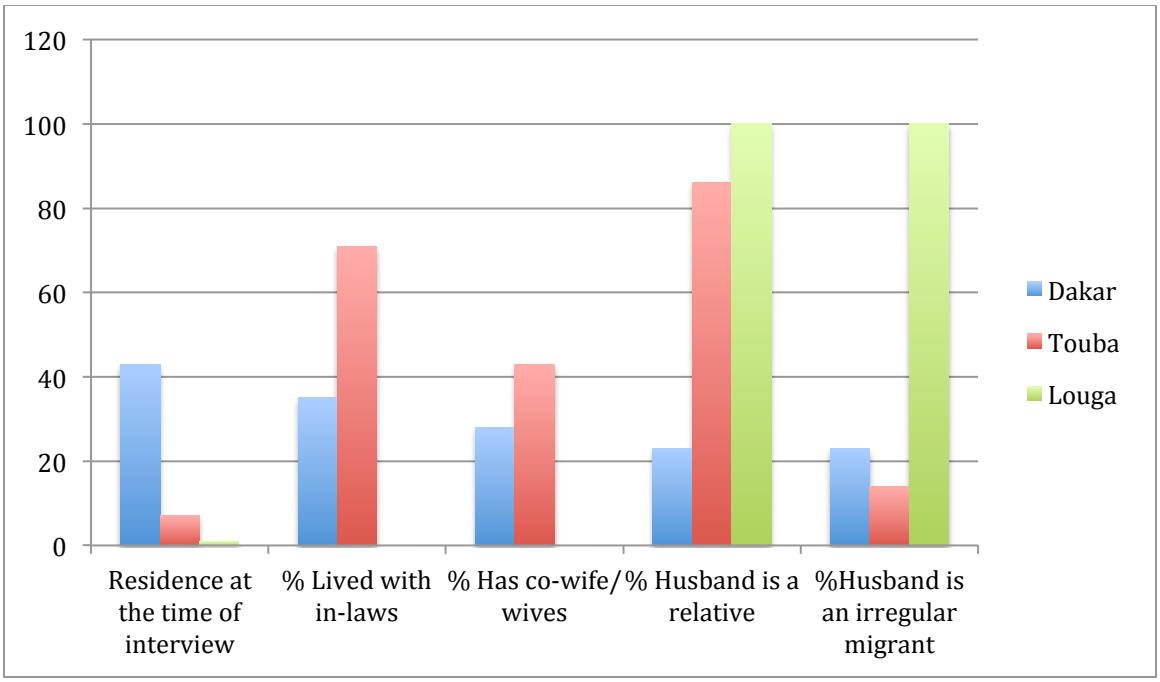


TABLE D. KNOWLEDGE OF HUSBAND'S SITUATION

DOES NOT KNOW HUSBANDS OCCUPATION	16	31%
DOES NOT KNOW CITY OF HUSBAND'S RESIDENCE	13	25%

TABLE D. YEARS MARRIED

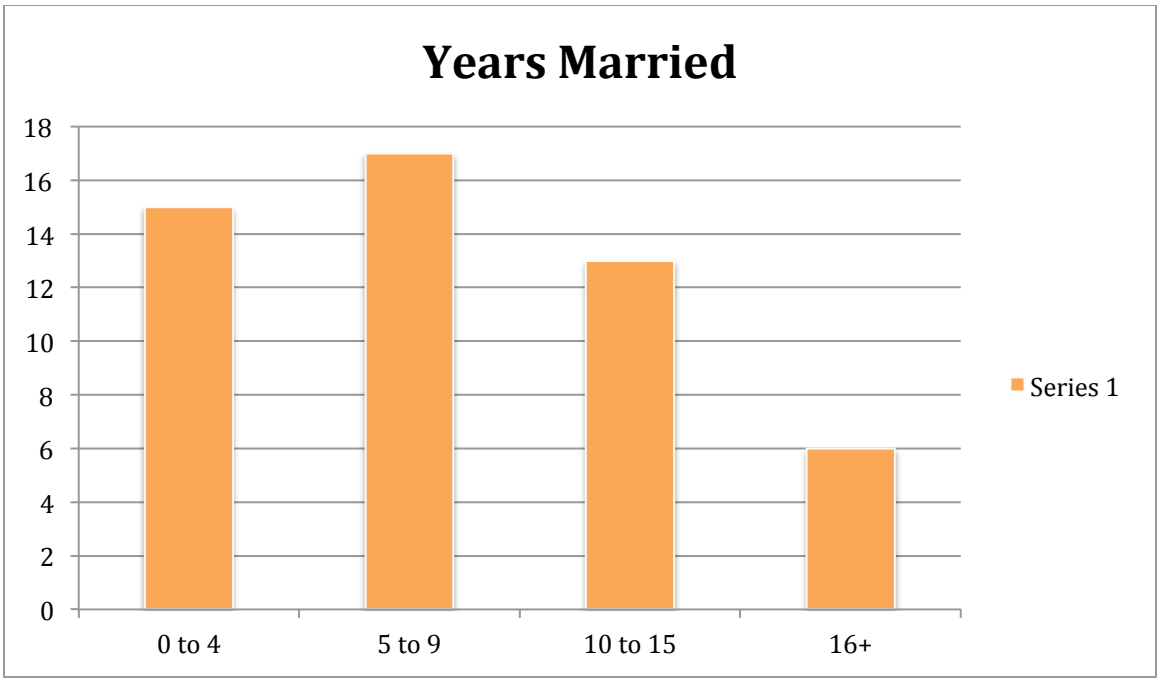


TABLE E1. YEARS MARRIED, KNOWLEDGE OF HUSBAND'S LOCATION

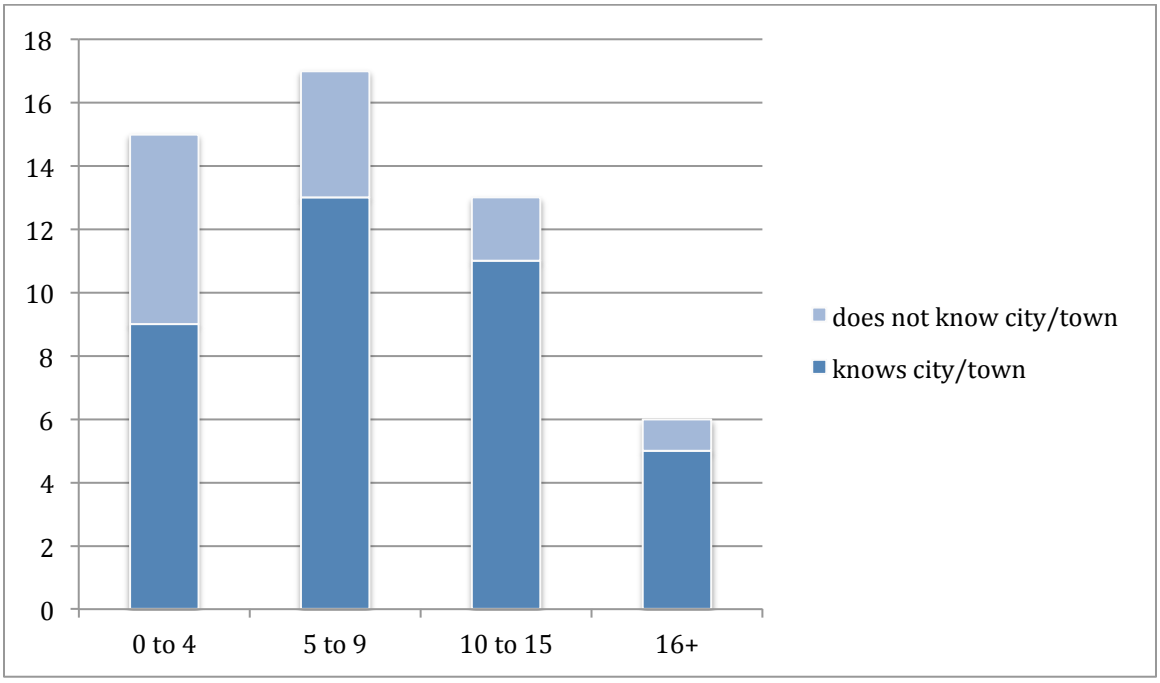


TABLE E2. YEARS MARRIED, KNOWLEDGE OF HUSBAND'S EMPLOYMENT

