Chapter 6
"*On se débrouille.*"[1] – (Re)negotiating masculinities after deportation through everyday suffering, hard work, and (im)mobilities[2]

The recovery and renegotiation of masculinities after deportation is a key factor in re-establishing oneself as a member of society and for the purposes of everyday life. In this chapter, therefore, the crisis caused by deportation and restricted mobility will be analyzed as a specific challenge to the masculinities of both younger and older men. Deportation entails a "true danger of emasculation," that is to say that the loss of money involved not only becomes a symbol of "failed" achievement, responsibilities and adulthood, but, more broadly, questions one's personhood, masculinity and membership of society, even though "success" through adventure has become much unlikelier today, especially as a result of EU intervention in sub-Saharan Africa. Chapter 5 focused on showing how gossip and mistrust may presume that one lacks the spirit, ambition, and strength (*fa den sago)* for the hazardous journey, narratively implying one's social death given that "money is at the heart of social exchange and codes of male respectability" (Gaibazzi, 2015a, p. 113; also Osella & Osella, 2000), and that the danger of being economically dependent on someone is the greatest threat to the latter (Gaibazzi, 2015a, p. 78) and a major source of suffering. This chapter complements its predecessor by highlighting masculinity and the strategies employed by former deportees to get by / eke out a living ("*se débrouiller*") and recover in the post-deportation everyday.

Young men in Mali face multiple constraints today, evoking a sense of crisis that has been discussed in the scholarly literature.[3] Against this background, an

1 "One gets by" also in the sense "one ekes out a living."

2 Parts of this chapter have been previously published in Schultz, S. U. (2020b), reprinted by permission of the publisher (Taylor &Francis Ltd, http://www.tandfonline.com).

3 A crisis of youth leads to a crisis of reproduction and a so-called "crisis of masculinity," seen as mostly driven by economic and structural factors (e.g., Cornwall et al., 2016; Weiss, 2004).

increasing number of "young" unmarried men and even full adults have been having, and still have, difficulties in living up to the norm of becoming a breadwinner and the head of a household (Cornwall, 2016; Schulz & Jansen, 2016). At the same time, their fathers, in their positions as older men and family heads, have been struggling to support them, which could eventually result in their losing their sons' respect. Over the last two decades as well, women have increasingly been contributing financially or even becoming household heads themselves, although this has not been happening out in the open (Schulz, 2012). Emigration could have offered those multiply constrained younger men a means of gaining the status and responsibility of social adulthood, particularly of becoming a "proper fully adult man," but deportation cut short their journey to social maturity. Possibly immobilized, in Mali as in other countries in sub-Saharan Africa (cf. Honwana & de Boeck, 2005; Comaroff & Comaroff, 2001; Mbembe, 1985), deportees join a generation "in-the-waiting in the double sense" (Schulz, 2002, p. 806; cf. Schulz & Diallo, 2016, p. 227)[4].

For most men staying and engaging with life where they are after deportation is often perceived as their only option, and it is often the express wish of their families, shameful and unworthy as it may first appear. The imperative of looking for money remains, not least to overcome one's suffering. Nevertheless, as described in deportation studies, former adventurers can convert their suffering into a new status defined by courage and fearlessness (Schuster & Majidi, 2015, p. 643; cf. Kusow, 2004)[5] and thereby recover and/or reinvent their masculinities. One might thus assume that only the physically and mentally strongest stay (given the fact that the journey allowed only some to survive at all), trying to free themselves from a certain "culpability," recover their dignity[6] and become good people (above all for the community) (Bredeloup, 2017).

4 Not only waiting to gain senior status, but also waiting for their parents, as well as the state, to create the conditions to enable them to do so. Deportations only worsen any such conditions.

5 Maher writes that *refoulés* renegotiated their inferior status by creating "a new system of counter-honor as a way to manage or "offset" their stigma as "failures" (Kusow, 2004, p. 194, after Maher, 2015, p. 351f).

6 Dignity is a meaningful concept, an emotion implying social skills as well as strategies for alleviating suffering (Youngsted, 2013, p. 12). It is similar to the Malian concept of *danbé*, literally translated as dignity, honor, or reputation. Schulz (1999) describes *danbé* for Mali as "the honor and prestige [one] gains from living up to the expectations" of one's people (p. 282; cf. Whitehouse, 2012, p. 88f).

Studying masculinities and "failed" migration

My analysis here is informed by different aspects of masculinity studies. Raewyn Connell defined hegemonic masculinity as a practice that legitimizes some men's dominant position in society and justifies the subordination of the ordinary male population and women, and other marginalized or complicit ways of being a man (Connell, [1995] 2005, pp. 76ff). Connell's then groundbreaking work remains very useful for considering masculinities in the plural, as made and remade by their specific social, historical, cultural, and geographical contexts and practices, and shaped by power relations, a critical factor in discussing men and migration (e.g., Ingvars & Gíslason, 2018; Hibbins & Pease, 2009).[7] "The dislocations of migration" (Cornwall, 2016, p. 17) present a particularly interesting site for a rooted intersectional analysis. Migrant men's acquired hegemonic ideals may provide support for them in a transnational social space or be enacted in an exaggerated "hypermasculine" fashion to compensate for a marginal position (Hibbins & Pease, 2009, p. 6).

Regarding the Malian and the broader African context, Schulz (2012) suggests asking which aspect of patriarchy is affected, instead of claiming that masculinities are in crisis: difficulties not only derive from relations between men and women, but more substantially from those between men. In a theoretical reformulation of the concept of hegemonic masculinity, Inhorn (2012, p. 30) calls for a concept of "emergent masculinities" understanding "manly selfhood … as an act that is ever in progress." This concept is particularly helpful for discussing deportees' sometimes volatile and precarious daily life, enabling an understanding of how "men navigate and adapt to their changing social worlds" (p. 60).

After deportation, migrants' constructions of their potential masculinities, which provided support abroad or while in transit, may suddenly be turned upside-down. At the same time, however, the hegemonic foil of becoming a breadwinner and head of a household remains of central importance. This chapter describes how deportees try to navigate their masculinities and form part of their communities, the particular challenges they may face, as well as what they bring in to enable them to go on. It does so by continuing to examine the empirical case of Brahima in Bamako and introducing Seku and his *grin*[8] in the small village close to

7 Despite criticisms that it is one-sided, static or simply mistaken (e.g., Broqua & Doquet, 2013; Schulz, 2012; Inhorn, 2012; Beasley, 2008; Lindsay & Miescher, 2003), Connell's conceptualization of hegemonic masculinities in relation to subordinate, complicit, or marginal ones ([1995] 2005, pp. 76ff), has been extensively adopted and cited as useful, including, recently, when discussing men and migration (e.g., Ingvars & Gíslason, 2018; Charsley & Wray, 2015).

8 A local term for a group of people, often men, who gather around a small stove to brew a drink, usually strong green tea, socialize, and pass the time.

Kita. Brahima and Seku offer insights into the concepts and practices that enable them to manage their endangered hegemonic masculinity after deportation. The specific forms of suffering that deportees describe in narrating their deportation experiences (see Chapter 4) may be reinterpreted for the purpose of recovering their dignity and becoming someone (*ka kè waritiguiyé*). Moreover, hard work and courage, as well as getting married, may help them to manage the everyday. Against this background, some kind of recognized "adventure-hood", as I term it, is integrated into a new repertoire of deportee masculinities. In particular, the chapter takes the generational aspect of deportation into account, shedding light on potential differences between younger and older male deportees.

