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**A Masculinist Perspective on Gendered Relations of Power:
Rwandan Migrant Men in the UK**

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Abstract

This paper explores the complex gendered dynamics of identity, power and personal relations that migration to the UK entails for Rwandan migrant men. In its analysis of eight qualitative interviews, it combines theory on ‘hegemonic masculinities’ with the application of the ‘gendered geographies of power’ framework to provide a nuanced and intersectional approach to how migration affects gender across and between three geographical and social scales. The paper argues that three corresponding configurations of gendered practice were dominant – *provider*, *family head* and *community* masculinities – but that migration led to disabling shifts in social locations that led some to attempt to reaffirm hegemonies. Importantly, novel and often innovative gendered configurations of practice emerged that I term *dual provider*, *achievement*, *equality*, *parental* and *diasporic-cosmopolitan* masculinities. With close attention to structure, agency and patriarchy, this paper thus builds on the recent and growing literature on migrant masculinities, and advocates further work on gender and transnational migration.

Keywords

Masculinity, gender, transnational migration, Rwandan diaspora

Introduction

Given that 1 billion people around the globe are migrants (IOM 2011: 49), the study of transnationalism, or the processes by which migrants ‘forge and maintain multi-stranded social relations that link together their places of origin and places of settlement’ (Basch et al. 1994: 7), is vital to building understandings of the complexities of human behaviour. Increasingly, scholars are recognising that ‘the reconfiguration of population movement in this period of globalization is changing the organization of power and identities at various scales’ (Nolin 2006: 48); and, moreover, realising that gender plays a pivotal role in these shifting relations (Pessar and Mahler 2003: 812). Feminist scholarship has endeavoured to reveal that rather than simply denoting sex as a dichotomous, fixed and ontologically given *variable*, gender is a relational, spatially and temporally contextual *process* that intersects with other dimensions of power and must be explored as a central analytical concept (Donato et al. 2006: 10). However, the current focus on gender in migration studies has tended to be almost exclusively on women, to the effect that men have, until very recently, been examined as ‘non-gendered humans...ignoring the gendered dimensions of men’s experiences’ (Hibbins and Pease 2009: 4-5). The research presented in this paper, which takes an avowedly *masculinist* perspective, therefore represents a much-needed addition to attempts that uncover gendered relations of power that take place within and between the sexes.¹

The paper focuses on Rwandan migrants in the UK. This is a particularly important and relevant case study because, firstly, Rwandans make up a hidden population in the UK. They number only 5000 (McDerra 2013: 27), are geographically dispersed and have few ties to UK-based individuals and institutions (McLean-Hilker 2011: 2). As such, there has been limited attention paid to UK Rwandan communities in migration studies, let alone on the topic of gender. Second, most Rwandan men in the UK sought asylum after the 1994

¹ My use of ‘masculinist’ is not to infer opposition to women or feminism. Rather, by mirroring the word ‘feminist’, it acknowledges the indebtedness of my study to feminism, and points to the synergy of my work with its emancipatory endeavour to make visible and disrupt hegemonic power relations.

Rwandan genocide.² Since, according to McSpadden, refugees experience ‘challenges to masculine identity’ (1999: 258) characterised by ‘a forced and rapid desocialisation requiring...rebuilding one’s cognitive map in order to make effective sense of an unfamiliar social and cultural context’ (1999: 245), modes of reformulating gendered identities may be more pronounced than in other migrant populations. Finally, focusing on Rwandan men is vital to expanding masculinity theory which has been largely constructed around white, western men. Although I will make reference to dominant masculinities in the host population, I will focus mainly on the shifting masculinities of Rwandan migrants in order to bring structurally marginalised groups into the overall academic discourse on masculinity.

This paper seeks firstly to probe the question of whether Rwandan men’s positions within gendered relations of power have changed as a result of migration. As such, it pays careful attention to existing literature on the dynamics of masculinity that has developed since Connell’s (1995) seminal work on hegemonic masculinity. What are the dominant ideals of masculinity that Rwandan migrants hold? Is the performance of these ideals inhibited in Britain? Are respondents able to reassert dominant ideals of masculinity? Do new reconfigurations of gendered practice emerge? And how are masculinities related to patriarchy? Secondly, it endeavours to understand how and why these processes take place by utilising Mahler and Pessar’s (2001) Gendered Geographies of Power (GGOP) framework and applying it to masculinities. Where are participants situated within intersectional and shifting social and spatial scales? Are they able to exercise agency given their social locations? And how are processes at each scale related to processes at other scales?

The paper begins with a discussion of the existing literature on gender, masculinities and migration in order to situate my study within current discourses, reveal gaps within them, and demonstrate that my research will contribute to their development. I then move to a discussion on methodology to show that my research design, attention to positionality and to ethics are congruous with the aims of the paper. Research findings are divided into three sections to examine gendered dynamics that operate across three distinctive geographical and social scales: the workplace, the household, and diasporic space. At each scale, I argue that a particular, hegemonic ideal of masculinity was articulated, but that migration entailed dramatic shifts in social locations within these scales that made performance of ideas difficult or impossible for many participants. In each section, I will show that through the utilisation of varying degrees and types of agency, some men reaffirmed hegemonies despite their social locations, but that new and often innovative responses to new migratory contexts simultaneously gave rise to reconfigured masculinities that rendered alternative ways of ‘being a man’ possible. Together, my findings demonstrate the complex, multi-scalar and shifting nature of Rwandan migrant masculinities which builds on current understandings of the role that gendered relations of power have on migrant men.

Literature and theoretical framework

Feminism, gender and migration

McDowell has contended that the aim of feminist geography is to ‘investigate, make visible and challenge the relationships between gender divisions and spatial divisions, to uncover their mutual constitution and problematize their apparent naturalness’ (1999: 12). When applied to migration studies, I argue that this goal rests upon three main concepts, all of which inspire and feature prominently in the analysis below. First, as a force that ‘structures

² The devastating genocide, primarily perpetrated by Hutu militias and aimed against the Tutsi population, created over 2 million refugees as well as leaving 800,000 dead (McDerra 2013: 73).

all human relationships and all human activities' (Donato et al. 2006: 21) gender is recognised as 'fluid and not polar, relational and performative, and therefore not merely ascribed' (2006: 5). This recognition allows us to interrogate relations of power that present themselves in dominant narratives as 'natural' or objective. Second, gender intersects and 'articulates with other axes of differentiation' such as 'race', class, nationality, ethnicity, sexuality, and age (Mahler and Pessar 2006: 29). Adhering to this principle has enabled the study of complex and specific configurations of power while avoiding cultural essentialism (Bürkner 2012: 181). Third, feminist theory has emphasised the socio-political nature of scale, place and space as meanings of space and place are 'tied up with...particular social constructions of gender relations' (Massey 1994: 2). This 'spatial politics', argues McDowell, is vital to 'uncovering the ways in which identities and places are being transformed and reconnected, positioning people within new patterns, or geometries, of inclusion and exclusion' (1999: 214). When applied to case studies, these concepts provide foundations not only to document the central role of gender in migration, but to investigate *how* gender operates across multiple terrains.