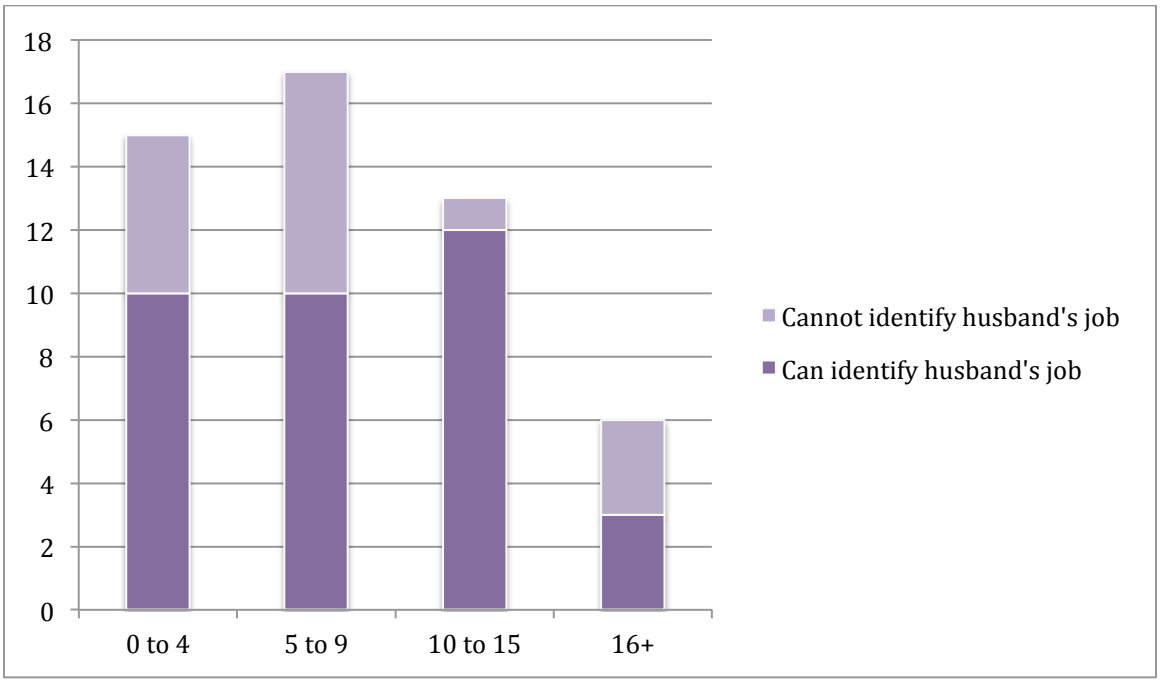


TABLE F. NUMBER OF CHILDREN

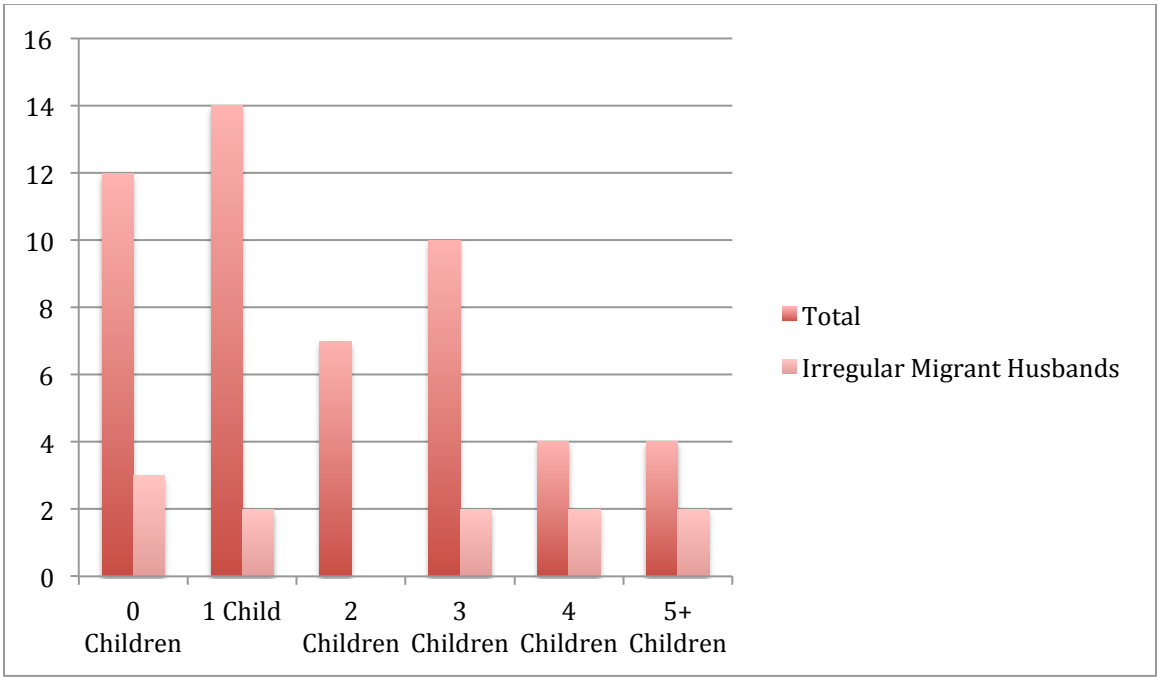


TABLE F1. LEGAL SENEGALESE MIGRATION TO EUROPE

Legal Immigration, Senegal to Europe
2000-2008

Destination	Senegalese Immigrants	%-Male	*Net-Males*
Spain	54,540	85.7%	38,912
Italy	40,824	76.8%	21,882
France	28,368	54.3%	2,440
Other	9,527	61.5%	2,191
Europe	**133,259**	**74.5%**	**65,425**