"I am obliged to stay where I am." – Restricted mobilities, suffering, and working in Bamako

The case of Brahima demonstrates the tension between feelings of stuckness, proactive engagement to stay, and a continuing longing to leave after a (forced) return in an urban context. In Chapter 4, I described how Brahima returned to Bamako in 2008, shocked that he could have been deported, facing mistrust and alienation back in the central market among his former colleagues and close friends. He felt obliged to stay, representing himself as "the Spaniard" and being recognized as such, as described in Chapter 3. At the end of 2015, in the second year of our acquaintance, we met for a longer conversation. Birama and I asked Brahima to evaluate his situation in comparison to the previous year:

> Sincerely, it's ok. I'm doing well and I thank God. Leaving for Europe would please me, but there is the problem of means (*moyens*), which I haven't got. I'd still like to leave, but there's the problem of the means. Other than that, I'm doing well. There is nothing bad. It's OK. (Brahima, 12-12-2015)

Seven years after his deportation the central element in Brahima's narrative was his desire to leave for Europe again, as opposed to his inability to do so. Still, he said "it's OK" and he thanked God, summing up his situation and feeling of constrained mobility. Nonetheless, hardship had increased. This placatory framework could also be seen as a narrative strategy to gloss over hardship and discomfort in order to save face – as discussed in the previous chapter. Thus, pretending to be well would have been the specific aim of the narration instead of revealing his actual state of mind and potential suffering. Brahima gave a coherent account, justifying why he needed to stay. The sensation of "stuckedness" (Hage, 2009) that he expresses is somehow legitimized; the theme of leaving again and of having left once already is predominant. It indicates an intrinsic longing to move on in life and become someone as a person. Ghassan Hage called the idea that a viable life presup-

poses a form of imaginary mobility, "existential mobility" on an "existential quest," a sense that one is "going somewhere" also in "socio-existential" terms (Hage, 2005, p. 471; cf. 2009; cf. Stock, 2019). Stuckness, on the other hand, is "existential immobility." It presumes a clear lack of agency, particularly as a man, as mobility and manhood are intrinsically connected. Most importantly, both can be perceived and imagined, rather than physically existing, and still dominate one's everyday. According to Hage, the "heroism of stuckedness lies in this ability to snatch agency in the very midst of its lack" (2015, p. n.d.). Imaginative talking about leaving, individually or among a group, can create agency. Beyond this, promoting one's decision to stay and justifying one's obligation to do so is a central motif of talk and eventually a lived reality, whether in an adaptive psychological mode or one of proactive acceptance (cf. Carling & Schewel, 2017), which can be likewise agentic. I follow these entanglements throughout the rest of this chapter, not least because they are intrinsic aspects of restoring masculinities.

As I mentioned, however, everyday hardship had increased for Brahima in comparison to the previous year. His expenses had grown and the employment situation had got worse, reminiscent of Salif's descriptions in Chapter 5.

> This year, it's not easy […] It's the work. I eke out a living ("*je me débrouille*") here in the shop (*butiki*). That's not at all my objective, but if you don't have any other possibility, you are obliged to accept. That's obligatory. That's as if I visit you and you prepare *la bouillie* (Bambanakan: *sari*; English: mash) for me. I'll eat it, knowing that there are no other possibilities. (Brahima, 12-12-2015)

Even though he felt expressly constrained, Brahima showed conviction and consistency in the way he kept on going, working and earning his small income. At the same time, his decision to adapt on-site did not rule out the potential of leaving again. To exemplify this obligation to accept everyday hardship and reciprocal responsibility, Brahima referred to the allegory of the traditional mash, "*la bouillie*," the common breakfast among farmers in West Africa.[9] Having *la boullie* for lunch or dinner is considered a sign of lack of means as people generally only eat it in the morning. The traditional lunch and dinner is *tô*, also made of sorghum or from corn. It comes along with a variety of sauces. Having *la bouillie* for all your meals makes it obvious that the family cannot afford to purchase the ingredients for the sauce. In view of the high value placed on hospitality in rural southern Mali, usually

9 *La bouillie* is mostly made from one of the many forms of Malian sorghum or from corn. The various forms of sorghum are the most widespread grains in Mali; they grow despite the dry Sahelian soils. They are thus considered to be the grain of the "poor" rural population. (See online, e.g., http://moulindelamousquere.pagesperso-orange.fr/pages/mali/cereales-afrique.htm, accessed 31 Octobe 2021.) For *la bouille*, the corn is pounded, mashed and then boiled, then one adds shea butter and eats it with sugar.

expressed through the abundance of food and drink offered to a guest and often involving the slaughter of poultry or a sheep, serving *la bouillie* as lunch or dinner creates a shameful situation. Whatever the guest might think of being served *la bouillie* for lunch or dinner, however, the imperative of hospitality would prevent him or her from refusing the meal offered by the host. In order to preserve social harmony, there would be no choice but to eat the humble meal offered, or in other words there would be no possibility of Brahima's doing anything other than staying in Bamako for the moment.

After his return from the Canary Islands, Brahima had almost immediately gone back to work, thereby showing masculine courage. His uncle commented approvingly when asked if he was touched by his nephew's unexpected collapse: "Well … he started to sell mattresses. This is already something." Having accepted that he had to stay in Bamako, Brahima tried to be a breadwinner, even if he described himself as dissatisfied. From that small economic base, he had worked his way up, he was even able to marry back in his village, thus carrying out the role expected of him. In 2015 Brahima was taking care of his sick mother and his wife who stayed with the extended family in Bamako. Still, he preferred to remain in the capital rather than return to his parents' village, and he was very hesitant and evasive when I asked him if we could visit the village together.

Beyond autonomy and anonymity, the city does offer some real economic opportunities such as possibilities for earning a small income through the extensive economic market structure, trade and (inter)national exchange even though it may be on a day-to-day basis; "*le petit business*" as people tend to say. This can be done without much schooling. Further, working on a construction site, as a watchman, or as a gardener may be a possibility. Importantly, the city also offers many different prospects of consumption. Brahima had been a Bamako dweller since he was ten, when his parents sent him there to earn his living with his uncle, and a rural village could hardly keep up with the modern standards of the capital, in Brahima's view. Charles Piot, on the other hand, has aptly illustrated the claim that rural villages (of the Kabre in Togo) are "a site… of the modern, one that is as privileged as any other" (Piot, 1999, p. 178). Others have shown that the rural cannot be so easily separated from the urban in Africa (cf. Ferguson, 2006, p. 167f). This is evident from people's intra-mobility patterns and the high degree of interconnectedness between the rural and the urban nurtured, not least, by the dense social web and embedding of many people, exemplified here by the family's receiving medical care in Bamako.[10] Still, negative perceptions of less desirable, remote rural areas are widespread in the respondents' accounts as well as among the wider population. In Bamako, Brahima seemed to be able to have an active life which corresponded

10 The latter relates to the centralized infrastructure in Mali, where some medical treatment is only available in Bamako.

more closely to a "Western" image of "modernity" and urban life: in addition to his many familial and economic caring responsibilities, he practiced taekwondo six days a week. This enabled him to remain physically strong and to somehow partake in, or at least get a taste of, a more popular city life. Without being able to read and write in French, he was very active and connected via Facebook and other social media. He showed off two fancy smartphones, the latest of which had been bought and sent by a friend in France. In this connection, Sasha Newell has analyzed the Ivorian "bluff" (Newell, 2012), a means of gaining prestige not through migration but by producing an image of success based mainly around (Western) clothing that is beyond the men's real economic means.[11] All these seem to be important features of consumption and worldliness, a form of manly maturity or wisdom, which may contribute to Brahima's standing as a (deported) man in the city.