Gendered geographies of power

Mahler and Pessar's GGOP is 'a strong conceptual framework for integrating theories of gender into studies of transnational migration' (Silvey 2004: 500), bringing together space, time, structure and agency to map the dynamics of gendered relationships across the migratory journey. Consisting of three central tenets, gender is first argued to 'operate simultaneously on multiple *spatial and social scales*' (Mahler and Pessar 2001: 445). Second, gendered migrants are situated at various intersectional yet fluid '*social locations*' based on multiple axes of differentiation within these scales, which show that migrants are positioned 'within power hierarchies that they have not constructed' (2001: 446). Third, utilising Massey's notion of 'power geometry' (1994: 149), Mahler and Pessar emphasise the importance of documenting 'the types and degrees of [corporal and cognitive] agency people exhibit given their social locations' (2001: 446). In subsequent work, the authors have identified special social scales for analysis that include the workplace, the household, and community networks (Mahler and Pessar 2006: 33, 46).³ Furthermore, Silvey has emphasised that processes operating at one scale must be understood 'in dynamic relation to, not in isolation from, the gender relations formed at other scales' (2004: 494). In order to apply the framework comprehensively, therefore, my analysis will take each of these scales in turn while documenting connections between each terrain.

GGOP also represents an important attempt to merge the study of transnationalism 'from above', conceived as the homogenising, macro-level structures of globalisation (Mahler 1998: 66) with transnationalism 'from below', defined as 'the everyday practices of ordinary people' across terrains (1998: 67). Although Mahler has argued that the latter process may disrupt the former to produce 'counter hegemonic powers among non-elites (1998: 66), Guarnizo and Smith have highlighted that transnational practices are situated within dominant narratives and may reinforce hegemonies (1998: 6). By combining structure and agency, therefore, GGOP leads us to consider the interplay between the hegemonic and the counter-hegemonic and, as McIlwaine has pointed out, helps us to move beyond 'stereotyped notions of how migration entails shifts from traditional gender regimes to so-called modern ones to emphasise a more nuanced picture' (2010: 282).

³ Mahler and Pessar have also highlighted the state (2006: 39) and the body (2001: 445) as significant scales. However, due to limitations on time and space and the importance that participants themselves placed on work, family and community, only three will be considered in this paper.

There have been limited attempts to apply this framework to specific cases (for example, Constable 2005; King et al. 2011). However, McIlwaine's study of Latin American migrants in London, in which she demonstrates that GGOP 'allows for consideration of men' (2010: 284), is the only example I have found of its partial application to masculinities. By shifting attention to a previously unstudied group of migrant men, this paper thus represents an original and necessary attempt to develop a framework that combines GGOP with masculinity theory.

Masculinities and migration

In her pivotal work on masculinities, Connell identified four 'main patterns of masculinity' defined as 'configurations of gender practice' as opposed to fixed character types (1995: 77). Borrowing terminology from Gramsci (1971: 12), she argues that there is a dominant, or *hegemonic* mode of masculinity, which currently 'guarantees...the dominant position of men' (Connell 1995: 77). This hegemony is supported by a pattern of *complicity*, where Connell argues that the majority of men are not able to rigorously practice dominant masculine ideals but nevertheless benefit from the 'patriarchal dividend' (1995: 79). These patterns are pitched against *subordination*, where men who do not meet dominant ideals face exclusion (1995: 78) and marginalisation, where 'the interplay of gender with other structures' may create new, innovative ways of being a man (1995: 80). This framework, which places hegemony at its centre, has been revolutionary in its recognition that dominant gendered ideologies 'came into existence in specific circumstances and were open to historical change' (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005: 832). Crucially, it also revealed the 'plurality of masculinities and the hierarchy of masculinities' (2005: 846). By showing that there is more than one way of being a man, that men can adopt different configurations of practice at different moments, and that these configurations are tied to authority and intersectional social power, Connell demonstrated that gendered power operates within, as well as between the sexes, and that masculinities are fraught with internal contradictions and contestations.

Although Connell's framework has significantly influenced recent thinking about men, gender, and social hierarchy across many disciplines, three major weaknesses have emerged within it. Firstly, as Connell herself explicitly states, the framework is built around 'the current western gender order' (1995: 77). Indeed, the very notion of masculinity has been constructed with reference to 'at most, 5 per cent of the world's population of men, in one culture-area, and at one moment in history' (Connell 1993: 600). While Messerschmidt has argued that this represents a 'major incompleteness in the study of masculinities' (2012: 73), the lack of studies among non-western men has also created essentialist narratives that frame many migrant masculinities as uniformly 'backward' and 'static'. There is, therefore, a pressing need to expand the framework to Rwandan migrant men.

Second, there has been significant 'slippage' in the term 'hegemonic masculinity' to the effect that it has often been used to denote explicitly patriarchal practices rather than dominant ideals (Beasley 2008: 89). This has effectively fixed hegemonic masculinity as being inherently based on domination, countering the 'politically important' possibility supplied by emphasis on historical construction that 'it was perhaps possible that a more humane, less oppressive, means of being a man might become hegemonic' (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005: 832). This slippage 'fails to recognise historical and cultural situations within which several hegemonic forms of masculinity may coexist' (Miescher 2003: 89). Miescher and Lindsay have stressed that in many African countries, 'the limited power of colonial ideologies, combined with the social flux created...a multiplicity of...divergent images of proper male behaviour' (2003: 6). Since it is not always obvious whether and

which notions of masculinity are dominant, I argue that we must be open to the idea of a plurality of dominant masculinities among Rwandan migrant men.

Third, the emphasis on hegemonic masculinity has overlooked the importance and agency of subordinated and marginalised groups, including their role in contesting dominant gendered ideals (Messerschmidt 2012: 73). Following Hibbins and Pease, I argue that this omission has left ‘unexplored’ the ways in which ‘pre-migration masculine identifications and practices change, remain unchanged, or are strengthened’ (2009: 12) and that we must consider migrant men as significant social actors because ‘resistance, accommodation...“protest” and rebellion are all possible’ during the migratory journey (2009: 3). Furthermore, the hegemonic bias has largely condensed the relationship between masculinities and globalisation to a singular, top-down, ‘transnational business masculinity’ (Connell 2001: 369). Like Beasley, I suggest that, by shifting emphasis to a more bottom-up approach, which places migrants as agents of transnational processes, we can achieve ‘a more rigorous and culturally specific evaluation of globalization as an uneven process entailing complex forms of accommodation and resistance’ (2008: 99).

As well as discovering how migrants’ positions within gendered power relations are affected by migration, by applying the GGOP framework to the study of masculinities I aim to counter ethnocentric and essentialist narratives as well as demonstrate the possibility of plural dominant modes of masculinity which may be related, but not bound, to patriarchy. This combined framework also holds the potential to expose the importance of counter-hegemonic gendered practices as well as the agency of migrants. Over the last five years, a small number of studies, including those by Ahmad (2009) on Pakistani labour migrants, Malam (2008) on Thai beach workers, and Alcade (2011) on Latino migrants in the US, have begun to explore the relationship between migration and masculinity in specific contexts. However, none have attempted to combine a thorough discussion of hegemonic masculinity theory with GGOP. Although my work, therefore, is situated within current literature on gender, masculinity and migration, I propose that this theoretical blend may yield novel results when applied to Rwandan migrant men.