Source: Eurostat

TABLE F2. HUSBAND'S COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE

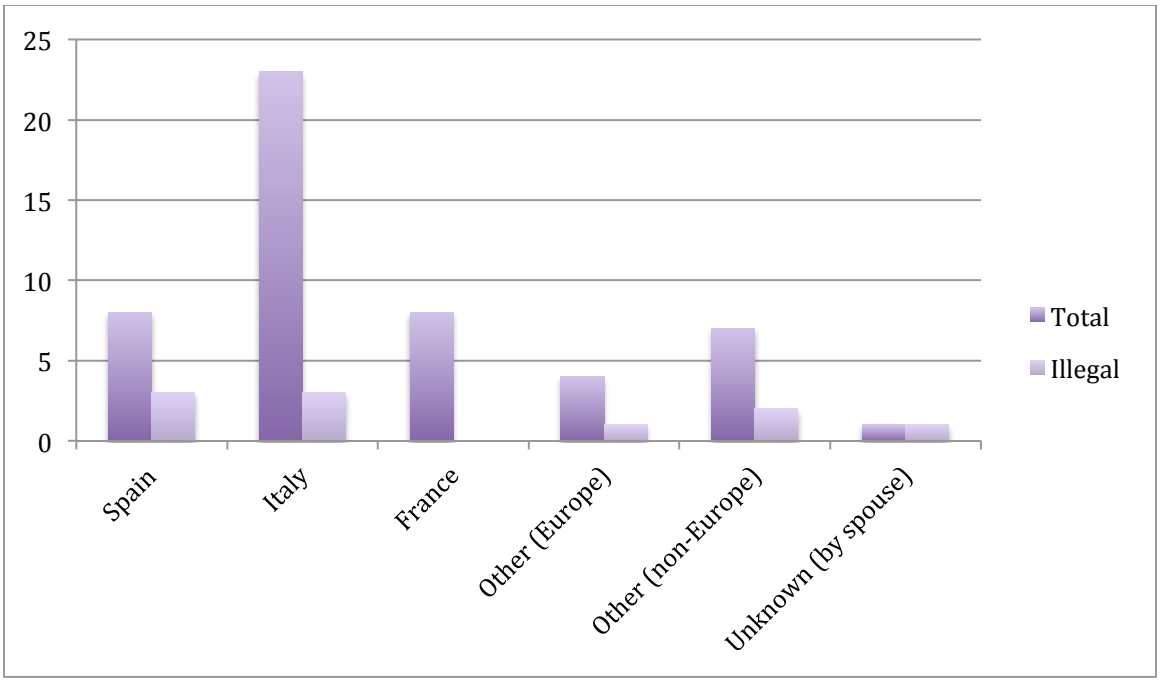


TABLE G1. DAKAR NEIGHBORHOODS AND LEGALITY

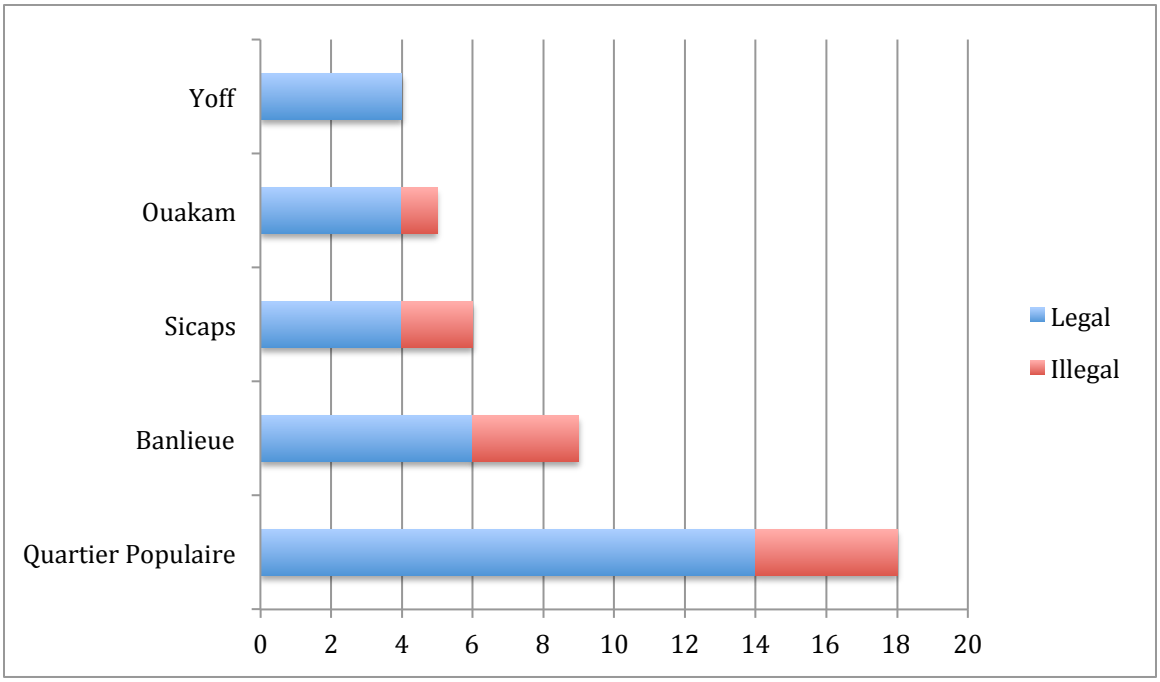
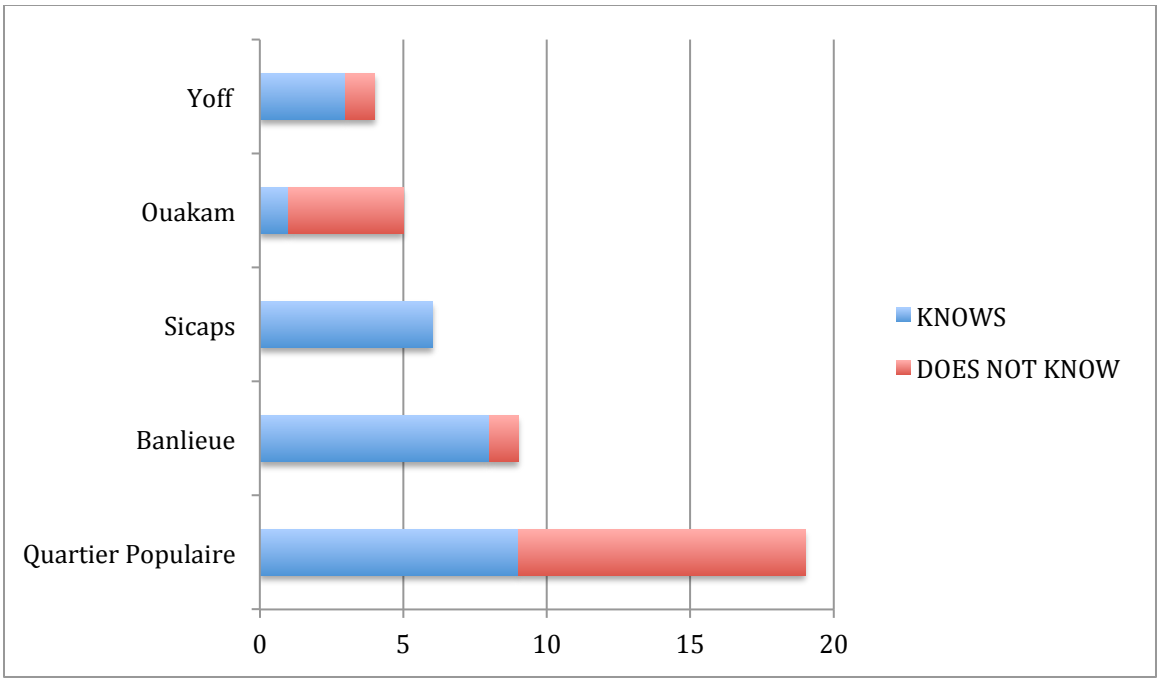