Even if he was obliged to stay, the hegemonic trait of mobility and being an adventurer continued to be omnipresent. His uncle and foster-father joined in the talk about re-emigrating: "If he [Brahima] wants to leave again, I will agree to it," and he repeated the common narrative: "No, I cannot refuse to let him leave. Why? (*loud voice*) If he leaves, it will be to make money. If he earns a lot of money, it will help everybody in the family. If a child is courageous, he will simply leave!" The courageous man is thus the one who disregards all the hazards and leaves in spite of obstacles and a potential obligation to stay. The cultural trait of emphasizing out-mobility is mirrored by the social situation. Brahima's family is of Soninke ethnicity, which is credited with an extensive migratory heritage. Basic convictions such as "everybody can make it," and even more "a man is made to travel" imbue our conversation and exemplify the expectations of migratory adventure and their intrinsic connection to becoming and being "a man." Brahima is very clear about what he actually aims to do:

> The main objective [*laughs*] is to leave here from Mali to go to Europe. You see, the first time, I left for Spain; this was for searching for money to continue on to Europe. … Unfortunately, I was deported (*refoulé*). Since I've arrived here, I don't want to stay in Mali anymore, I feel like returning. Europe and Africa, there is a very big difference between them – at the level of income. In every respect, Europe is different than Africa. Birama [*points to my co-researcher*] has not been there, but I, nevertheless, know the difference between Europe and Africa well. (Brahima, 12-12-2015)

Despite all the hardships of the journey, his main objective is still presented as being to leave again, not least because the everyday offers few possibilities for a

11 Ferguson speaks of postcolonial imitation (2006) and Bhabha of mimicry (1994) which would need to be discussed, of course, against the contradictions and inequalities in the postcolony (cf. Newell, 2012, pp. 14ff, also Mbembe, 2001).

larger and more substantial income (see Chapter 5; also Makhulu et al., 2010). Europe, by contrast, is represented as an economically highly desirable place, even for someone who has been deported from there. That is also based on its symbolic dimension, as shown before. Moreover, these aspirations are built on transnational spaces, knowing, hearing from, exchanging with contacts abroad. In this case, of course, Brahima's own migratory experience counted too, even if it was only 40 days in Tenerife. "In Bamako there is no agriculture, so it can only be little business or leaving on adventure," his uncle added. Brahima had prepared for being an adventurer and for succeeding and earning in Europe. But it did not work out. In Gambia, "hard-working off-farm workers, especially those who travel" are called "hustlers" (Gaibazzi, 2015a, p. 63), while in the literature on youth in Africa, "hustling" has been used as another term for actively getting by through everyday difficulties and uncertainties (cf. Ludwig, 2017a).[12] In this sense, Brahima's "eking out his living" ("*se débrouiller*") through "small businesses," the most widespread expression used to describe everyday getting-by jobs in Mali, is acknowledged as a hard-working attempt to improve the situation, that could, at the same time, be seen as a masculine continuation of the spirit of adventure, complementary to the travel, and even as preparation for potentially heading off again.

Bahima's uncle agreed that there was currently no money to re-emigrate, and Brahima could not leave his wife and three-year-old child behind "just like that." As in the other cases described, it was the economic as well as the social obligation to take care which made him stay. "Still, I think about it, because when you want to achieve an objective, this discourages you." Multiple sufferings, among his memories as well as in daily life, formed part of his milieu. Though physically immobile, at least in international and transcontinental terms, Brahima remained mobile in his imagination at least (Urry, 2007)[13], full of aspirations, and also of a certain conviction that he would get another chance to leave.[14] In Hage's terminology he was

12 Since Honwana & de Boeck's "Makers and Breakers" (2005) there has been plenty of literature on youth in Africa and a varied discussion on the phenomenon of everyday getting by in spite of the labor market and other structural constraints, i.e., the "prolonged decline and drastic reduction of social possibilities" (Vigh, 2006, p. 96; cf. Ludwig, 2013). Terminologies such as hustling, eking out a living or navigating, have become synonyms for ways to analytically grasp the everyday reality, the "abject" and often desperate efforts to survive of youth in Africa (cf. Ludwig, 2017a, p. 14; Newell, 2012; Vigh, 2006). This debate has been further extended to study African migrant realities in Europe (cf., e.g., Schapendonk, 2018).

13 Urry differentiates four dimensions of mobility: physical, imaginative, virtual, and communicative. (2007).

14 The "aspiration/ability" model by Carling (2002; revised by Carling & Schewel, 2017) differentiates between aspirations to migrate and the ability to do so. "Feeling obliged to stay" thus implies that the desire to leave and expectation that one will leave are pitted against the ability and capacity to realize this desire, creating a situation of an involuntary immobility (cf. Carling, 2002).

existentially mobile. In his late twenties, Brahima, in fact, had a real chance to leave again; most importantly, because mobility is seen the privilege of the youth. His uncle again explicitly exclaimed: "As he is still young, if he still wants to leave, he can leave! Not so? … He is like one of my sons (*laughs*)." The uncle expatiates on his expectations driven not least by the hegemonic image of the successful adventurer and man exerting pressure on his nephew to re-emigrate. Brahima's narrative priority of leaving again to achieve something more has in the end to be seen against this hegemonic background too, since it potentially influenced his narrative, making him represent himself as a young ambitious man. His economic endeavors on the spot were almost hidden by it, although his uncle did recognize them too.

After deportation, Brahima joined a generation in waiting in multiple senses. Honwana (2012) used the term "waithood" for the extended phase between youth and adulthood that does not allow young people to follow the established paths to gain social status as preceding generations had. Other than this, however, Brahima seemed to act within the binding structure of sociality and comply with the social roles as much as he could. He tried to comply with hegemonic conceptions of masculinities by taking over social responsibility and engaging where he was. At the same time, representations of masculinity such as being modern, worldly, and oriented to the potentially heroic acts of the adventurer could emerge, as I will explain later. In this vein, his friend confirmed "of course, Brahima is an adventurer!" And he bade farewell in Spanish: "¡Hasta luego!" Brahima's experience of having been abroad in this sense contributed substantially to his reputation. He was not stuck, but enduring and acting: navigating his livelihood between what was and what might come. Even if he stayed in Bamako after his involuntary return he deserved the status of a (former) migrant, also as part of a transnational supporter network formed by emigrants from his village all over the world.

"As a man, you have to be strong where you are!"– Suffering and courage in the rural hinterland

Seku's story more explicitly demonstrates the intersections of everyday suffering post deportation, courage, and masculinities in getting through in a rural context in southern Mali. Seku had not long turned thirty by the time that we met. Like many others in the small village not far away from the larger community of Salif and Karim, he had been deported from Libya in 2010 (see Chapter 2). This, however, was not his first return: in 2002 he had come back triumphant as a successful returnee.

One evening, we were sitting in the small courtyard of Seku's best friend Baba's house. It was the end of a long, hot day. The cement house had roofs made of corrugated sheets, which indicated some wealth in the family (cf. Chapter 5). Seku, Baba and Ousmane were the core of their *grin*, their privileged and trusted space

that allowed them to address and reflect on their daily concerns. These specific tea circles have been called spaces to (re)produce and renegotiate masculinities (Bondaz, 2013; Schulz, 2002).[15] Ousmane was in the nearby city, assisting a mechanic and wheel seller as an everyday job; Baba worked in a small shop behind his father's house. Seku spent almost the entire day with us. It was the middle of the dry season and the harvest had been gathered. Mostly small things were left, considered women's work – picking and processing peanuts. A tarred road, built in 2006 and to be reached via a small dusty track through the bushes and along the fields, had changed the situation of the villagers fundamentally, so people said. Now it was easy to reach the city, to do a little business, sell products at the market as well as to leave for Bamako or farther away.