Methodology

Research design

As well as secondary literature that will continue to be explored throughout the paper, my findings below are drawn from a series of two-hour interviews with Rwandan migrant men in the UK carried out during June and July 2013.⁴ In keeping with recent work on transnational migrants, my qualitative approach is rooted in post-positivist epistemologies which stress that we should ‘accept uncertainty and turn our attention to...the minute events of everyday life, seeking to understand them in their own right’ (Borer and Fontana 2012: 46). As opposed to quantitative methods, which often aim only to measure or categorise (Stroh 2000: 198), this approach enabled me to probe the deeper ‘why’ questions and attempt to present men’s lived experiences through their eyes. Rather than searching for broadly applicable laws, then, my research aims to provide resources to understand other situated cases (Schofield 1993: 207). Mahler and Pessar have stressed that individual accounts and recollection are vital to understanding gender relations (2006: 30), and as such this approach enabled me to utilise GGOP fully.

⁴ Due to decades of ethnic and political conflict in Rwanda, many migrants who identify as Rwandan were born or raised in exile in neighbouring countries. Many have also acquired other nationalities. Rather than being based on place of birth or citizenship then, ‘Rwandan’ in this paper is a self-ascribed category.

Individual biographical interviews were undertaken because ‘there may be no equal to the life story interview for revealing more about the inner life of a person’ (Atkinson 2012: 120). I combined this method with a semi-structured approach through the use of a flexible interview guide that asked unambiguous and open-ended questions about gender at various scales. Interviews were recorded in audio format, transcribed, and coded following Jackson’s general principles for interpreting qualitative data (2001). This ensured a systematic analysis that, as Jackson argues, ‘avoids the temptation of jumping to premature conclusions’ (2001: 202). Working with previous literature in mind, coding enabled me to approach the transcripts in an inductive manner, carefully selecting themes and making interpretations from the data.

I conducted interviews with eight male participants. Although this number is appropriate for qualitative case study research (Beitin 2012: 244), female voices were absent and as such I present a male perspective only. However, since I do not lay claim to universal truths and sought only to understand my respondents, my post-positivist methodology allows the presence of this bias. Although, as we shall see, it was not possible to investigate all axes of differentiation, I selected my sample based on diversity of age, marital status, religion, occupation, number of children, citizenship, education level, countries of residence, and immigration status. Participants’ ages ranged between 29 and 49, were mostly Christian although at least one followed Islam, and half were married with children. The sample included office workers, factory workers and self-employed men as well as one unemployed man and one student. Participants were generally highly educated, some more so than others. Although all participants had all been refugees at some point in their lives, my sample included men with a range of citizenships and men who had grown up or lived in France, Belgium, Zaire, Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya as well as Rwanda and the UK. This diversity enabled ‘data triangulation’ to interpret meaning from multiple perspectives and build a rich understanding of the intersectional complexities of masculinity.

Positionality and ethics

Since researchers become positioned within the social world that they seek to study, reflexive scrutiny of the research process as well as close attention to the interplay of subjectivities was vital to ensure that my study was ethically sound and recognised my role in constructing meaning (Dowling 2005: 22-23). Mohammed has argued that we are always ‘both “insider” and “outsider” in the same place and/or time’ (2001: 112), which was indeed the case in my relationships with participants. I have worked with a number of UK-based Rwandan individuals and community groups for three years through co-ordination of an oral history project (rYico 2012), and like the participants I am male, which situates me as a social insider. This helped to create open, trusting dialogue and perhaps enabled me to form accurate interpretations, but I am likely to have ‘shaped the kind of narrative that unfolds’ more than if I had no connection with participants (Carter and Bolden 2012: 255). Furthermore, most of my contacts come from the Tutsi ethnic group. In an attempt to achieve a more ethnically varied sample, therefore, I selected four people from these contacts and following Dahinden and Efiionayi-Mäder’s advice, located the rest through a combination of ‘diversifying gatekeepers’ and ‘snowballing’ techniques (2009: 104). As a ‘white’ British person interviewing ‘black’ Rwandan men, I held dual status as an outsider. Although this positioning may have led participants to articulate experiences more clearly (Dowling 2005: 26), my interpretations may not have been as reliable as if I was an insider only.

My position as researcher was ‘interleaved with relations of power’ because academic interpretations have ‘potential to change the way...people are thought about’ (Dowling 2005 23). By recognising that ‘data do not speak for themselves’ (Schofield 1993: 503) and that

‘many different readings can coexist’ (Jackson 2001: 210), I thus recognise that knowledge is produced in dialogue and that the findings presented below are not free from my own biases. However, my familiarity with Rwandan migrants, careful methodology and attention to ethics enabled my interpretations to be well informed while helping to redress the imbalances of power that research may create.

Throughout the research process, I followed five key ethical principles as set out by the Social Research Association (2003: 25-40). First, I *avoided undue intrusion* by being sensitive in my choice of questions. In particular, I did not ask participants to reveal their ethnicity because there is a considerable amount of post-conflict fear and suspicion surrounding ethnic categorisation among UK Rwandans (McLean-Hilker 2011: 3). Although it is recognised that this is a weakness of my research, protecting participants took precedence over my interests, and, as we shall see below, ethnicity was explored indirectly. Second, I *obtained informed consent* by providing clear information to participants and ensuring that a consent form was signed. Third, I *protected the interest* of my participants by presenting findings truthfully while treating sensitive information, such as that about ethnicity or politics, carefully. Fourth, I *enabled participation* by travelling across the UK to locations of participants’ choice. Finally, I *maintained confidentiality of records* and *prevented disclosure of identities* by deleting recordings after transcription, using pseudonyms, and excluding details from the paper that may compromise anonymity.

Findings and analysis

The workplace

Hegemonic masculinity

Recent work on African migrant masculinities has emphasised the importance that men and women attach to the idea of masculinity centring upon providing for the immediate and extended family (Mungai and Pease 2009: 105). For Rwandan migrant men, the workplace was strongly associated with *provider masculinity* by participants. As Eric explained:

To be a man in Rwanda is to be able to provide...to earn a lot of money or to be able to work and provide food for your family. Earn your living.

Provider masculinity was closely connected to the concept of *Umugabo* which stressed that, rather than being a biological category, being a man was more about fighting for and supporting the family. This was demonstrated vividly by a childhood story that Eric recalled:

Mgunda was this man who was working so hard, he could really work the land for years, like three years in one day, he was eating a lot which as a child you think if you are a man you can work hard for your family, you get the compensation.

Because of its relationship to family support, provider masculinity was not explicitly bound to the maintenance of patriarchy, which supports Mungai and Pease’s optimism that dominant gender relations do not necessarily equate to outright domination (2009: 98). However, Donaldson and Howson have argued that, by being breadwinners, men ‘exert control over property, income and what it can buy’ (2009: 212), and as such, the gendered shifts that migration entails represent growing limitations on their relational power as men.

Shifting social locations

The ability of many participants to perform this dominant version of masculinity was inhibited by the subordination that some men faced in their attempts to find and keep jobs. This migration-induced outcome supports Koser's observation that, through racism and exclusion from public domains, 'African migrants can be triple disadvantaged – they are migrants, they are black and they are from Africa' (2003: 11). For those who claimed asylum in the UK, their immigration status prevented them from working for sustained periods of time. For Vincent, this period lasted a staggering eight years, throughout which he 'lived a very harsh life', finding it difficult to work and send support to family in Rwanda. While most participants had experienced overt racism outside of work, Vincent argued that racism at work took a more covert form, exclaiming that 'racism...takes place on a daily basis at work...you're not given equal opportunities if you're black and you're from Africa'. This mirrors Mungai and Pease's observations in Australia, where African men 'experienced discrimination...in work environments but often in a subtle rather than violent manner' (2009: 111). Similarly, Eric claimed that

If you go for the same position, you have the same skills, and one person is English and another person is from Rwanda, you are sure that the English person will be selected.