TABLE G2. DAKAR NEIGHBORHOOD AND KNOWLEDGE OF HUSBAND'S JOB


Yoff
Ouakam
Sicaps
Banlieue
Quartier Populaire
0
5
10
15
20
KNOWS
DOES NOT KNOW

WORKS CITED

Ackers, L. (2004) "Citizenship, migration and the valuation of care in the European Union." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies,* vol. 30 (2): 373-396.

Aduayi-Diop, R. (2010) *Survivre à la pauvreté et à l'exclusion: Le travail des adolescents dans les marchés de Dakar*. Paris: Karthala.

Aguilar, F. (2003) "Global Migrations, Old Forms of Labor, and New Transborder Class Relations," *Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 41, No. 2 :137-161.

Alonso, A. and Oiarzabal, P.J. (2010) *Diasporas in the new media age: Identity, politics and community*. Nevada: University of Nevada Press.

Amann, Edmund and Werner Baer. 2002. "Neoliberalism and Its Consequences in Brazil." Journal of Latin American Studies 34(4): 945-959.

Amédé, L. S. (2009): "Privée de tout, l'Afrique sait tirer le maximum des NITC", *Les Afriques,* Sunday, 11 October.

Antoine, P, Bocquier, P., Fall, A.S., Guisse, Y.M., Nanitelamio, J. (1995) *Les familles dakaroises face à la crise*. Dakar, Senegal: Orstom, IFAN, Ceped.

Antoine, P. and Nanitelemio, J. (1996) *'Can Polygyny be avoided in Dakar?*', in *Courtyards, Markets, City Streets: Urban Women in Africa.* Kathleen Sheldon (ed.). Boulder/ Oxford: Westview Press.

Associated Press (2013) "Dozens Found Dead of Thirst in African Desert" October 31, 2013.

Ba, Awa (2008) "These Women Who Wear Trousers: Senegalese Women Immigrants in New York City" Gwendolen M. Carter Conference, Migrations In & Out of Africa: Old Patterns & New Perspectives. February 15-16, 2008, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL.

Babou, C. A. (2007) *Fighting the Greater Jihad: Amadu Bamba and the Founding of the Muridiyya of Senegal, 1853-1913.* Athens, O.H.: Ohio University Press.

Babou, C.A. (2008) 'Migration and Cultural Change: Money, "Caste," Gender, and Social Status among Senegalese Female Hair Braiders in the United States." *Africa Today,* Vol. 55, No. 2, pp 3-22.

Baizan. P., C. Beauchemin, A. Gonzalez-Ferrer. (2011) "A Reassessment of Family Reunification in Europe: The Case of Senegalese Couples." *MAFE Working*

Paper 16. Retreived from : http://mafeproject.site.ined.fr/en/publications/working_papers/.

Baldassar, L.V. (2008) "Debating Culture across Distance: Transnational Families and the Obligation to Care" in *The Family in Question: Immigrant and Ethnic Minorities in Multicultural Europe*, Netherlands: Amsterdam University Press.

Ballard, R. (2004). "*Riste* and *Ristedari:* the significance of marriage in the dynamics of transnational kinship networks", The Center for Applied South Asian Studies, University of Manchester. Available at: www.casas.org.uk/pa**per**s/pdfpa**per**s/ristedari.pdf

Barber, P. G. (2008) *"*Cell phones, complicity, and class politics in the Philippine labor diaspora." *Focaal—European Journal of Anthropology* 51: 28–42

Basch, L., N. Glick Schiller, C. Szanton Blanc (1993) *Nations Unbound: Transnational Projects, Postcolonial Predicaments, and Deterritorialized Nation-States.* New York: Routledge.

Beauchemin, C.; K. Caarls, and V. Mazzucato (2013) "Senegalese Migrants between Here and There: An Overview of Family Patterns" *MAFE Working Paper 33.* Retrieved from: http://www.ined.fr/fichier/t_telechargement/60574/telechargement_fichier_fr_wp33_senegal_family.pdf

Bernstein, E. (2007) *Temporarily Yours: Intimacy, Authenticity, and the Commerce of Sex*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.

Boellstorff, T. (2009) *Coming of Age in Second Life: An Anthropologist Explores the Virtually Human*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Bohr, Y. & Tse, C. (2009) "Satellite Babies in Transnational Families: a Study of Parents' Decision to Separate from Their Infants." *Infant Mental Health Journal*, 30, (3), 1–22.

Bop, C., C.I. Niang, M.S. Ndione and S. Sow. (2008) *Etude sur la sexualité au Sénégal*. Unpublished report.