The majority of young males and others used their small Jakartas[16], which had become the standard affordable means of transport for many. Others, mostly the younger ones, took their bicycles. In the district capital, which offered a large range of livelihood opportunities, people pursue small income-generating activities. Since the previous year, a "moto taxi," consisting of a small van body installed on a motor bike, connects the surrounding villages to the nearest bigger town twice a day. It allows those without their own vehicle, mostly women, children and the elderly, to sell their garden vegetables in the marketplace, to buy items not available in the little village kiosk or to visit people. Baba's and Seku's wives were there on that day, too.

In 2008, Baba, Ousmane, Seku, and many others were in Libya. When the conflict in Libya escalated in 2011, almost the entire village youth, and elder males abroad, came back, either repatriated or deported. Others continued on to Europe, even if it was not their original plan. The whole village became involved in the disaster of their imprisoned youth, through the prisoners' distress calls by phone and through the accounts of others returning. Unlike in Salif's village, which is four times as big, here, everyone seemed to have exchanged their experiences. Now, the three are married; Baba already has two wives.

For Seku it was paramount that he left for Libya twice, and that his first return – by plane – was his own decision. He came to visit and show off: "the 11/11/2003 I came," he laughs. "I will never forget this date." He lived *"la belle vie"*; spent all his money, married, and took important steps toward male adulthood. Migratory

15 While Schulz (2002, p. 811) described *grins* as something mostly found in urban areas, the practice seems to have spread more widely in the meantime diffusing into local rural forms of socializing. The young men in the village referred to their tea round as a *grin* with its informally appointed president, thus replicating or adapting a previously urban phenomenon. At the same time, the heterogeneity of backgrounds, ages, and style that potentially exists in the city, can hardly be found in a village, even though things vary with the size of the village population.

16 A type of small motorbike imported from China.

success empowered him. During his second migration too, he was able to get together some money and send it home, like Yakouba and Broulaye who were described in the previous chapter. In this case too his father had died, and the family needed support. However, this second stay "did not work out." Seku was deported to Bamako, "disturbed and confounded"; notably as a result of his treatment in the Libyan prison. Still, he immediately started to help with the family farmwork, not stopping to search for other ways to support himself: after harvest, he left for Kéniéba, the largest region for informal gold mining ("*orpaillage*") farther south-west in Mali. To make preparations for winter, he returned, before leaving again to search for gold, this time in neighboring Senegal. Seku followed the established patterns of seasonal mobility, which for centuries have secured livelihoods, by cultivating peanuts, cola nuts or doing "small business" (Gary-Tounkara, 2008). Seasonal, but also year-long mining in informal gold sites has become the established alternative and complement to agricultural work, especially when international mobility is constrained[17], even if it provokes major conflicts about potential dangers and benefits, particularly between generations (Dwell, 2013; Hilson & Garforth, 2012).[18] Seku underlined his motivation:

> Well, we get by (*on se débrouille*)… Here are many things. In the case of sickness, we all stay. There, where you are, you must not… you must not lower your arms as a man. One has to understand this. Even here, it's good. If you have got this idea in your head that we are here, but here it's not good. That's not life… As a man you have to be strong where you are! (Seku, 1-28-2016)

Remaining active is characteristic of a proper man and the central category in Seku's depiction. Lowering one's arms (more generally, sitting with your arms folded ["*les bras croisés*"]) relates to laziness, and a potential accusation of *fa den sago* implying a "danger of emasculation," fundamentally questioning one's integrity as a person, a member of society and "a man." Not only in telling their stories, but also in practice, Baba, Ousmane, and Seku tried to carry on in spite of an everyday precarious situation post deportation, remaining active and engaged, and caring

17 Gold is a historical, cultural as well as common social good in Mali. Its industrial exploitation through international companies only started around 2000 when the gold price rose on the international market. Simultaneously, informal gold-mining sites emerged, which are usually administered as regards infrastructure by the nearby community. Often a gold-mining site forms part of a village territory itself and the inhabitants form collectivities to distribute the opportunities for obtaining licenses to dig for the metal equally.

18 For the young men, working on the gold mines can, like going on an adventure, serve to create autonomy and enable them to generate income. For the older population, the informal gold mining sites may be a "hotbed of vice," of drug abuse, prostitution, and sexual disease. In the mining regions, Bamako, and civil society fora, debates are heated and international organizations engage in evaluating the potential dangers of the new rush for gold and luck.

for those who were close to them, thus trying to comply with the hegemonic image of the breadwinner and provider.

Active waiting

In light of their arduous and none too profitable efforts, though, Seku revised their situation, constantly thinking about going on an adventure again:

> Last year, I did not go anywhere. I'm in the process of reflecting (*laughs*). There are conflicts in several countries and it's not easy to have the money. That's why I stay here to wait; it's not for anything else. To have a rest is also good for the body (*laughs*).
> Also it's better to have a rest right now as the gold sites used to yield good money, but now that's not the case – so, it's better to have a rest (*Birama and Seku laugh*). (Seku, 1-27-2016)

Just then, he was doing "nothing," he continued: "there are no activities." The winter preparation of the fields had not yet started. Political crises made it difficult to "just go and succeed." He sat and reflected on the alternatives: "That's it. I'm in the process of evaluating, if I should take the road toward Europe again or go somewhere in the subregion or here in Mali. I'm observing the current situation." As if complementing continuous and active searching, staying, waiting, reflecting, and taking a rest are central elements for many young men of their cohort. Seku laughed when he mentioned the benefit of staying for his physical health. Consciousness of a good physical condition has been described as prevalent among other young men, for example in Senegal or the Ivory Coast, aspiring to create masculine values (Prothmann, 2018; Newell, 2012). From this perspective, resting and reflecting are valuable activities for a mature adventurer and responsible man, even one who has been deported. It is not passive waiting, but a meaningful activity. Waiting can be "actively produced, embodied, experienced, politicized and resisted across a range of migrant spaces" (Conlon, 2011, p. 355). All modes of active waiting are "negotiated and incorporated into everyday lives and life projects" (p. 357). This active sense is even more important since immobility might be perceived as a threat to hegemonic masculinity (Gaibazzi, 2015a), or rather as a female characteristic, but from this point of view it becomes part of an emerging and assembling repertoire of (deportee) masculinities.

In the end, this kind of renegotiation of waiting and taking a rest again links in with discussions about young people's tactical strategizing, navigating, and hustling, or active sitting in African countries today (e.g., Gaibazzi, 2015a; Newell, 2012; Vigh, 2006; Honwana & de Boeck, 2005). Even if, for some deportees, a complete standstill would induce a feeling of stagnation, an "active waiting," defined as a constantly incorporated mode of being, can be seen as a "motion within motion,"

as Henrik E. Vigh defined social navigating (2006, p. 14), which here consisted in courageously trying to make the best of the possible choices, including by reflecting and physically recovering over time. Active waiting very much resembles, or at least complements, notions such as (social) navigating, hustling or "eking out a living" (*se débrouiller*). Seku tried to work out the most beneficial opportunities to gain a livelihood. He felt obliged to do so as it appeared to be his duty as a man. Effectively, his presence was also needed to take care of his parents, his uncle, his children, and his wife. Still, Seku was torn and in difficulties. A lot of money had been lost through travel. His wife was contributing financially through selling products in the market. Active waiting represents endurance and a constructive use of time in renarrating, renegotiating, or repracticing the established story of the "failed" adventurer. Taking care of others, moreover, goes beyond the (social) value of money, constituting an essential social worth value in itself.

