INTIMACIES, CITIZENSHIP AND REFUGEE MEN

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To my wife, Hilda Wanjiku, and my two children,
Melvin Muchoki and Abbie Wairimu

PREFACE

The process of forced migration, asylum seeking and settlement of refugees is broadly conceived as a mass movement from a site of conflict and suffering, to one of security. However, such a movement incorporates transitions through many social, political and economic contexts, including those within which intimate relationships are organised. Yet, little is understood about intimacies of male refugees during migration and settlement.

This book intends to initiate a new line of inquiry and debate on the experiences of male refugees that are not necessarily associated with trauma. Traditionally, many studies have discussed refugee experiences through the lens of struggle, suffering and loss. Such studies have reinforced a focus on traumatic experiences in understanding the impact of forced migration on refugee populations. Undeniably, forced displacement as a result of civil war has devastating consequences for thousands of refugees. Nevertheless, forced migration also provides new opportunities for refugee men to pursue new relationships and reorganise their intimate lives.

This book presents intimate experiences of Horn of Africa refugee men—from Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia and Eritrea—living in Melbourne, Australia; experiences associated with the pursuit of happiness and a desire for pleasurable and fulfilling intimate relations despite the chaos of displacement, living in limbo in countries of asylum and navigating life after settlement. Although the Horn of Africa communities represent a broad cultural diversity, some generalisations

about the refugee men in the study were still possible; these men shared many cultural commonalities, had been forced to flee their countries as a result of civil war, had lived in countries of asylum, and settled in Australia.

The use of the term 'refugee' is used to connote that these men have a refugee background. The term is not meant to imply that the men identified themselves as refugees.

The book demonstrates that, throughout migration and settlement, the desire for enjoyable and fulfilling intimate relations remains central to everyday experiences of refugee men. The book also alerts readers to new concerns about rights for refugee men who are increasingly becoming citizens in countries of settlement. Citizenship is about inclusion and involvement as recognised members of a society; it is about carrying rights but also responsibilities to fellow citizens, and to the community that defines who citizens are. But what does this mean for societies in which refugee men bring with them distinct cultural practices, values and beliefs about the pursuit of intimate relationships? It is this discussion of the intermingling of personal and public lives during migration and settlement that makes this book so important. In voicing the experiences of male refugees from the Horn of Africa, the book draws attention to debates about how rights related to the pursuit of intimacy by minority and racialised groups intersect with citizenship. The book contributes to an application of citizenship theory in understanding intimate experiences of refugee men and, as a result, extrapolates how intimacy discourses embrace a variety of interlocking strands that reveal the interconnections between ethnicity, nationality, gender and sexuality.

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Samuel Muchoki is the online course coordinator at Melbi Institute, Australia. He also works as a public health practitioner and has taught at various Universities in Kenya and Australia. Muchoki has published in the areas of forced migration, gender and sexuality. A motivational key note speaker, Muchoki holds a Doctorate degree in community health from La Trobe University. He presents on topical issues related to forced migration and settlement, and preventing violence against women.

Introduction: Refugee Citizens

Abstract The Horn of Africa has experienced some of the world's most intractable, complex and prolonged ethnic conflicts that have resulted in the displacement of millions of people across national and international boundaries. Yet, little is known about the intimate experiences of refugees, particularly male refugees, during migration and after settlement in final countries of asylum. This study provides a useful insight to understand how intimate lives of male refugees are shaped by experiences associated with forced migration and settlement.

Keywords Ethnic conflicts · Forced migration · Durable solutions of refugee problem · Study methodology · Refugees

GLOBAL REFUGEE CRISIS

Forced migration as a result of conflict is not a new phenomenon. As early as the 1950s, the refugee problem had been noted as a perennial issue worldwide (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) 1953). Although refugees have historically come from many regions—the Americas, Asia and Pacific, Europe and the Middle East (UNHCR 2010)—Africa has experienced some of the world's most intractable and complex ethnic conflicts resulting in displacement of millions of people (UNHCR 2009a).