Brennan, D. (2004) *What's Love Got to Do with It*? *Transnational Desires and Sex Tourism in the Dominican Republic*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Brinkerhoff, J. M. (2009) *Digital Diasporas: Identity and Transnational Engagement*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Bryceson, D. and U. Vuorela (2002) 'Transnational families in the twenty-first century' in D. Bryceson and U. Vuorela (eds) *The transnational family: new European frontiers and global networks,* Oxford: Berg, 3-30.

Buggenhagen, Beth. 2001. Prophets and Profits: Gendered and Generational Visions of Wealth and Value in Senegalese Murid Households. Journal of Religion in Africa 21(4): 373-401.

Buggenhagen, B. (2009) "Beyond Brotherhood: Gender, Religious Authority and the Global Circuits of Senegalese Muridiyya." In, *New Perspectives on Islam in Senegal: Conversion, Migration, Wealth, Power and Femininity*. Mamadou Diouf and Mara A. Leichtman, eds. Pp. 189-210. Palgrave Press.

Buggenhagen, B. (2012) *Muslim Families in Global Senegal: Money Takes Care of Shame* Indianapolis: Indiana University Press

Carfagna, M. (2002) "I sommersi e i sanati. Le regolarizzazioni degli immigrati in Italia" in *Assimilati ed esclusi*. A. Colombo and G. Sciortino (eds). Bologna: il Mulino: 53-90.

Carter, Donald M. (1997) *States of Grace: Senegalese in Italy and the New European Immigration*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Carling, J. (2007) 'Migration control and migrant fatalities at the Spanish-African borders.' *International Migration Review,* 41(2): 316–343.

Castagnone, E. and F. Gasparetti (2008) "Il settore dei phone center: dall'espansione alla crisi. Il caso di San Salvario" in *L'immigrazione che intraprende: Nuovi attori economici in provinicia di Torino*. Fieri (ed.) Turin, Italy: Mariogras Industrie Grafiche.

Castaldi, F. (2006) *Choreographies of African Identities: Négritude, Dance, and the National Ballet of Senegal*, Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

Castles, S., 2000. *Ethnicity and globalization : from migrant worker to transnational citizen*, London ; Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications.

Castro, L. and *Gonzalez*, V. (*2009*): "Technology and Connections: Mexican immigrants in the USA." *IEEE Technology & Society Magazine*. Vol. 28, No. 2, 42-48.

Chamberlain, M. and S. Leydesdorff (2004) 'Transnational families: memories and narratives.' *Global Networks*, 4, 227-41.

Cole, J. (2004) "Fresh Contact in Tamatave, Madagascar: Sex, Money and Intergenerational Transformation," *American Ethnologist.* 31(4): 571-586.

Cole, J. (2009). “Love, Money, and Economies of Intimacy in Tamatave, Madagascar.” In *Love in Africa*, edited by Lynn M. Thomas and Jennifer Cole. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Cole, J. & L. Thomas. (eds). (2009.) *Love in Africa*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Comaroff, Jean and John L. Comaroff (eds.) (2001) *Millennial Capitalism and the Culture of Neoliberalism.* Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Comaroff, J. and J. L. Comaroff (2005) “Reflections on youth, from the past to the postcolony” in *Makers and Breakers: Children and Youth in Postcolonial Africa,* A. Honwana and F. De Boeck (eds.), Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Conforti, J. (2007) “Low Birth Rates In Japan And Italy” *International Review of Modern Sociology* Vol. 33, No. 2, pp. 245-268

Constable, N. (2003) *Romance on a global stage : pen pals, virtual ethnography, and "mail-order" marriages*, Berkeley: University of California Press.

Constable, N. (2009) “The Commodification of Intimacy: Marriage, Sex, and Reproductive Labor” *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 38: 49 – 64.

Cooper, F., 2001. “What is the Concept of Globalization Good for? An African Historian's Perspective.” *African Affairs,* 100 (399), 189-213.

Creevey, Lucy. Vengroff, R. and I. Gaye. (1995) “Devaluation of the CFA Franc in Senegal: The Reaction of Small Businesses ” *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 4, pp. 669-683

Cruise O’Brien, D. (1971) *The Mourides of Senegal: The Political and Economic Organization of an Islamic Brotherhood.* Oxford: Clarendon.

Daffé, G. (2008) “Les transferts d'argent des migrants sénégalais. Entre espoir et risques Dial, F.B. (2008) *Mariage et divorce à Dakar: Itinéraires féminins*. Paris: Éditions Karthala.

Desai, S. and M. Banerji (2008) “Negotiated Identities: Male Migration and Left-Behind Wives in India” Journal of Population Research 25(3): 337–355

Dial, F.B. (2008) *Mariage et divorce à Dakar: Itinéraires féminins*. Paris: Éditions Karthala.

Diop, M.-C. 1981b. Fonctions et activitiés des *dahira* mourides urbaines (Sénégal). *Cahiers d’Etudes Africaines* 21:79-91.

Diouf M. (1992) Le clientélisme, la 'Technocratie' et après? In: Diop MC (ed.) *Sénégal: Trajectoires d'un État*. Dakar, Senegal: Codesria, pp. 223–278.

Diouf, M. (2000) "The Senegalese Murid Trade Diaspora and the Making of a Vernacular Cosmopolitanism." *Public Culture* 12 (3): 679-702.

Diouf, M. (2003) "Engaging postcolonial cultures: African youth and public space." *African Studies Reivew* 15 (2): 317-45.

Ebin, V. (1992), "À la recherche de nouveaux 'poissons': stratégies commerciales mourides par temps de crise", *Politique africaine,* Vol. 45.

Edelman, M. and A. Haugerud (2005) "Introduction: The Anthropology of Development and Globalization" in Edelman and Haugerud (eds.), *The Anthropology of Development and Globalization: From Classical Political Economy to Contemporary Neoliberalism*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1-74.

Faier L. 2007. Filipina migrants in rural Japan and their professions of love. *American Ethnologist.* 34:148–62

Fall, P.D., Tall, S.M., Bruzzone, V.T. & Gueye, C., (2006) "Capital sociale et potentiel d'investissement dans les territoires d'origine des Sénégalais d'Italie." In : S. Ceschi & A. Stocchiero (eds.) *Relazioni transnazionali e co-sviluppo. Associazioni e imprenditori Senegalesi tra Italia e luoghi di origine.* L'Harmattan Italia, Torino.

Fan, C. and Li, L. (2002) "Marriage and Migration in Transitional China: A Field Study of Gaozhou, Western Guangdong," *Environment and Planning* 34 (4) 619-638.

Featherstone, M., ed. (1990). *Global Culture: Nationalism, Globalization, and Modernity.* London: Sage.

Ferguson, J. (1999). *Expectations of Modernity: Myths and Meanings of Modern Life on the Zambian Copperbelt.* Berkeley: University of California Press

Ferguson, J. (2006). *Global Shadows: Africa and the Neoliberal World Order.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Findley, S. (1997). Migration and Family Interactions in Africa. Family, Population and Development. A. Adepoju. London, Zed Books: 109-138.