Intersections of courage, suffering, and adventure

Former deportees circumvent the imminent danger of being called *fa den sago* and thus disrespected as a man, by remaining active and engaging locally, as well as caring for close relatives and friends, as the examples of Seku, Baba, Ousmane, and Brahima illustrate. Showing courage is an important masculine value. It functions productively as an intrinsic and also everyday motor for getting along, and has different connotations in the respondents' accounts. In Bamankan, several terms are used to express courage.[19] They relate to very specific conceptions of masculinity in terms of endurance and physical as well as mental strength; and, again, to the central idea of being a full person with body, heart and soul, which signifies "a man" (values, which could also apply to a woman). First of all, courage is a central value in the migratory adventure itself. Only a courageous young man is able to go into the wilderness, learn from being there, and survive. Seku's uncle and social father gave an example:

> If I tell someone to leave, for example. If he leaves and he finds some difficulties, he will return immediately. By contrast, if the person leaves by himself, even if he encounters difficulties, he will try to overcome them to enter the countries of destination. If the person takes the decision to leave on an adventure, he will endure suffering, prison, and other forms of torture.

19 *Dusuta*, which means "with heart"; *jageleya*, which would more generally mean "getting over difficulties"; *kiseya*, which signifies energy as well as *timinadja* which more strongly implies a "don't give up" attitude and particularly refers to courage and suffering in agriculture.

The same applies when the person is *refoulé* and looks to re-emigrate:

> This is a person who is looking for ways to leave. For example, if the person cannot stand suffering, he will stay; but if he is courageous and ready to bear the suffering, he will leave. (Seku's uncle, 01-28-2016)

The conception of individual responsibility for the adventure and its implicit "failures" fits into conceptions of becoming somebody, being able to withstand difficulties and suffering, here exemplified as "prison and other forms of torture." The realities of irregular journeys and externalized migratory control are known. For the father, courage is defined through one's potential to bear such suffering, which is what makes an adventurer, and thus "a man." Re-emigration in spite of all the hazards would be a particular sign of courage, while those who stay behind, including those who have failed to leave (again), may appear as cowards. Seku, like Brahima, had not left for anywhere abroad since 2010. When asked if Seku was courageous, the elder man replied: "Seku was deported. When he came back, he built houses. This was a good thing." Although Seku had been deported and was still there, his uncle appreciated his contribution. This underlines the importance of money as social currency, regardless of a deportation, as discussed in the previous chapter: what one has achieved before, during and after the journey may be of major importance. Furthermore, it points to the idea expressed when Seku vehemently exclaimed – "as a man, you have to be strong where you are!" You have to remain active and engage, contribute however you can and take care of those close to you; even if economic currency remains pivotal. This very much recalls what Brahima's uncle said about his nephew.

What is paramount is the courage one has acquired through living through the sufferings of the migratory adventure, which demands endurance of high risks and sometimes death (Dougnon, 2013). It helps to recover one's dignity post deportation. Suffering is culturally, socially, and historically contingent and can take many forms, as discussed in Chapter 4 (Kleinman & Kleinman, 1991, p. 280). In Mali suffering is an everyday and manifold phenomenon, and, like courage, is expressed through a variety of terms and expressions in Bamanakan.[20] We talk about different forms and terminologies of suffering. Interestingly, Seku equates the suffering caused by hazardous everyday economic and living conditions with the sensation

20 *Ni ma tooro*, which means "tired heart" ("*cœur fatigué*"), again points to the central organ and essence of life; or *dimi* which usually refers to suffering during physical sickness translating as "pain," "hurt," and explicitly "suffering" (in French: "*douleur*", "*blessure*", "*souffrance*"). Furthermore, suffering is often framed as a productive category as *monnè*, which should rather be translated as "resentment," "bitterness" or "anger" (in French: "*rancœur*", "*rancune*", "*ressentiment*").

of being left behind to suffer from a disease (*dimi*), thus endangering one's health, endangering the human basis of one's existence. While for Seku "*dimi*" and "*monnè*," translated as "resentment," "bitterness" or "anger," meant the same. Ousmane differentiated between the two terms as follows:

> For example, you and me, we can be looking for something, I may have something and you may not. In this case you will be "*monnè*." I consider this as suffering. "*Monnè*" it's like you telling me that I do not know anything to do in life; in this case, I'll be "*monnè*"; this will make me force myself to do what needs to be done. (Small group discussion, 11-7-2015)

Ousmane speaks of the anger of not having achieved anything [acquired money or means] in comparison with others. Jealousy plays an important role here, it being said to be a central tool for autonomy in Mandé (see Chapter 5). Contrary to a more "negative" form of suffering, as described in Chapter 4, here suffering is framed as a particular productive category. Stress and anger at "failure" and accusation may be silenced, but they may incite action instead of submission.[21] The discursive narratives construct suffering and courage as prerequisites for masculinities post deportation, for being a good son, husband, and father.

Even if the courage of the migratory adventure is mainly framed in terms of masculine values, the rare female adventurers can benefit from its glory, as I was able to learn: Baba's cousin had been deported from Spain six years before. "Everybody was very happy" when she went off to Libya all by herself. A friend sent money, but she had saved up herself by working as a tailor in the city. "She is courageous!" everybody nodded. After her return, she was "unhappy," but everyone tried to make her aware that it was bad luck and she should make the best of it. She had married the year before: "man and woman are equal in *warignini*. If somebody decides to leave, we can only encourage that person. This is our wish" (Baba, 01-25-2016). These accounts appear remarkable given that the migratory adventure is mainly defined as a masculine activity, and money is connected to male respectability. Here, the adventure is described equally heroically when the adventurer a woman. It remains to be seen if this hints at a reconceptualization of new adventurer masculinities and femininities.

21 Interestingly, this approach invokes the neoliberal idea of the entrepreneurial self, responsible for his or her own performance (Cornwall, 2016) and not least reminds one of Foucault's "technologies of the self" (1988; cf. also Gaibazzi, 2015a, pp. 75f).

On "adventure-hood" and adulthood as a man

The world described here is seen in terms of the migratory adventure being a pivot, a mode of being, and, most importantly, a means to become a "full man." Men are defined in relation to it, as sitters and stayers or as adventurers. Over the last 20 years, deportations have created a new phenomenon, the "failed" adventurer. Despite returning empty-handed, a man in this situation may still be valued for having grown. Overall, the deportees' narrations perfectly reflected the ambivalence of the adventure as "a career which one enters with more or less trumps, that one accomplishes with more or less success and thus one finishes one day or the other, to leave in a more or less honorable way" (Streiff-Fénart & Poutignat, 2006, p. 131). Ousmane's mother found her son much wiser and more courageous afterward. One former deportee pointed out: "the difference consists in the fact that those who have travelled a lot and those who have not travelled cannot be the same, [although they are confronted by the same problems]." In this vein, Brahima, Seku and others represented themselves as experienced and worldly adventurers, and experts in travel, taking migration as the ultimate act of consumption and personal transformation as defined in the last chapter (Newell, 2012, pp. 208ff). Brahima, for instance, displayed his knowledge of the difference between Europe and Africa by explaining it to Birama, my co-researcher, who had never been to Europe, and was not eager to go there. More than that, deportees took to explicitly warning the village youth of the dangers of leaving. Rather than being persuaded, however, the youngsters tended to ask for their advice as experienced travelers: "They want to find out for themselves! And have their own money," one complained. Sometimes, to the sorrow of the older generation, their mothers, and the *refoulés*, the youngsters' restive search for travel abroad and for wealth would persist. The attributes of the experienced adventurer are explicitly masculine, in a society where "adventure-hood," as I call it, a combination of the terms adventure and adulthood, i.e., this specific experience of the migratory adventure, contributes to manhood and "a man has to travel."

