

Abstract English

Divergent masculinities. A socio-anthropological research on Senegalese migrants living in Italy who perform non normative sexualities.

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This Ph.D. Research is the result of an ethnographic research on the migratory trajectories of some Senegalese men living in northern Italy. The choice of Senegal is particularly interesting, especially because of the impressive scientific scholarship produced during the last decades on the mobility experiences of Senegalese citizens to European countries. The majority of the works produced until now on this national community in Italy has explored especially the living and working conditions of Senegalese migrants living abroad, as well as they create and manage associations or act as highly mobile transnational social actors. More recently, other researches have explored aspects related to gender issues.

Differently, the topic of sexuality of Senegalese migrants is still understudied, therefore this thesis analyses the experiences of some Senegalese men who express non-normative forms of masculinity and sexuality, namely gender expressions that bypass or betray the socio-normative model represented by heterosexuality. The fieldwork carried out for this research explores how these men manage their masculinities and sexualities in Italy, Senegal or other countries in which they move. A special attention has been given to timing, in order to understand whether and to what extent they have been redefined from pre-migratory and post-migratory period. The collected data illustrate how some biographical factors (age, gender class, socio-legal status, language skills/gaps, socio-cultural capital) could influence their migratory trajectories and, simultaneously, the social positionalities they occupy in the transnational arena (workers, students, asylum seekers, refugees, sex workers, undocumented people), without neglecting the ways they use to express their sexuality.

The research focuses on the everyday strategies that these Senegalese migrants deploy, choosing according to specific situations whether confirm or redefine their transnational image of migrant men living abroad. In some contexts, the participants to this research are interested in adapting to dominant social expectations transmitted by family members or other compatriots, whereas in other contexts they feel free to express more easily their non-normative sexuality through creative and flexible strategies that vary according to social contexts in which they find themselves or people they are in touch with or connected to.

In conclusion, the thesis analyses limits and possibilities of these migrants' agency and their ability to manage bonds and belongings through the borders. The fieldwork has been carried out between 2015 and 2017 through qualitative research methodologies (archive research, interviews, ethnographic observations, digital ethnography) in Italy and Senegal. The collected data have been analysed creating a dialogue between anthropology, sociology, migration studies, men studies and queer studies.