Fieloux, M., 1985. "Développement, émigration masculine et travail féminin. Le cas des femmes toucouleur de la région du Damga" ORSTOM/CIE Conference, Paris, France.

Foley, E. and C.A. Babou. *(*2011*)* "Diaspora, faith, and science: Building a Mouride hospital in Senegal," *African Affairs 110 (438): 75-95.*

Foley, E. and F.M. *Drame*. (2013) "*Mbaraan* and the shifting political economy of sex in urban Senegal". *Culture, Health, and Sexuality*. 15(2):121-34

Foley, E. and D. Hannaford (forthcoming) "A good man is hard to find: negotiating love and marriage in Senegal." *African Studies Review.*

Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. [Trans. Alan Sheridan] New York: Vintage.

Freeman, C. (2000). *High Tech and High Heels: Women, Work, and Pink-Collar Identities in the Caribbean.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Freeman, C. (2001) "Is Local: Global as Feminine: Masculine? Rethinking the Gender of Globalization" *Signs*, Vol. 26 (4), p. 1007-1037.

Freier, L.F. (2011) "Crossing the Atlantic in search of new destinations: Contemporary African migration to Latin America," *Crisis global y estrategias migratorias: Hacia la redefinición de las políticas de movilidad*. Flacos: Quito, Ecuador.

Gamburd, M. R. (2000) *The kitchen spoon's handle: transnationalism and Sri Lanka's migrant households,* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Gasparetti, F. and D. Hannaford (2009) "Genitorialità a distanza: reciprocità e migrazione senegalese", *Mondi Migranti*, Vol. 1, pp. 111-32.

Geschiere, P. (1997) *The Modernity of Witchcraft: Politics and the Occult in Postcolonial Africa*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press.

Giddens, A. (1992) *The transformation of intimacy : sexuality, love and eroticism in modern societies*, Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Gimeno, Santiago. (2010) "España recibe la cifra más baja de inmigrantes de los últimos tres años", *El País*. 17 January 2010. [Online] Available from: http://www.elpais.com/articulo/espana/Espana/recibe/cifra/baja/inmigrantes/ultimos/anos/elpepiesp/20100117elpepinac_7/Tes [Accessed 18 September 2010].

Gittens, A. (2008) "Hands, Eyes, Butts and Thighs: Women's Labor, Sexuality, and Movement Technique from Senegal Through the Diaspora," (Doctoral Thesis) Department of Performance Studies, New York University.

Glick Schiller, Nina (2012) "A Comparative Relative Perspective on the Relationships between Migrants and Cities" *Urban Geography* 6: 1-24.

Glick Schiller, N. and G.E. Fouron (2001) *Georges Woke Up Laughing: Long-Distance Nationalism and the Search for Home*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Goldring, L. (2001) "The Gender and Geography of Citizenship in Mexico-U.S. Transnational Spaces," *Identities* 7 (4): 501-537.

Guérin, I. (2006) "Women and Money: Lessons from Senegal." *Development and Change,* 37 (3), 549-570.

Gueye, M. (2010) "*Woyyi Céet* : Senegalese Women's Oral Discourses on Marriage and Womanhood." *Research in African Literatures.* Vol. 41, No. 4, pp. 65-86.

Hannaford, D. (2008) "Exploring Alternate Social Networks: The Role of the *Dahira* in Northern Italy." Globalizing Mystical Islam, Schomberg Center for Black Culture. May, 2008.

Hannaford, D. (2011) "Dynamics of Class in the Senegalese Diaspora: The Case of the Migrant Husband" American Anthropological Association, Montréal, Canada, November 16-20, 2011.

Hannaford, Dinah (2012a) "Conjugal Duties and Absentee Husbands: Transnational Migration and the Shifting Meanings of Marriage in Senegal" American Anthropological Association, San Francisco, CA, November 14-18, 2012.

Hannaford, D. (2012b) ""I Told My Husband to Marry Her": Transnational Migration and Modern Approaches to Polygyny in Senegal" African Studies Association, Philadelphia, November 29-Dec 1, 2012.

Hannaford, D. (2013) "Transnational Divorce: Migration and Marital Dissolution in Senegal" American Anthropological Association, Chicago, Illinois, November 20-24, 2013.

Hannaford, D. (2014) "Technologies of the Spouse: Intimate Surveillance in Senegalese Transnational Marriages." *Global Networks: A Journal of Transnational Affairs.*

Hannaford, D. (forthcoming) "Intimate Remittances: Marriage, Migration, and MoneyGram in Senegal ." *Africa Today.*

Harvey, D. (1989) *The condition of postmodernity: an enquiry into the origins of cultural change*, Oxford, England ; New York, NY, USA: Blackwell.

Harvey, D. (2005) A Brief History of Neoliberalism. New York: Oxford Univesity Press.

Heath, Deborah, (1992) "Anti-Fashion and Heteroglossia in Urban Senegal." *American Ethnologist* 19 (2): 19-33.

Hirsch, J.S. (1999) "En el norte la mujer manda: Gender, Generation, and Geography in a Mexican Transnational Community." *American Behavioral Scientist*, 42(9), 1332-1349.

Hirsch, J.S. and H. Wardlow (eds.) (2006) "Modern Loves: The Anthropology of Romantic Love and Companionate Marriage." Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Hirsch, J. S., M. Munoz-Laboy, C. M. Nyhus, K. M. Yount, et al. (2009), "They 'Miss More than Anything Their Normal Life Back Home': Masculinity and Extramarital Sex among Mexican Migrants in Atlanta," *Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health,* Vol. 41 (1): 23-32.

Hochschild, A. (1983) The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling Berkeley: University of California Press.

Hochschild, A. (2002) "Love and Gold" in *Global Woman: Nannies, Maids and Sex Workers in the New Economy*, co-edited with A. Hochschild and B .Ehrenreich (eds.) New York: Metropolitan Press.

Hondagneu-Sotelo, P. (1994) *Gendered Transitions : Mexican experiences of immigration.* Berkeley, CA, and London: University of California Press.

Hondagneu-Sotelo, P. and E. Avila (1997) '"I'm here, but I'm there": the meanings of Latina transnational motherhood', *Gender and Society,* 11, 548–71.

Honwana, A. and F. De Boeck (eds.) (2005) *Makers and Breakers: children and youth in postcolonial Africa*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Horst, H. A. (2006) "The Blessings and Burdens of Communication: The Cell Phone in Jamaican Transnational Social Fields." *Global Networks: A Journal of Transnational Affairs* 6(2):143-159.