Over the years since its establishment in 1950, the UNHCR has attempted to resolve the global refugee problem by advocating three

'durable solutions' for those affected: voluntary repatriation, local integration into the country of first asylum, or settlement to a third country (UNHCR 2009b). According to this UN agency, returning voluntarily to places of origin has been the most desirable solution and has historically benefited the largest number of refugees. However, when repatriation is not certain, countries of first asylum are encouraged to integrate refugees into the local communities through naturalisation (Manby 2010). Settlement in a third country is only sought when the first two solutions are not viable (UNHCR 2009b).

Every year the UNHCR presents cases for settlement consideration to those developed countries that are signatories to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1969 Protocol (UNHCR 2007a, 2010) as part of international cooperation and burden sharing of the refugee problem. In the past, the United States, Canada, Australia, Sweden, Norway, Finland, New Zealand, Denmark and the Netherlands have taken the bulk of refugees, but most recently have been joined by Chile, Benin, Burkina Faso, Brazil, Ireland, Iceland and the United Kingdom (UNHCR 2013). Nonetheless, the capacity to settle refugees largely depends on migration policies of each nation. Over the course of 15 years the Australian Government, for example, gradually increased the number of places allocated to humanitarian entrants from 12,000 in 1996–1997 to 13,750 by 2010–2011 (Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC 2009a, 2011b)). Between 2003 and 2005, the Government also increased the quota allocated to settling African refugees from 30 % to 70 %, giving priority to people from Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Somalia—hereafter referred to as the Horn of Africa (DIAC 2009b). By 2008 over 24,000 people from these four countries had settled in Australia through the humanitarian programme (Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs 2004, 2006a, b; DIAC 2008a, b). Horn of Africa refugee men living in Melbourne, Australia, formed the population of interest for the study.

METHODOLOGY

I use the term 'refugee' in this book to imply a 'process' and not an 'identity'; all the men interviewed in my study were from a refugee background but did not necessarily identify as refugees. The study adopted a qualitative methodology that included key informant interviews, focus group discussions (FGD) and in-depth individual interviews. All the

participants were drawn from the Melbourne metropolitan area. Ethics approval for the study was provided by the La Trobe University Human Ethics Committee.

Key informants were selected on the basis of their experience working with Horn of Africa refugee men. Participants for in-depth interviews and FGD were selected on pre-determined criteria according to:

- Country of origin: Participants had to identify as people with a refugee background and born in Sudan, Eritrea, Ethiopia or Somalia.
- Age: Participants had to be at least 18 years of age. Since the discussions and interviews focused on sexual practice, the age limit excluded those men who were classified as minors in Melbourne.
- Ability to converse in English: Participants needed to be able to converse in English. This enabled interviews and FGDs to be conducted in English.
- Period of residency in Australia: Participants must have resided in Australia for at least three years. Findings of past studies have reported that the feeling of belonging depends on the length of time migrants had been in the country; those who had lived in Australia for more than four years on average had a greater sense of belonging compared with those who had lived there for a shorter period of time (Murray 2010; Pittaway and Muli 2009). Therefore, participants who had spent more than three years in Australia were presumed to have had more time to experience the sexual culture in Australia, compared with recent arrivals. A purposive sampling method was used to recruit participants.

Seven key informants were interviewed to shed light on the needs of refugee men from these four countries. These informants were asked to talk about their understandings of how forced migration impacted on the intimate lives of these refugee men. Each interview took approximately one hour to complete and was digitally recorded. An interview schedule was used to guide the interviews. Issues raised by key informants were followed up in FGDs and individual in-depth interviews.

Four FGDs were conducted to compare the sexual cultures of participants' former societies in countries of origin and asylum with those in Australia. The FGDs were organised according to country of origin to

enable a more focused discussion. The respective groups comprised three men from South Sudan, six from Eritrea, six from Somalia and ten from Ethiopia. All men from Eritrea and Somalia identified as Muslims, while those who were in Sudanese and Ethiopian FGDs identified as Christians. Participants in each FGD were asked to compare the sexual norms, values, beliefs and practices of societies in their countries of origin and asylum with those in Australia. Participants were also asked to discuss how refugee experience affected the intimate lives of other men from their respective communities. Finally, participants were asked to discuss the needs of Horn of Africa refugee men in relation to their intimate lives and to suggest the kind of assistance they believed could promote their sexual health and wellbeing. Each discussion took approximately one and a half hours to complete and was digitally recorded. Besides eliciting information about differences in sexual cultures, FGDs were also used to explore personal views and differences in opinions.