Suffering here attains an overarching meaning for masculinities after deportation and for becoming a respectable person. As Seku described it: "A man/person who suffers, explains his experiences to his descendants, like my grandfather; so if you have not experienced anything, what are you going to tell?" Suffering is the equivalent to experiencing. One cannot be a "real man" without suffering, even if this suffering needs to be finally overcome. Significantly, the adventurous experience is depicted in the person of the grandfather, a highly respected man.

Seku even entered a plea for strength and courage to be considered as particular attributes of the Malian adventurer, underlining the function of as an identity anchor in situations post deportation (see Chapter 4):

> I did not see anyone from the village or surrounding area who had suffered psychological problems. But the English speakers were psychologically affected a lot in Libya. Because of this, I think Malians can cope with things that the nationals of English-speaking countries cannot bear. Often you see these young English speakers in prison, who get up and bang on the wall; the Malians do not do that. (Seku, 1-27-2016)[22]

Still, such "adventure-hood" does not suffice for becoming an adult, even if one potentially acquires characteristics needed as the head of a household. One may be courageous and willing to take up everyday work, but one faces the same struggles as before. It is still the "autonomy of money" (Quiminal, 1991, p. 142; also, Gabazzi, 2015a, p. 94) that counts most. In places such as Seku's village, where a considerable number of the younger and older men had been deported or repatriated, the collectivity played a central role. Heroically talking about an imagined new adventure, like talking about the previous ones, was acted out in group discussions and informal talk where Brahima's, Seku's and the others' aspirations to travel again were on show. While the ambivalence of money loss and the hazards of the journey and thus some kind of joint recovery were part of it. "The adventure is never easy" was, over and over again, the central conclusion (see Chapter 4).

"Just talking is far from being without aim," as Schulz declares in "The World Is Made by Talk." Malian youth try to perform worldliness, consumption values, and adulthood through listening to the local radio and talking about music culture in Bamako: "talk adds a social dimension to the texture of everyday life that is crucial to a person's being-in-the-world" (Schulz, 2002, p. 812). A "discursive mode of imagining," meaning a combination of debate and imagining, serves as a performative, establishing, and self-ensuring act (ibid., p. 822) In this sense, talking about a previous or future adventure is a deeply agentic act, one that goes far beyond treating the migratory adventure as a form of consumption by collectively reflecting on its hazards and its potentials for personal transformation. It is not that people pretend to be worldly and knowledgeable; they are recognized as such even as deported adventurers.[23] Not least it creates a space for former and future adventurers, and potentially enables the deportees to recover and assemble a new repertoire of supposed deportee masculinities (cf. also Kleist, 2017a, p. 337).

Baba's, Seku's, and Ousmane's *grin* was a small circle of like-minded people and fellow sufferers providing a space of trust for them to share their worries after

22 I will not further analyze or contextualize the obvious groupisms inherent here.

23 Similarly, Stefanie Maher described *refoulés* sharing their stories in Senegal as "communal performances that articulated their suffering as a morally and socially valuable experience" (Maher, 2015, p. 59), building on Brad Weiss who aptly demonstrated how the representation of suffering itself is socially meaningful and contributes to building masculinity, where pain becomes "a social mode of consciousness" (Weiss, 2009, p. 120).

deportation – even though Seku's neighbor revealed one day that "there is actually nothing that connects us, the other *refoulés* and me." It was more that, during everyday chats, they were able to exchange bits of information. In a neighboring village, the older generation of deportees would convene. The brother of one of them laughed in a mixture of astonishment, fraternal forbearance, affection, and admiration: the older men exchanged experiences, which nobody else understood, to relieve their mental imprisonment ("*emprisonnement*"). Some of them had travelled collectively, which provided a particular source of connection (see Chapter 4). But otherwise it was an inner circle of like-minded men, a closed system and a performance at the same time, that most of those taking part understood and may also have been strengthened by (cf. Goffman, 1956). Both the younger and the older deportees seemed to create specific alliances, but each within their own age groups, generally speaking. While the older men's time to leave again had passed, the younger ones were still at the age of mobility. For them, immobilization and potential waithood may have been perceived as particular threats as they implied a potential for *not becoming* or "not arriving" (Khosravi, 2018, p. 8), though another chance of a new adventure and "full male adulthood" might come through talking, imagining, working hard, or through caring and contributing, courageously engaging or actively waiting.

Agricultural hardships and "back to the soil" ?

The migratory adventure may appear to be the hegemonic foil and central rite of passage to social adulthood for men, but notions of suffering and courage go far beyond the adventure. In Mandé, suffering is part of everyday life and common in conversations (Diawara, 2003a, p. 70), particularly for illustrating hardships in agriculture. So former deportees describe their experiences within socially recognized codes of suffering. Consequently, deportation and the situation afterwards are a form of (continued) everyday suffering and can be specifically meaningful. According to Paolo Gaibazzi, who worked in a Soninke village in neighboring Gambia, going on an adventure builds on training in agriculture and having proved oneself to be a "real man." Knowing how to suffer is a part of it. A certain amount of hardship in the education of children is widely practiced (Gaibazzi, 2015a, pp. 74ff). Similarly, Michael Jackson defined suffering in Sierra Leone as unavoidable: "though one imagines a better life, a fairer lot, one is taught to stoically accept the inevitability of hardship. What matters most is how one endures it"[24] (Jackson,

24 Maher further elaborates the connections between Islam, sacrifice and suffering in the practice of Qur'anic education, which was supposed to be hard for the young, predominantly male, *talibés* (students) in Senegal to obtain higher knowledge (2015, p. 40).

2008, p. 70). Instead of avoiding suffering, one needs to suffer properly (Geertz, 1965, p. 9).

Therefore, immobility does not automatically indicate "failure" in achieving manhood. Even if highly prestigious, the migratory adventure can only be one of several potential life paths. In a region with long-standing cultures of migration, certain people need to stay to keep agriculture and local business going and take care of the family. More generally, it would be false to claim that everybody leaves.[25] In places such as Seku's village, not all the employable men were, or had been, abroad. There, you would also hear: "Everybody wants to succeed at home. But it's difficult here. Over there, you have the possibility; not here." "One of the brothers will always be abroad," Seku's mother asserted: "They cannot all be here; somebody needs to look for money abroad." Even if accounts seem contradictory, staying and leaving condition each other. In that respect, a successful time abroad for one family member enables others to stay through remittances and transnational circuits. The feeling of belonging and references to the village continue to be central as, for example, Brahima's engagement in the transnational support network shows. There are increasingly long-term and structurally oriented projects for family members from abroad or diaspora representatives, even if those left behind complain about being ignored while the travelers follow their own ideas. Many young men, in urban as well as rural areas, however, view agricultural work as ambiguous. They may complain about the hardships of scratching the dry Sahelian soil without proper machines. Seku complains about their small income: "People are unhappy because they work, and they do not make a fortune." The young men explicitly criticized the Malian state for closing down the peanut-processing mills: "We need factories!" "There is no support, no possibilities here" (Group discussion, 11-7-2015). Support and possibilities are linked instead to international experts and NGOs; even if suspicion of them is equally widespread (see Chapter 2). It is a structurally induced "negative" suffering, which creates people's feeling of marginalization; in the Kleimans' words a "routinized form of suffering" (Kleiman & Kleinman, 1991, p. 280), which is what conditions post deportation may become as well (see Chapter 4).

For many young men all this provides a reason to leave, at least for small business activities in the nearest city, to purchase items for consumption or eventually go on an adventure: the latter is often undertaken to obtain materials for progress in agriculture on their return. Eventually this opens the way to urban experience or global connectedness. Despite a reputation for remoteness and backwardness, the value of agriculture remains high. Deeply embedded in the rural, it still aims at more worldly masculinities.