For Joseph, the one participant of working age who had migrated directly from Rwanda to the UK without time in other countries, his initial inability to speak English prevented him from being able to get a job for eight months after arrival, a situation that Pascal claimed was common for Rwandans who had been in the UK for less than three years and that because of this 'the only job you'll get is a cleaning job because no one wants to do it'.

McIlwaine's study of Latino men in London found that hegemonic masculinities 'gave way to marginalised masculinities closely linked with downward social mobility' (2010: 295). This trend was also found among Rwandan men, most of whom previously inhabited middle-class social locations before migration. Joseph, who had been a teacher in Rwanda, and Pascal, a qualified graphic designer, expressed frustration at being unable to get a job in their areas of expertise. Instead, they were forced to work in low-skilled jobs to earn a wage, reflecting Samuel's assertion that 'the [material] conditions we had in Rwanda were better than what we have here'. This loss of social and occupational status, explained Pascal, often resulted in men being unable to perform their gendered role as providers through the sending of remittances back to Rwanda:

In Rwanda they think you're minted...you're expected to support the extended family in Rwanda but when you tell them I can't afford it they don't believe you. They think, oh you're in the western world, you can do that....It's totally different, you sweat to get that pound in your pocket.

Men who did not regularly send remittances, argued Eric, could not 'prove' they were working and since 'the person who is sending money to his family is a man', they were viewed by Rwandans at home and in the UK as 'selfish', embracing individualist western values, and neglecting their families. This revealed that 'the inability to be a provider puts an immense strain on men' (Donaldson and Howson 2009: 212). Because of subordination in the labour market, which was closely related to immigration status, 'race', and the ability to speak English, the downward social mobility that some Rwandan men faced, despite their best efforts, caused them to articulate a painful and frustrating sense of masculine responsibility that they were unable to fulfil (McSpadden: 1999). In David's words:

As it says in Kinyarwanda,⁵ you can't have everything. You can't have honey and milk. So I think that actually, [the pressures of work] replace...all these un comforts that you had in Africa which you tried to escape.

Reaffirmation

Mungai and Pease have stressed that, despite the disempowerment that men from Africa experience, 'we must be careful not to essentialise black men and fix them in a subordinate position' (2009: 100). Indeed, not all provider masculinities were subordinated, and some respondents were able to perform the dominant ideal despite their disempowered positions. For example, Samuel, a self-employed business owner, found working life in the UK far easier than in France:

In France...they say you are black first and then you are French....When you are in business there is a level where you reach but then it's very difficult. And here it's opposite. The more you are different, the more they respect you.

Similarly, those who had lived in English-speaking countries such as Kenya and Uganda believed that their mastery of English language and culture enabled them to find work relatively easily and provide for their families. For example, Vincent pitched his ability to express himself clearly in English at interviews against other Rwandan men who exhibited 'weakness' because they were 'not used to' selling themselves to employers.

Donaldson and Howson have argued that it is 'the embracing of the difficulties and impositions of paid work, for the sake of one's family, that gives meaning to the paid work that men undertake' (2009: 212). Indeed, for those who were able to send remittances to Rwanda, this became a source of pride and affirmation of masculinity, as David explained:

You feel really proud to do that because...by sending money, you've established the point here that you are able to do something in the eyes of the whole family.

Respondents also stressed the importance of hard work as sacrifice for the family. Although Joseph found that 'jobs in the UK are very hard...8 hours working, you don't stop', he was proud that this enabled him 'to make my family happy, to let my children go to school, to buy something for them'. Likewise, although Pascal complained that 'I really don't like the job that I'm doing', he stressed that he gained satisfaction from working hard and 'diversifying' across many different temporary jobs. These comments show that through the utilisation of both corporal and cognitive agency, subordination could be manipulated to lay claim to hegemonic notions of masculinity, which gives weight to Mahler and Pessar's assertion that 'the imagination or mind work' is crucial in formulating gendered identity as well as social relations (2006: 43). Like Alcade's US-based Latino workers, some Rwandan men have thus come to rely on their labour to 'maintain self-esteem and define themselves as "real" men' (2011: 455).

Reconfiguration

Two important reconfigurations of gender practice began to emerge at the workplace scale. First, for respondents who were married, inability to earn a stable income that could support

⁵ Kinyarwanda is the main language spoken in Rwanda.

an entire family meant that women became more involved in providing for the family than they would have been in Rwanda. Considering the connections between income and control mentioned above, the fact that all four wives of married respondents were working or studying supported Eric's statement that 'after a while when the woman and man are working...the woman starts being in control of her life as well as taking care of the family'. Although Eric, who was not married, also claimed that 'the masculinity of the person [would be perceived] as decreasing' if women became primary breadwinners, those who were actually married seemed to accept this change, illustrated by Joseph's comment:

Now men and women is both equal. You can do business, your wife can do another business and this...can bring more income than your business.

However, David explained that this shift in relations was beyond the control of men and thus occurred probably more out of necessity than choice, which supports McIlwaine's (2010: 282) observation that changes in gender practices do not automatically lead to corresponding changes in 'gender scripts':

In Europe...a woman has to go to work and a man has to go to work...If only he works he's not really gonna provide for the household...Because of your means and living in a different economic setting there is a kind of shared burden.

It was possible, argued Eric, that *Umugabo* could 'go to a woman', but my interviews revealed little evidence that *dual provider masculinity* was much more than a pragmatic migratory performativity that could perhaps be reversed in an alternative economic situation.

The second reconfigured pattern of masculinity that was detectable at the workplace scale, found among married and unmarried participants alike, was that men began to place more of an individualist emphasis on education, hobbies and personal development. Compared to dual provider masculinity, *achievement masculinity* came into being through more active corporal and cognitive decisions which hinted towards a more radical gendered transformation. Cornwall has argued that for men in Nigeria who confront uneven forces of economic development, men began to 'use education to carve out "new" ways of being a man' (2003: 237). Indeed, many participants rated education as central to their identities and highlighted its intrinsic value, rather than vocational benefits. As Samuel, who had two master's degrees and was preparing to embark on a PhD, emphasised:

What makes me who I am is education, education, education...When you go to school you get abilities to analyse and to think critically.

Furthermore, many participants stressed that, rather than waged work, it was their hobbies that gave them their main source of satisfaction. The fact that Emmanuel was a musician, Pascal a painter, and that David, Gilbert and Samuel had been involved in Rwandan development initiatives gave these men an important sense of fulfilment from activities that most agreed were facilitated by their move to the UK and did not depend on their ability to provide for their family. Mirroring the words of other respondents, David explained that this fulfilment was tied to an alternative gendered performance of individual autonomy and accomplishment:

For me being a man is more about the action that you do...what you are able to say you've done...You don't need to be rich or married...it's more about achievement, it means progression in life.