Illouz, E. (1997) *Consuming the Romantic Utopia: Love and the Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Johnson, E., (2007) *Dreaming of a mail-order husband : Russian-American Internet romance*, Durham: Duke University Press.

Johnson-Hanks, J., (2007) Women on the market: Marriage, consumption, and the Internet in urban Cameroon. *American Ethnologist*, 34(4), 642-658.

Kane, O. (2011) *The Homeland is the Arena: Religion, Transnationalism, and the Integration of Senegalese Immigrants in America*. New York: Oxford

Kyle, D. (2000) *Transnational peasants: migrations, networks, and ethnicity in Andean Ecuador*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Press.

Lan, P.C., (2006) *Global Cinderellas: Migrant Domestics and Newly Rich Employers in Taiwan.* Durham: Duke University Press.

Levitt, P. (2001) *The Transnational Villagers*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Levitt, P. and Glick Schiller, N. (2004) "Conceptualizing Simultaneity: A Transnational Social Field Perspective on Society." *International Migration Review* 38(3): 1002: 1039.

Levitt, P. and Lamba-Nieves, D. (2011). "Social Remittances Revisited". *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 37 (1): 1-22.

Lewellen, T.C., (2002) *The anthropology of globalization : cultural anthropology enters the 21st century*, Westport, Conn.: Bergin & Garvey.

Lima, F.H. (2001) 'Transnational families: institutions of transnational social space' in L. Pries (ed.) (2001b) *New transnational spaces: international migration and transnational companies in the early twenty-first century*, London: Routledge.

Lutz, Helma (2011) *The New Maids. Transnational Women and the Care Economy.* London: Zed Books.

Madianou, M. and D Miller. (2011) "Mobile Phone Parenting? Reconfiguring relationships between Filipina migrant mothers and their left-behind children." *New Media and Society,* 13 (3): 457-470.

Mains, D. (2007) Neoliberal Times: Progress, Bordom, and Shame Among Young Men in Urban Ethiopia. *American Ethnologist* 34:659-673.

Marcus, G. (1995) "Ethnography in/of the World System: the Emergence of Multi-sited Ethnography." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24:95-117.

Markham, Anette (1998). *Life Online: Researching Real Experience in Virtual Space*. AltaMira Press.

Masquelier, Adeline. 2005. The Scorpion's Sting: Marriage and the Struggle for Social Maturity in Niger. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 11: 59-83.

Massey, D. (1994) *Space, Place and Gender* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Massey, D.S., 1998. *Worlds in motion: understanding international migration at the end*

of the millennium, Oxford: Clarendon Press ; New York.

Massey, D.S., Arango, J., Hugo, G., Kouaouci, A., Pellegrino, A., & Taylor, J.E. (1993). Theories of international migration: a review and appraisal. *Population and Development Review*, 19(3), 431-66.

*Mbenge, L. "*Toubab Dou Woujj" (film). *Available at: http://www.seneweb.com/videos/toubab-dou-woujj-versio-espagnol-50mn-lamine-mbengue-wmv_n_46682.html*

Mbow, P. and M. Tamba (eds) (2007) « L'Emigration clandestine, le profil des candidats : étude réalisé par le bureau des jeunes du mouvement citoyen.» Dakar : Mouvement Citoyen Partenariat avec L'ambassade des Pays Bas.

McLaughlin, F. (2001) "Dakar Wolof and the configuration of an urban identity" *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, 14 (2): 153-172

McNee, L. (2000) Selfish Gifts. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Melly, C.M. (2011) Titanic tales of missing men: Reconfigurations of national identity and gendered presence in Dakar, *Senegal*. *American Ethnologist*, 38: 361–376.

Mezger, C. and S. Toma (2011) "The Impact of International Migration on the Labour Market Behaviour of Women left-behind: Evidence from Senegal" UAPS Sixth African Population Conference; Ouagadougou, December 2011.

Miller, P. (1987). Domination and power. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Nie, N.H and D. S.Hillygus. (2002) "The Impact of Internet Use on Sociability: Time-Diary Findings." *IT & Society* 1(1), 1-20.

Nielsen H.S. & N. Smith & A. Celikaksoy, (2007) "The Effect of Marriage on Education of Immigrants: Evidence from a Policy Reform Restricting Spouse Import," Economics Working Papers 2007-07, School of Economics and Management, University of Aarhus.

Nieswand, B. (2011) *Theorising Transnational Migration. The Status Paradox of Migration*, New York: Routledge.

Nonini, D. (*1997*) "Shifting identities, positioned imaginaries: Transnational traversals and reversals by Malaysian Chinese." In *Ungrounded Empires: The Cultural Politics of Modern Chinese Transnationalism*, A. Ong and D. *Nonini (eds)*. New York: Routledge, 203-227.

Nyamnjoh, F. B. (2005) "Fishing in Troubled Waters: Disquettes and Thiofs in Dakar."

Africa, 75 (3): 295-324.

Ong, A., (1999). *Flexible citizenship : the cultural logics of transnationality*, Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press.

Osella, F. and Osella, C (2003). "Migration, money, and masculinity in Thailand," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, (NS) 6: 117-33.

Ozyegin, G. (2001) *Untidy Gender: Domestic Service in Turkey.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Padilla, Mark B., J.S. Hirsch, R. Sember, M. Munoz-Laboy, and R. Parker (2007) *Love and Globalization: Transformations of Intimacy in the Contemporary World.* Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press.

Palriwala, R. & Uberoi, P., (2008) *Marriage, migration and gender*, New Delhi, India ; Thousand Oaks, Calif.: SAGE Publications.

Parreñas, R. S. (2001) "Mothering from a distance: Emotions, gender, and intergenerational relations in Filipina transnational families." *Feminist Studies*, 27 (2): 361-390.

Parreñas, R. S. (2005) "Long distance intimacy: class, gender and intergenerational relations between mothers and children in Filipino transnational families." *Global Networks,* 5 (4): 317-336.

Perry, D. L. (1997) "Rural Ideologies and Urban Imaginings: Wolof Immigrants in New York City." *Africa Today* 44 (2): 229-259.

Perry, D. L. (2005) "Wolof Women, Economic Liberalization, and the Crisis of Masculinity in Rural Senegal." *Ethnology*, 44 (3), 207-226.

Pessar, P.R. and S. Mahler (2003) "Transnational Migration: Bringing Gender in," *The International Migration Review*, 37 (3), 812.

Poiret, Christian. (1996) La famille africaine en France. Paris, France: L'Harmattan.

Portes, A. & DeWind, J., (2007) *Rethinking migration: new theoretical and empirical perspectives,* New York: Berghahn Books.

Portes, A., L. E. Guarnizo and P. Landolt (1999) "The Study of Transnationalism: Pitfalls and Promises of an Emergent Research Field," Ethnic and Racial Studies, 22(2):217-237.