25 After a lot of hype about mobility, immobility was newly discovered in migration research (cf., e.g., Van Hear, 2014; Jónsson, 2011).

Deportations, restricted mobility regimes and economic recessions disturb these migratory and livelihood strategies and have to be integrated: nowadays in Seku's village the majority of young men stay. Despite the value of masculine risk-taking, the increasing chance of death and difficulties abroad seem to motivate young men to remain where they are and try to succeed. Particularly schooling can have a significant effect, coexisting with the established adventurous pathways (e.g., Hertrich & Lesclingard, 2017; Daum, 2014). Furthermore, the EU discourse of safe migration, involving (inter)national NGOs, the Malian government, community leaders, family and youth organizations alike, promotes the idea that "one can succeed here" by going "back to the land." It is what the first Malian president, Modibo Keita, preached back in the 1960s. Today, it has become a motto for providing alternatives for the youth (Gary-Tounkara, 2013, 2008). The prospect has even entered the new Malian migratory policy. And it is the EU Trust Fund that finances the "reintegration" of deportees as well as such "alternatives for the youth" (European Commission, 2016), as if leaving for a better life were something unusual and disregarding common sayings and conceptions of circular mobility, such as that "each departure already implies a return" (also Dougnon, 2013). It is questionable whether these prospects are equally attractive for the youth in light of the prestigiousness of established adventurous ways toward social adulthood, worldliness and becoming an autonomous as well as a contributing and caring person. In any case, the (former and/or "failed") migrant perspective seems to express an in-depth desire to be able to decide autonomously about going or staying, not least as an adventurer and as "a man."

Even though they may be difficult, there are "real" economic possibilities for young men in the rural hinterland too. On the one hand, the informal gold mining industry has given rise to a new informal economy and "incomes at the margins" (Roitmann, 2003)[26] providing alternative income beyond the village (even if it is often illegal). Other than that, the nearby city privileges Seku and his friends on account of its economic market structure and possibilities of exchange, even if only on a day-by-day basis, over more remote places offering little in the way of income possibilities. Even so, people still consider themselves as "poor" (see Chapter 5), which, not least, pays tribute to the overarching and omnipresent development discourse and governance of international organizations and NGOs.[27] What could be seen as the result of an objectifying approach easily overlooking people's agency

26 According to Roitman (2003), "incomes at the margins" are – in her research often violent – constructions of spaces for the economic empowerment of Cameroonian young men at the periphery of the periphery (cf. Comaroff & Comaroff, 2001).

27 Who direct their aid "to the poor" to reduce "multidimensional" poverty through "pro-poor growth" (cf. Macamo & Neubert, 2012, p. 100). Simmel, in a visionary way, put things into context by acknowledging that a poor person is one who is the object of poverty assistance.

may thus be an agentic act by local people using the established discourses in order to get through. Whether it was the restricted mobility, a growing self-consciousness of where people come from, seniority or desperation, or importantly the need to take care felt and expressed by one's close friends and relatives staying behind, Brahima in Bamako and many in the village felt obliged to stay. They engage locally and thus may have overcome the presumed defeat through deportation, or even use it productively. Still, the adventure seems to be the more desirable – and, in the long term, more promising – path to take at least once in a lifetime.

The question of marriage after deportation

One of the main topics in the everyday conversations with Seku, Baba and Ousmane was women and marriage. Their judgment turns out to be harsh sometimes, as women seem to be assigned the role of being actually responsible for difficulties and evil (also Schulz, 2012). Marriage is a central rite of passage – for both women and men – and one of the foremost exchange relations during one's life course and a step towards adulthood.[28] Deportations intersect with it in a specific way. While many leave to search for money, potentially to finance a marriage, once they have returned, their lack of money hinders their chances of marrying. Previously, the patriarch took care of the son's marriage, selected a wife for him and paid, but fathers and family heads are often no longer capable of doing so. Consequently, the groom's voice in selecting his bride has become more influential, which may eventually question the patriarch's authority.[29]

As a generation "in-the-waiting" men have been marrying later, due to longer education, long phases of unemployment, and (failed) migrations. Setting up a new household is a very costly business; moreover, the bride price and life in general have become more expensive in recent years (as Brahima or Salif explained). Eventually this hinders youths from becoming "full adult men." One respondent in

28 Even if, for men, becoming mature and sexually active does not change their status as "young men" (Grosz-Ngaté, 1989, p. 173), as Schulz (2002) pointed out, the numbers of children born out of wedlock has been "skyrocketing over the past fifteen years, to the extent that marriage no longer serves as a marker of female adulthood" (p. 805).

29 While the first marriage would still be one of reason, contributing to the prestige of the entire family and social harmony in or between the families, even the villages, of the married couples, the second or third wife could be chosen out of affection. Although marriage and parenthood are seen principally as vocations for women, much more than for men (also Schulz, 2012, p. 51), women's voices seem to count little in marriage decisions as depicted by the young men. In the urban context, marriage decisions may be taken much more autonomously by the couples.

Bamako refused to be married, when the family offered support after his deportation from France: he wanted to succeed by himself. As his brother commented: "It's shameful not being able to pay yourself." It would call his masculinity into question.

Yet others bitterly regretted that they lost time through the journey: without achieving the objective envisaged, "dispossessed of the time, [they] had before removal" (Martin, 2015; cf. Khosravi, 2018, p. 7), by "temporal disorders" caused by deportation as explained in Chapter 4. They came to a halt behind their age mates, trying to do the impossible and catch up through tedious everyday work. It took Brahima in Bamako several years to gain an economic base that enabled him to marry back in the village, which could be seen as a substantial success after deportation. Seku took the opportunity to get married after his first return from Libya, although he framed his squandering of his money as an "issue of youth." Literature underlines the idea that consumption items, like Brahima's mobile phones, as signs of migratory success have become symbols that constitute masculinity and are potentially even more important than collecting bridewealth (e.g., Rudwick & Posel, 2014; Ungruhe, 2010; cf. Chapter 5).[30] In the village, it is not unusual, if it is financially possible, for unmarried, deported men to be married by their families after their return – "to give [them] an additional reason to stay and an obligation to take care of," one imagines. The aging parents may need their son where they are. Moreover, this underlines the argument developed in Chapter 5 that in the end a person's wealth lies in being a good member of society. Physically caring for people and taking over duties on spot are an essential reason to stay and are often appreciated. Eventually this links in with the sense of obligation that deportees described as underpinning their need to stay, as in Brahima's case. Without further exploring the matter here, marriage seems to gain a particular value after deportation, potentially more important (not least for reconstructing one's masculinities) than re-emigration. From the perspective of post-deportation studies, this seems to be a new phenomenon, which may indicate a certain acceptance of normalization and, even more, an integration of deportations into family livelihood strategies and the everyday. At the same time, marital responsibilities and household management, thus taking over one's duties of care are important aspects in the discourse of (hegemonic) masculinities, which places fundamental value on men staying (Gaibazzi, 2015a, pp. 135ff), contributing to recovery, and assembling a new repertoire of masculinities post deportation.

30 Successful adventurers, but also gold seekers, usually return with presents, fashionable clothes, and desired consumption items. A young man returning from a gold mining site in Senegal after two years, had even gilded his teeth, something that was visible to everybody: in his home village he wanted to do some building and then leave for Senegal again, he said.