At the workplace scale, then, masculinities ‘are constructed, unfold, and change’ (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005: 852) through the migratory journey. For Rwandan migrant men, the dominant provider masculinity was linked but not bound to patriarchal control. Migration to the UK led to difficulties in finding work, discrimination in the workplace and downward social mobility that demonstrated how gender intersects with ‘race’ and migration status, making it hard for men to perform their expected masculine roles. Through both corporal and cognitive actions, some were able to utilise their ‘otherness’ and their knowledge to progress at work and others came to emphasise their self-sacrificing hard work to reaffirm provider masculinity despite their social locations. Migration also led to reluctant but necessary reconfigurations towards dual provider masculinities which, at least practically, led to more equal gender relations. Importantly, migration also led to a more transformative masculinity, which relied upon achievement rather than providing. Since ‘everyday struggles in marital relationships make being a man more than a day’s work’ (Cornwall 2003: 232), we now turn to the household scale to gain a richer understanding of gendered relations of power.

The household

Hegemonic masculinity

The dominant conceptualisation of masculinity, heavily referenced from Rwanda, that emerged when participants talked about household spaces was what I term *family-head masculinity*, which was based on three requirements. Firstly, as Eric explained, to be recognised as an adult man, it was necessary to be part of a functioning reproductive unit:

To be a man in Rwanda you firstly have to get married...Even when you get married it’s not enough. It’s when you have the first child that people go, ‘he is a man’.

Second, my participants stressed that Rwandan men should have the final say over household decision making. Since in a recent survey in Rwanda, well over half of both male and female respondents agreed that ‘a man should have the final word about decisions in his home’ (RMRC 2010: 41), Joseph’s view was likely not to be exceptional:

In my culture, the man is the king of the house...You can discuss with your wife but the final decision is for men.

Third, this control and the responsibility that came with it was seen as exempting men from domestic duties like cleaning, cooking and parenting which, as Vincent explained, positioned women as collaborative, rather than inferior, ‘hearts of the house’. In Pascal’s words:

If you’re married, your wife...cooks, does the shopping, she looks after the children, she takes them to school and back. You, as a man, wake up in the morning, go to work, make sure the rent is paid for.

As at the scale of the workplace, the ability to perform family-head masculinity, which remains a widespread ‘social expectation’ in Rwanda (RMRC 2010: 44), was threatened by migration which left some men feeling emasculated.

Shifting social locations

Family-head masculinity excluded those who were not married. Eric explained that other Rwandan people struggled to see him as a man:

[unmarried men] are discriminated against. I still have people from my family telling me to get married and have children...otherwise you are not considered a man, even by people here.

Although participants' sexuality was not discussed for ethical reasons, it is probable that non-heterosexual men would struggle to be accepted as adult men. Furthermore, no participants who were single when they migrated had subsequently married, and it became evident that for some, migration made it difficult to do so. David and Vincent envisaged a 'traditional wedding' with a Rwandan partner only. For Vincent, this prerequisite made it difficult to form relationships because there were relatively few Rwandan women in the UK and he was perceived as 'too Rwandese'⁶ for those who he met, which gave rise to a state of 'gendered melancholia' (Ahmad 2009: 321):

For some of us it's very difficult to get women here because you are behaving like a Rwandese man. The women are much more influenced by western culture....She's looking to you being a more modernised person....It makes me feel less of a man when I cannot connect with the opposite sex.

Some men, therefore, had been unable to respond to the pressure they faced to be regarded as adult men in the UK, and this was compounded by the effects of migration which restricted the number of potential partners. Like tribal men in Delhi, Rwandan men could be perceived by their compatriots as 'unromantic, boring and provincial in contrast to the urbane tastes of women' (Alcade 2012: 120), making the performance of family-head masculinity highly problematic.

Some married respondents saw migration as threatening their authority within the family and hence reducing their ability to be decision makers. This loss of control was most evident in relationships with spouses which caused a widespread sense of disempowerment. Like Ghanaian men in Toronto, the shift in gendered relations was seen as emanating from the state and as a 'complete reversal of roles' (Manuh 2003: 157). Joseph believed that, according to UK law, women had more power than men, which affected household relations and caused humiliation:

There, the power is for men. Here, the power is for woman and we as men don't want to listen to that....Here, if you know a man who is under power of his wife, we feel embarrassed about him. But it is the law we have to follow.

This points towards the feeling shared by many respondents that, in the case of a family breakdown, the law would protect wives who could 'leave and take anything'. Gilbert said that women could take advantage of this power:

[Women can] say OK I will take this opportunity because I am in the UK and I know my rights and sometimes they even go beyond the boundaries.

Inability to deal with the female disobedience that migration was perceived as encouraging led Vincent to protest against the fact that in an argument 'you can't slap her' to enforce authority like in Rwanda, where 'slapping is considered as a natural way to control and correct their wife's disrespect' (RMRC 2010: 11). Rather than a move to a society which treats men and women more equally, then, participants tended to view migration as entailing

⁶ Participants used the words 'Rwandan' and 'Rwandese' interchangeably. It was generally considered that the former was an Anglophone term, while the latter was Francophone. Hence, I use 'Rwandan' throughout the paper.

a reversal of male dominance which caused tension and embarrassment in participants' efforts to perform family-head masculinity.

Reaffirmation

Thankfully, there were no signs that any participants sought to reconcile loss of patriarchal relations through violence in the household, as was the case with Alcade's 'machismo' masculinities in the US (2011: 451). However, two cognitive strategies emerged which support McIlwaine's claim that 'deep seated transformations in gender ideologies' may not come easily (2010: 282). Firstly, in response to his difficulties in developing romantic relationships with women in the UK who were 'Rwandese Europeanised', 'changed faster' than men and 'talk back', Vincent hoped that finding a wife in Rwanda to bring back to the UK would enable him to perform all aspects of family head masculinity:

You are looking for more of a culture woman who I can talk to and listens to me....That's why people like me are now travelling over to Rwanda. We all believe that those girls are more original, they still have more of the Rwandese culture and they know how to understand the gap that we are missing here.

For Vincent, the solution to him being seen as *too Rwandese*, was to exercise cognitive agency which rendered his family-head masculinity safe in an imagined return to *Rwanda*. Second, Joseph responded to his loss of power in the household by casting men as responsible preservers of culture who would eventually triumph over those women who were quick to adopt western values:

Women adapt quick in the decision which is favoured to them. But the men think first and try to keep their culture....women are trying to take that understanding from here out. Some of them still [leave the husband] but at the end, after a couple of years, they'll say they have made a mistake.

This commitment to cultural preservation enabled Joseph to continue to define his masculinity as 'the principle person in the family' whose 'decision comes before' his wife. Clearly, then, for some Rwandan migrant men, migration did not entail a shifting of dominant ideals and actually provided new opportunities to uphold them *vis à vis* those who did not in a process of imagined patriarchal re-empowerment. However, there were important moves towards less patriarchal relations that took place at the household scale.