Rheingold (1993) *The Virtual Community: Homesteading on the Electronic Frontier*,

Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley.

Riccio, B. (2001) "From "Ethnic Group" to "Transnational Community?": Senegalese Migrants, Ambivalent Experiences, and Multiple Trajectories", *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 27 (4).

Riccio, B. (2004) "Transnational Mouridism and the Afro-Muslim Critique of Italy", *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. 30 (5): 929-944.

Riccio, B. (2005) "Talkin' about migration - some ethnographic notes on the ambivalent representation of migrants in contemporary Senegal", *Stichproben. Wiener Zeitschrift für kritische Afrikastudien* 8 (5), pp.99-118.

Rofel, Lisa. (2007). Desiring China: Experiments in Neoliberalism, Sexuality, and Public Culture. Durham: Duke University Press.

Salih, R. (2003) Gender in Transnationalism. Home, Longing and Belonging Among Moroccan Migrant Women. London; New York: Routledge.

Sassen, S. (1998) Globalization and its Discontents, New York: The New Press.

Schaller de la Cova, A. (2013) *Secular and Islamic Schooling in Senegal: Reconfiguring Knowledge and Opportunity in Uncertain Times.* (Doctoral Thesis) Department of Anthropology, Emory University.

Scheld, Suzanne. 2007. "Youth Cosmopolitanism: Clothing, the City and Globalization in Dakar, Senegal." *City & Society* 19 (2).

Sassen, S., 1998. *Globalization and its discontents : [essays on the new mobility of people and money]*, New York: New Press.

Signorelli, A. (1995) "Movimenti di poplazioni e trasforamzaion culturali," in *Storia dell'Italia repubblicana. La trasformazione dell'Italia: sviluppo e squillibri* Torino: Einaudi, pp. 589-643.

Sinatti, G. (2011) "'Mobile transmigrants' or 'unsettled returnees?' Myth of return and permanent resettlement among Senegalese migrants." *Population, Space and Place.* Vol. 17 (2), pp. 153-166.

SMEF (2004) Rapport de synthèse de la deuxième enquête sénégalaise auprès des ménages (ESAM-II). Ministère de l'Économie et des Finances, Direction de la Prévision et de la Statistique. Dakar, Senegal.

Somerville C (1997) Reaction and Resistance: Confronting economic crisis, structural adjustment and devaluation in Dakar, Senegal. In: Green C (ed.) Globalization

and Survival in the Black Diaspora: The New Urban Challenge. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, pp. 15–42.

St. Jacques, E. (2011) "My husband brought me here": Gender and Change in the Senegalese Diaspora," American Anthropological Association, Montréal, Canada, November 16-20, 2011.

Stark, Odded. (1991) The Migration of Labour. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Stoller, P. (1997) "Globalizing Method: The Problems of Doing Ethnography in Transnational Spaces" *Anthropology and Humanism* 22(l):81-94.

Suh, S. (2013) "Re(Writing) abortion: deploying medical records in jurisdictional negotiation over a forbidden practice in Senegal." American Sociological Association, August 2013, New York.

Tall, M. (2002) "L'emigration internationale sénégalaise d'hier à demain." In Momar Coumba Diop (Ed.) La societé sénégalaise entre le local et le global. Paris: Karthala.

Tall S.M. (2002) "Mouride Migration and Financing" *ISIM Newsletter*. Vol (9), pp. 36.

Tandian, A. (2009) "ICTs in Senegal: between migration culture and socio- cultural and politico-economic positioning" in Fernández-Ardèvol and Hijar (eds.) *Communication Technologies in Latin America and Africa: A multidisciplinary perspective.* Barcelona: IN3, p. 273-292.

Thai H.C. (2005). Clashing dreams in the Vietnamese diaspora: highly educated overseas brides and low-wage U.S. husbands, in Constable, N. (ed.) *Cross-Border Marriages: Gender and Mobility in Transnational Asia.* Philadelphia: Univ. Penn. Press, pp. 145–65

Thai H.C. (2008). *For Better or Worse: Vietnamese International Marriages in the New Global Economy.* New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers Univ. Press.

Tousignant, N. (2013) "Broken Tempos: Of Means and Memory in a Senegalese University Laboratory", *Social Studies of Science*, 0 (0) 1-25.

Vázquez Silva, I. (2010). El impacto de la migración en las tareas de cuidado dentro de las familias senegalesas: ¿la emergencia de las "nueras transnacionales"? VIII Congreso Vasco de Sociología y Ciencia Política. Bilbao.

Venables, E., (2008). Senegalese Women and the Cyber Cafe: Online Dating and Aspirations of Transnational Migration in Ziguinchor. *AFRICAN AND ASIAN STUDIES*, 7(4), 471-490.

Vertovec, S. (2004) 'Cheap calls: the social glue of migrant transnationalism', *Global Networks,* 4: 219–24.

Weiss, Brad. 2004. "Street Dreams: Inhabiting Masculine Fantasy in Neoliberal Tanzania." In *Producing African futures: ritual and reproduction in a neoliberal age,* edited by B. Weiss. Leiden: Brill.

Weiss, B. "Consciousness, affliction & alterity in urban East Africa" in *Makers and Breakers: Children and Youth in Postcolonial Africa,* A. Honwana and F. De Boeck (eds.), Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Westlund, A.C. (1999). "Pre-Modern and Modern Power: Foucault and the Case of Domestic Violence. " *Signs* Vol. 24 (4), pp. 1045-1066.

Whitehouse, B. (2011) "Enterprising Strangers: Social Capital and Social Liability Among African Migrant Traders" *International Journal of Social Inquiry* 4 (1): 93-111.

Whitehouse, B. (2012) *Migrants and Strangers in an African City: Exile, Dignity, Belonging.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Wilding, R. (2006) "'Virtual' intimacies? Families communicating across transnational contexts" *Global Networks* 6, (2): 125–142.

Willems, Roos (2008) Les "fous de la mer": Les migrants clandestins du Sénégal aux îles Canaries en 2006. in *Le Sénégal des migrations: Mobilités, identités et sociétés*. Momar-Coumba Diop, ed. Pp. 277–303. Paris: Karthala.

Williams, L. (2009) *Global Marriage: Cross-Border Marriage Migration in Global Context.* Palgrave Macmillan.

Yamanaka, Keiko (2005) "Changing family structures of Nepalese transmigrants in Japan: split-households and dual-wage earners." *Global Networks* 5 (4): 337-358.

Zelizer, V.A.R., 2005. *The purchase of intimacy*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

Zhou, Min and Carl L. Bankston III (1998) *Growing Up American: How Vietnamese Children Adapt to Life in the United States.* New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1998.