Generational discrepancies and generations of deportees

These potential contradictions and ambivalences of engaging, leaving, and staying torn between aspirations for autonomy and expectations of reciprocity, are embedded within a broader process of intergenerational change in Mali. Notably, the engagement of young men is not recognized in the same way by everybody and in particular by the older generation. The administrative head of the community exclaimed one day: "The older people don't understand the younger anymore! They have adopted the European lifestyle just like that. The people want the money instantly; but you have to work hard!" At least the initiatives built up with a large number of *refoulés* and repatriates and initiated by the International Organization for Migration and the Association des Repatriés between 2006 and 2010 have fizzled out.[31] Seku and Baba protested vehemently: "He is not right at all. We work so much! It's difficult to get anything." A frequent complaint particularly from fathers of the younger generation of deportees, those aged between 25 and 33, is that the younger ones do not contribute as much from their earnings as they did previously. In earlier times one's entire earnings were shared with the "*chef de famille*" (*sòtigi*), today, young men usually keep the larger part for themselves and, potentially, their nuclear family. Still, a substantial fraction is often shared with the extended kin. Seku's uncle shakes his head: "We contributed as much as we could; but times are different today. They have other needs."

All this hints at a major conflict between generations and shifting roles between men in African societies. Fathers may not have their previous power as providers while the young, even if economically constrained, may leave more easily and earn for themselves. Conversely, the elder may designate this as immoral (also Schulz & Diallo, 2016, p. 227). Threats to the status of senior men by juniors have received particular attention in masculinities studies on African settings questioning "traditional" and re-generating new hegemonic or other interrelated masculinities (e.g., Alber et al., 2008; Honwana & de Boeck, 2005; Weiss, 2004; Lindsay & Miescher, 2003). In this vein, widespread autonomous decisions to leave, including earning

31 Today, there are a number of self-organized groups of former deportees in Kita, often made up according to the deporting country, thus continuing potential networks of migration. Occasional informal gatherings may be supported by the AME as well as the transnational network "Afrique-Europe-Interact" and others. Moreover, the reintegration activities of the IOM and other international as well as local NGOs of transit returns from Libya within the framework of the EUTF and the IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration, have clearly shaped the visibility of the return issues (cf. Alpes, 2020). See online: https://ec.europa.eu/trustfundforafrica/region/sahel-lake-chad/mali/renforcement-de-la-gestion-et-de-la-gouvernance-des-migrations-et-le_en and https://www.migrationjointinitiative.org/countries/sahel-and-lake-chad/mali, accessed 31 October 2021.

one's own money for the travel, may, as demonstrated in the previous chapter, be indicators of such shifts of authority, even if autonomy of travel is socially sanctioned. In this sense, sharing less money is potentially consequent on having received less support for the travel beforehand within a primordial concept of generalized reciprocity.

In the small villages, deportation itself is an intergenerational issue. Several generations of deportees live there today. Ibrahim, Ousmane's uncle, was also in Libya in 2001 and was deported; caught in the street like his nephew: "It's so long that I've not talked and thought about all this," he reflected: "You cannot be satisfied when you return with empty hands; but it's God who decides, so you cannot complain." Ibrahim almost died when trying to cross the ocean. He was against his nephew leaving. Ousmane should have continued school. Now, neither their adventures, nor Ousmane's schooling have worked out. Upon his return, Ibrahim restarted agricultural activities, which he is still engaged in. Today, he has been married twice, has eight children, and is established in the village community. While age may have an empowering effect (Christou, 2015), he dates from a generation where deportations were fewer. More than his nephew, he regrets the "failed" adventure: "It helps that there are other deportees, but you cannot forget what you've lost."

Still, between generations men may agree in their evaluation of the political difficulties as against the economic possibilities and chances. Brahima's uncle in Bamako reflected on the difficulties of the migratory adventure today: "There are conflicts kind of everywhere. When we traveled, it did not happen like this. Only God can protect us. At the moment one has stopped traveling to foreign places until peace returns to the country" (Brahima's uncle, 1-10-2016). The difficulties of migration and political restrictions may thus be recognized as hindering and endangering factors. "If it's possible to stay where you are and work, it's good," is the central message. It implies the value of taking care of one's close family through contributing, but also by physically caring for them and taking over little jobs and duties on the spot. The concept of success, through hard work and earning money, remains the central expectation and desire in becoming a man – whether back in the village, in the city or by leaving (again). The hegemonic ideas and expectations, building on previous economic and structural conditions, however, are thwarted by constrained realities and "real" chances, making it often impossible to fulfill generational expectations.

Concluding remarks: assembling deportee masculinities ?

This chapter has shown a set of men's ideas and practices connected with recovering and reproducing, thus assembling a new repertoire of masculinities after deporta-

tion, when the hegemonic conception of the breadwinner and head of household as a successful adventurer may be fundamentally endangered. The crisis brought about by large numbers of forced returns may question one's personhood as a man and substantially erode life chances particularly in a Malian context of self-evident values based on circular livelihood mobilities. Masculine values have to be renegotiated. One could assume different types of rural and urban masculinities, but there seem to be universal features that many (young) men struggle to meet, not only after deportation: the adventurer, as a counterpart to the agricultural worker, or the one involved in small-scale business; being courageous, in good physical shape, enduring, achieving, taking care, contributing, and becoming someone. The majority of these characteristics relate to hegemonic notions of masculinities. Deportations challenge this hegemonic image in particular, but simultaneously create a space for recovering and emerging aspects of masculinities, which may at the same time be particularly productive because of a person's deportation.

The deportee brings along a very specific form of "adventure-hood," even if – or maybe even because – it has potentially "failed." It differs in its particular form (i.e., by being caused by the deportation experience) from the sufferings of returnees who decided to return of their own volition, or had somehow prepared for it, even if the latter were potentially "unsuccessful" as well. Against this background, active sitting, waiting and reflecting become valuable, time-appreciating masculine engagements, demonstrating reflective capacity and knowledgeable worldliness, as forms of manly maturity or wisdom, particularly for some of the younger generation, who eagerly reinterpret aspects of supposed (deportee) masculinities as regards physical shape and consumption items.

Even if they are potentially stuck, one would not automatically call the Malian returnees socially dead, as others predicted (e.g., Vigh, 2016; see also Bredeloup, 2017; Kleist, 2017b). Deportees seem to form integral parts of their societies, eking out a living as many of their contemporaries do. It is about their wealth as persons, about trying to be a good member of society, about what deportees actually do (see Chapter 5). Discrepancies between men are based on migratory and deportation experiences, whether one gained money or not, and most notably on one's age and generation. The latter also influences one's capacity for mobility. Some are torn between leaving again and staying, but precarious and volatile situations may reverse their prospects from one day to the next (e.g., through a parent's death, which would require immediate need to take care on the spot) or through leaving and earning more. While deportees need to navigate their specific vulnerability and potential strength, the approach of courageously going on, regardless of difficulties, demonstrates the pressure to comply with the expected role despite the danger of depending economically on somebody.

Even if one must constantly readapt and renegotiate one's potential "failure," hegemonic values of becoming a household head and provider, ideally achieved

through a successful adventure, but also through taking care on the spot, persist on a large scale. Rather than testifying to entirely new deportee masculinities in Mali, hegemonic notions provide stability and orientation in contrast to the conflicts between generations, which generate certain changes in Mandé masculinities. Emerging notions such as those of actively waiting and the worldly wisdom as acquired by "failed" adventurers seem to be discursively interwoven into established conceptions. Hence, former deportees assemble and act out a repertoire of masculinities. Whether this suffices for an entirely new category of deportee masculinities, differing from those of others who "failed" in their adventures may need to be researched further. In the end, (re)interpreting masculinities constitutes a narrative strategy to cope with the crisis of deportations itself. In the next chapter, I shall revisit the sense- and future-making of former deportees through "*la chance*" and a broader cosmology that former deportees referred to time and again.