Reconfiguration

Two renegotiations of family-head masculinity that participants described in the UK concerned male/female gender relations and parenting. In terms of the former, there was a detectable shift towards *equality masculinity* which manifested in two ways. First, respondents began to share domestic duties within marriages.⁷ This was intimately bound to gendered dynamics at the workplace scale because women's participation in waged labour meant that they were no longer, in Vincent's words, 'the heart of the house', and so men had

⁷ Although some participants mentioned that there may be slight differences in the ways that men of different ages, religions, and those who had lived in Rwanda's neighbouring countries may respond to these shifts, most agreed that there was little difference and this was reflected in my sample, where none of these intersections seemed to play a significant role in gender relations between women and men.

to take a share of housework for the family to function. Many saw that these changes, although important, were pragmatic. David claimed that

Friends of mine do the cooking, shopping in order to live well in this country... they've completely changed...but even if they have changed it's to adapt to this capitalist world whereby people have to work.

It is important to note that rapid moves towards more equal gender relations are taking place in Rwanda, where female participation in politics and the economy is proportionally among the highest in the world, and comprehensive laws have recently been introduced to prevent gender discrimination (allAfrica 2013). As Eric explained, this 'influenced' men in the UK because 'we are always connected to our families in Rwanda', and as such, probably made these reconfigurations easier for migrant men. As Pessar has proposed, then, migration can result in 'a wider acceptance and consolidation of counter-hegemonic gender regimes which were available' at home (2005: 6).

The second related way that family-head masculinity gave way to equality masculinity was through women having a greater say in decision making. Even Joseph, who placed great emphasis on family-head masculinity, admitted that 'sometimes if you don't agree with your wife, you have to cool down and sometimes you have to just say OK'. Likewise, Pascal spoke of the need for the equal participation of his wife in planning their social life and making decisions about the future because they both led busy lives. Although, as with dual provider masculinity, these transformations thus often took a pragmatic form, there was evidence that changes in relational gendered practices were leading to deeper changes in ideals. For example, Samuel, who had spent more time in Europe than any other participant, showed a strong commitment to gender equality when he said that 'I can't see any difference between me and my wife...we don't have any roles saying you are going to do this', and Gilbert thought that these shifts held promise for the future:

Our partners, they think differently from our grandmothers and our mothers. They are bit more open, a bit more free. That kind of freedom I see in them encourages me that they will live a better life.

While a more equal split of household tasks and decision making may not have been wholly desirable for all, following McDuire-Ra, I argue that these reconfigurations make 'the adoption of more fluid ways of being masculine...more possible and visible than back home' (2012: 125). As such we may speculate that in the long term, equality masculinity could become more accepted and normalised.

A more active transformation that took place at the household scale was the emphasis that participants put on attentive fatherhood. Although *parental masculinity* was facilitated by pragmatic changes in gender relations, participants were more celebratory of changes in their relationships with their children. In Rwanda, Pascal recalled, because of gendered divisions of household labour and the consequent lack of contact between father and child, 'there's no men who bond with their children'. In contrast, participants placed great emphasis on caring relationships with their children in the UK, illustrated by David:

Being a father here, I had the opportunity to look after my children, I love them and we are very close....The communication between us is wonderful and I don't think it would be the same if it was in Rwanda.

Whereas in Rwanda, fathers' involvement in their children's future was limited to providing school fees, Joseph took pride in helping his children to be successful and 'focusing more on

them than my life'. Furthermore, by stressing the importance of the family ties integral to Rwandan life alongside their new ability to be attentive fathers in Britain, some participants pitched parental masculinity against men in the host population, who they perceived as not caring enough for their children. In contrast to British parents who sever ties to their children at the age of 18, David claimed, Rwandan men's parenting continued 'even after 50 years if possible. So family is more important'. The story that Joseph told demonstrated this cognitive reordering:

My friend at work has a daughter in Glasgow but it has been six years without seeing her...I can't believe that. That is incredible to our culture. If your daughter lives away, you have to see her at least twice a month.

As well as enabling a new gendered configuration of practice that emphasised care, rather than control, parental masculinity thus created a sense of empowerment compared to host masculinities. Like Latino men in the US who pitched their ethos of hard work against the host population (Alcade 2011: 457), Rwandan migrant men articulated a narrative of fatherhood that rendered new, emancipatory performativities possible and showed that 'a dominant pattern of masculinity was open to challenge...from men as bearers of alternative masculinities' (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005: 848).

At the household scale, then, family-head masculinity emerged as a dominant and often dominating form of masculinity. Gender intersected with marital status to the effect that non-married men were excluded from male adulthood, and migration compounded this by decreasing the perceived availability of potential partners. Migration also threatened men's role as decision makers over spouses, who were viewed as having more power than men after migration. By imagining marriages with women from the homeland, and by presenting men as responsible preservers of culture, some men were able to, at least cognitively, reaffirm their commitment to family-head masculinity. However, shifts in gendered working patterns led to pragmatic equality masculinities which, eased by changes in Rwanda, caused men to participate in domestic duties and allow partners a greater say in decision making. Crucially, participants deployed corporal and cognitive agency to facilitate a new, less patriarchal parental masculinity which empowered men while demonstrating 'the fluidity of masculinity even among a group where masculine norms appear rigidly defined' (McDuaie-Ra 2012: 128). The interplay of rigidity and fluidity was hyper-visible at the third and final scale for analysis, to which I now turn my attention.

Diasporic space

Hegemonic masculinity

Mungai and Pease have argued that 'modern African manhood bestows on the man specific responsibilities to...the wider community...family, clan, tribe and nation' (2009: 97). Indeed, at the diasporic scale, defined by Brah as 'the entanglement of genealogies of dispersion with those of "staying put"' (1996: 181), the dominant conception of masculinity for Rwandan men was that a man was somebody who participated in, and upheld responsibility for, the community. As Eric explained, when Rwandan men talked about responsibility for the family, they were actually describing something much larger than immediate relations:

The family in Rwanda is not really the biological family. For us the family is the community, it is the friends, the friends of the friends, friends of grandparents.

Most participants agreed that *community masculinity* was integral to their identities, illustrated by Gilbert's comment:

Community means who I am...it's my roots so that's who I am, where I came from, my background. That community, that's where I belong.

Like Latino communities in the US who exerted peer pressure to prevent deviation from hegemonic masculinities (Alcade 2011: 464), Rwandan participants stressed that being recognised as a man depended on authorisation from the wider community, demonstrating strong links between community, provider and family-head masculinities. Eric stressed the shame and consequent emasculation that Rwandan men face from other Rwandans if their wife becomes the sole breadwinner:

It's really bad to be seen in a relationship as a man and not working...because you are not a man....People talk you know, they say the wife is the one who is working and people go, like really? You can never represent the family in an event.

This mirrors McSpadden's findings among Ethiopian refugees that reputation, kept in check by 'community judgement of personal failure and consequent shame' gives 'strength' to ideas of masculinity (1999: 248). Although community masculinity was not defined by patriarchal bargaining, it therefore helped to 'consolidate positions of power and control' established at other scales (Mungai and Pease 2009: 105). The severing of community ties that migration often entails, then, causes a loss of power and control as well as social support (McSpadden 1999: 245), and represents a dramatic shift in communal social locations.

Shifting social locations

For Rwandan migrant men, loss of community began before the move to the UK because most participants lost many friends and family in the 1994 genocide. Relocation away from surviving community members was compounded by the fact that the number and dispersal of Rwandans in Britain made it hard to forge new community ties, as David explained:

It's quite unusual to walk around the streets of London and meet a Rwandese...so you get to miss that kind of Rwandese community.

This caused a loss of social support which gave rise to a general perception that life in the UK was tough. Emmanuel complained that 'you are on your own...here in England so it's very different, it's very hard', and Eric explained this 'cultural shock' led him to feel 'alone and not supported'. Importantly, this led to difficulties in maintaining romantic relationships in the UK and since family-head masculinity depended on such unions, problems with performing community masculinity were directly linked to difficulties in upholding its equivalent at the household level. Participants identified two reasons for this. First, the heavy involvement of families who 'come together' to provide 'authority to get married' at home, created community obligations that made it very difficult to get divorced and these, argued Samuel, did not exist in Europe. Second, as Joseph explained, disputes within marital relationships were resolved with the support of the wider family in Rwanda, where community members 'sit you down and understand you and listen to you...and try to make reconciliation between the man and the woman'. Solutions provided by the family, along with long-term monitoring of the situation, prevented break-ups and enabled more men to 'keep their [married] life'. Lack of family and community in Britain, however, signalled a loss of this mechanism for some. As Vincent explained:

You have a very big situation and you won't be able to resolve it with your woman and there is no family here. If you talk to your neighbour who is an English or Indian man, or Jamaican lady, they won't listen to you...you won't get to a solution.

Loss of community was often associated with a troubling move from a culture based on thick social relationships to one that was individualistic and capitalist. This supported Mungai and Pease's observation that 'coming from a culture that is more communal and family orientated to one that is individualist, materialistic and consumer-orientated is a major hurdle for African men' (2009: 105). Many participants had few non-Rwandan friends, and Samuel put this down to UK culture valuing money, rather than people:

In Europe, it's like artificial friendship. When you've got a good job, nice car, nice house, you get more friends...and when there is a problem, there are few or no friends.

Similarly, Vincent found the impersonal nature of many of his post-migration relationships problematic:

I find it very difficult, even my housemates...what kind of personal relations do I have with them? There isn't any....It's the way people in Europe are, people mind their own business. Everyone is on his own...people are busy.

The effects of the 1994 genocide, migration, and experiences in a new society that was perceived as more individualist, then, conflated to render dominant community masculinity difficult to perform. This resulted in respondents facing problems in maintaining other hegemonic ideals as well feeling alone and unsupported.

Reaffirmation

As at other scales, some respondents were able to utilise cognitive and corporal agency to reimagine and regain a sense of community masculinity. Some men placed greater emphasis on their friendships with other Rwandan people. Eric explained:

You don't need a lot of Rwandan friends but if you've got two you really feel more connected than any other group...you feel almost like you were from the same family.

Likewise, Samuel said that he had a few friends whom he could trust, that they were Rwandan and that they embodied *imihigo* which is 'like a strong agreement that we are friends. I look after you, you look after me'. As Vincent concluded, these close friendships were 'how we cope in the UK'. Respondents frequently imagined a future in Rwanda in which engagement with communities played a central role, consistent with Pessar and Mahler's claim that 'men pursue transnational strategies that link them...closely to their homelands' (2003: 829). While most participants expressed a desire to permanently return to Rwanda at some point, all those who were not married imagined doing so in a role 'to look after people', 'working with communities', and to 'develop the community'. As David exclaimed, 'in 10 years, if I can do that, I will definitely be a man'. Not only did Rwandan men look to a future return in order to consolidate their lost community masculinity in the present, but marital status intersected with gender to the affect that unmarried men placed a higher importance on an imagined future where they would be considered responsible community men. Crucially, this suggested that the three dominant forms of masculinity mentioned in this paper did not all have to be present to be considered a 'successful' man

which, as well as supporting the concept of multiple hegemonies, showed that gains at one scale could potentially compensate for shortfalls at others.

Some respondents were able to employ corporal agency to build formal community groups, and hence strengthen community masculinity in the UK. Pascal, who was a leader of a Rwandan community organisation, explained that his responsible role was a source of empowerment:

I love anything to do with the community...because I miss home a lot so it keeps me connected....I feel I've got a commitment and I feel very, very happy to lead my people.

Likewise, Joseph, another community leader, stressed the role that his organisation played in public peace-building events which generated a strong sense of purpose:

As a people who suffered in genocide, we have big experience than other people....That's why we go to speak out in different events...to show different people who don't know or don't care about discrimination and racism.

This statement reflected sentiments expressed by many men in my professional work with Rwandan communities, suggesting that engagement with the politics of home, as with McDuie-Ra's respondents, 'helps to affirm identity and masculinity' (2012: 123). Moreover, in some situations, the social support that community groups were able to offer members counteracted loss of family ties. For example, Joseph explained that senior community members assumed reconciliatory, familial roles when couples experienced conflict, and that the process of 'sitting down and talking as we do in my country' helped to keep marriages intact. Reaffirmation of community support at the diasporic scale, then, also helped to maintain practices that family-based masculinity was predicated upon. Furthermore, women assumed more powerful positions in these reaffirmed community practices. Whereas in Rwanda, men maintain control of the house and children during disputes, and male community members had the final say in the reconciliation process, in Britain it became normal for women to retain control, and, as Joseph emphasised, women had a growing role in community decision making. Participation in community groups, therefore, helped men to move beyond a preoccupation with masculine dominance, and allow more room for equality masculinities while keeping notions of community masculinity intact.

However, not all respondents felt able to access community organisations. Membership of the main diaspora organisations in the UK is predominantly Tutsi, and they have strong links with the Tutsi-led Rwandan government (McLean-Hilker 2011). As Samuel explained, 'the embassy is involved massively in the community, it's like the tutor who gives you the platform but shows you where you want to go'. As well as politicising the diaspora along ethnic lines, said Samuel, this also led to a feeling that formal diaspora organisations 'were keeping people from staying together', which was compounded by a fear that the Rwandan government was monitoring people through these groups. Although David expressed a strong desire to participate more in the community, the fact that family members had been accused of genocide, that he had lived in Zaire, and that he had not visited Rwanda since he left, made him wary of joining diaspora groups:

Everything is very politicised so you don't know whether you are welcome there, you don't know how you're gonna be perceived and that is what pushed us to come here, all these rumours and being judgemental.

David's views demonstrate how gender intersected with family and migratory backgrounds, politics and possibly ethnicity to produce exclusion from community masculinity. These sentiments also mirror the situation of McDuie-Ra's respondents (2012: 123), suggesting that the narrowing of communal ways of being a man may be a common experience for migrants who have fled ethnic conflict. Those who felt excluded from diaspora groups tended to emphasise that they 'bog you down', and put more emphasis on work and family-based masculinities where politics did not matter. In Vincent's words, 'me going there or not going there I lose nothing. I have my job nine to five. I have family to look after'. There was, however, a more innovative gender response to migration at the diasporic scale that was open to all respondents.

Reconfiguration

In his commentary on the 'Black Atlantic' diaspora, Gilroy has argued that a 'double consciousness', characterised by the coexistence of loyalties to heritage and destination cultures, became a dominant mechanism to cope with migration (1993: 188). In a similar yet more specific process, a new configuration of *diasporic-cosmopolitan masculinity* was the most prevalent gendered transformation that took place across all three scales. This ideal, expressed by every participant, combined patriotism and connections to Rwanda with strong articulations of a flexible worldliness that was linked with mobility and refugee identity. Despite a difficult history and political divisions among the diaspora, Vincent explained that Rwandan men 'have this dignity, this proudness that we feel we are Rwandans, no matter what is surrounding us', and David said that 'when people say "Ah, you're from Rwanda"...you feel really proud. I feel I'm a man. I am proud of my country'. As well as uniting the diaspora and bolstering transnational connections, by emphasising loyalty and 'Rwandaness', these sentiments served to resist the gendered disempowerment that men felt by celebrating their difference to the British population. However, the strength of national pride among participants was matched by value attributed to mobility and adaptability which enabled the refugee experience to become a source of self-esteem and power. As Pascal explained:

We were privileged as refugees because we were so exposed...that is why we can live anywhere in the world and adapt ourselves in any sort of culture....We're very adventurous.

Like McDuie Ra's respondents, Rwandan migrant men 'cast themselves as worldly cosmopolitans' to resist the gendered disempowerment they faced and 'preserve the key element of their identity' (2012: 126). Cosmopolitanism was also expressed, in Joseph's words, as a process of 'trying to catch some different culture'. Eric explained that:

The most important part [of my identity] is that I try to understand different ways of living so I can accept a lot of things...[and] not have fixed ideas.

Pascal summed up the 'double conscious' convergence of diasporic and cosmopolitan identities:

Whoever comes with an idea thinking he's gonna go back, it never ends up that way....They prefer living here both ways...Rwanda and in the western world where they live....The best way is to jumble it up and set two feet in two countries so migration has completely twisted things around and we are happy wherever we are...but the most important thing is our home where we've got this common value.

Although this configuration of practice was not perceived as historically dominant by any participants, the fact that all expressed it, combined with recent authorisation from the homeland,⁸ hints that this gendered reconfiguration may be on the verge of becoming a new hegemonic masculine ideal for Rwandan migrant men. As other hegemonies are threatened, reaffirmed, and reconfigured, diasporic-cosmopolitan masculinity may mean that performing manhood is increasingly predicated on the ability to combine indicators such as adaptability, travelling, the ability to ‘catch’ and blend cultural practices and loyalty to Rwanda. It is unclear what the implications of this growing hegemony might be for gender relations. Although perhaps more inclusive and less linked to the consolidation of multi-scalar masculine control than traditional community masculinity, holding hope that this transformation may be less oppressive for both men and women alike, it also seems likely that men and women who do not meet its criteria will be excluded, facilitating further reconfigurations of gendered relations of power.

The dominant ideal of masculinity expressed at the diasporic scale, then, hinged upon participation in a community of Rwandans. Although not an expression of patriarchy, its successful performance could help to consolidate control at other scales. Migration caused the severing of ties to, and loss of support from, the community which made family-head masculinity harder to accomplish and caused social isolation. Participants actively reaffirmed community masculinity through friendships, imagined returns to Rwanda and purposeful participation in formal community groups which also furthered equality masculinity. However, the intersections of family and migratory histories as well as politics and ethnicity blocked this reaffirming route for some, who responded by emphasising alternative masculine ideas. Attention to this scale also revealed the emergence of a novel and widely practised diasporic-cosmopolitan masculinity that combined a unifying pride for the homeland with value placed on mobility, adaptability and intercultural navigation. As such, respondents’ intersectional status as ‘others’ and particularly their identity as refugees served as a source of empowering gendered accomplishment. Although not historically dominant, the consolidation of diasporic-cosmopolitan masculinity may, in time, constitute a new masculine hegemony which, although more inclusive and probably more conducive to equality masculinities, may subordinate those migrants who are not able to successfully juggle this double masculine consciousness.

Conclusions

In this paper I have demonstrated that the migration experience is one of intense transformation for masculinities. By combining GGOP with masculinity theory, my framework allowed me to not only confirm that Rwandan men’s positions within gendered relations of power were dynamically changed in the migration process, but also investigate how and why this happened. Three interrelated scales were identified as being central to these dynamics, and at each scale I was able to discern a particular dominant ideal of masculinity. I found, like Donaldson and Howson, that migrant men ‘bring with them firm beliefs and well established practices about manhood and gender relations’ (2009: 210). Provider, family head and community masculinities emerged as hegemonic gendered configurations at the scale of the workplace, the household, and diasporic space respectively. Due to the dislocatory impact of migration and the intersecting effects of ‘race’, ethnicity, migration status, marital status, family and migratory history, and politics, participants experienced shifts in their social locations within these scales which often inhibited their ability to perform hegemonic ideals.

⁸ It has been argued that, since 1994, the Rwandan state has placed growing emphasis on patriotism (Iiffe 2005: 353) and diasporic national belonging (Hintjens 2008: 25).

Through the uneven application of corporal and cognitive agency which was also related to these intersections, men reaffirmed and reconfigured hegemonic masculinities. At the workplace scale, dual provider and achievement masculinities emerged as novel gendered ways of being. Likewise, equality and parental masculinities were visible transformations in household spaces. At the diasporic scale, diasporic-cosmopolitan masculinity was shown to be a particularly important and powerful reformulation. These reconfigurations differed in levels of pervasiveness, extents to which participants willingly brought them into being, and in their effects on patriarchal control. However, they robustly demonstrated that migration is a ‘central mechanism in destabilising and remaking different types of masculinities’ (McIlwaine 2010: 284), and that hegemony is vulnerable to resistance, contestation and even usurpation.

For Rwandan migrant men, gendered ideals and practices at each scale were acutely interrelated. Shifts towards dual provider masculinity at the workplace, for example, made equality and parental masculinities possible at the household scale, and successful performance of community masculinity helped to consolidate hegemonies at other scales. Importantly, the three dominant forms of masculinity observed here did not all have to be successfully performed in their entirety for participants to be regarded as ‘real’ men. Although this helped to confirm Connell’s concept of ‘complicity’, it also created a strong case for the presence of multiple hegemonies which renders Connell’s singular conception problematic. Furthermore, it established that ‘changes in gender identities in one sphere may not [necessarily] translate to another’ (McIlwaine 2010: 283), and that gains at one scale could potentially compensate for shortfalls at others.

The paper also counters ethnocentric and essentialist narratives because migration was shown not to entail an automatic linear shift from ‘traditional’, patriarchal gender relations to egalitarian ‘modern’ ones. Although all Rwandan hegemonic masculinities had associations with and helped to maintain domination of men over women and other men, they were also linked to support and collaboration. Furthermore, my participants migrated from locations in which globalised forces of modernity had been operating for many years. Rather than being uniformly powerless and subordinated, individuals were able to deploy agency in varying degrees to resist the disempowering effects of migration in ways that either reaffirmed or reconfigured hegemonies which facilitated both moves towards and moves away from less oppressive ways of being a man. My study thus demonstrated that hegemony and patriarchy are distinct concepts, that both are in a constant process of renegotiation, and that migrants, rather than being the bearers of ‘backward’ or ‘static’ masculinities, are in fact at the forefront of this complex phenomenon.

While this research contributes to understandings of migration and non-western masculinities, urging further studies that explore the multiple masculinity types identified, it was not able to gain a complete picture of relations between the sexes and neither could it predict the outcomes of gendered reformulations on the homeland society. As such, I advocate further research on migrant masculinities that both includes female voices and conducts fieldwork in both destination and origin countries to build fuller comprehensions of gender, transnationalism, and the fascinating interplay between the two.

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