Eighteen in-depth interviews were conducted to explore participants' sexual histories. These interviews investigated how experiences of forced displacement, asylum seeking and settlement affect the intimate lives of refugee men. Participants were asked to talk about their sexual lives during migration and on settlement. They were asked to describe their settlement experience and the kind of assistance they may require. Each interview took approximately one and a half hours to complete and was digitally recorded. A schedule was used to guide the interviews.

In-Depth Interview Participants

The 18 participants who took part in in-depth interviews were aged between 24 and 75 years. Eight were Muslims, nine were Christians, and one did not affiliate with any religion. Six participants had Year 12 (equivalent to a high school qualification) equivalent education, seven had a college education, two had a university education, two had a primary school education, and one had never been to school. The majority had attained their highest qualification in Australia. At the time of interview, seven participants reported they were unemployed, five were employed (on a casual basis), two were self-employed, three were students, and one was a retiree. Due to the sensitive nature of the topic under investigation, confidentiality was critical in this study. Throughout the book, pseudonyms are substituted for participants'

real names. The following are socio-demographic characteristics of the 18 men who took part in in-depth interviews:

Alaki: 31 Years Old, Married, Ethiopian-born, 7 Years in Australia

Alaki was forced to flee Ethiopia when one of his relatives was being sought by the police on account of his involvement with the Oromo Liberation Front, a political movement opposed to the Haile Selassie government. He feared for his life as a result of constant harassment of his family members by the police. He fled to Nairobi, Kenya, where he lived for four years. During his stay in Kenya he attempted to apply for humanitarian settlement in a developed country, but it was difficult, since he was required by the UNHCR to have been living in a refugee camp in order to qualify for assistance. Consequently, he travelled to Egypt where there were no refugee camps. This made it easier for refugees in that country to apply for settlement. It was from Egypt that he was resettled to Australia.

Ishmael: 25 Years Old, Single, Somali-born, 3 Years in Australia

Ishmael fled from Somalia to Kenya with his parents and siblings to escape the civil war. He was about ten years old at the time. Ishmael and his family settled in a suburb in Nairobi dominated by Somali refugees. He lived in Kenya for four years before he was resettled to Australia through family reunion by a relative.

Benson: 24 Years Old, Single, Sudanese-born, 4 Years in Australia

Benson was born in Southern Sudan but fled with his parents to Kakuma refugee camp in North-Eastern Kenya when he was eight years old. He lived in the refugee camp for about 12 years. He attended primary and secondary school in the camp with all his expenses being paid by the UNHCR. He left the camp for Nairobi in 2005 where he applied for settlement with the Australian High Commission. One year later, Benson was granted a humanitarian visa to settle in Australia.

Mustafa: 75 Years Old, Married, Eritrean-born, 9 Years in Australia

Mustafa was working for the government of Eritrea when he sought asylum to Australia on account of his political differences with some

government officials. While on official duty overseas, some of his collea-
gues who opposed Eritrean government policies were arrested and
detained. Consequently, Mustafa feared going back to Eritrea. He applied
for a protection visa to Australia, which was approved a few months later.
He arrived in Australia in 2002.

David: 35 Years Old, Married, Ethiopian-born, 5 Years in Australia

David fled to Sudan with his mother when he was about five years old. He
lived in Sudan for over 20 years as a refugee. He received his primary
school education in Hagadera refugee camp in Eastern Sudan, where he
was living at the time, and then went to Kasara City, Eastern Sudan, for his
high school education. All David's expenses were paid by the UNHCR.
He was sponsored for Australian residency through a spousal visa. His wife
had applied for settlement prior to their marriage. After they were married,
his wife's case was approved and she was granted a humanitarian visa to
resettle in Australia. One year after her arrival, she applied for a spousal visa
for her husband. David arrived in Australia in 2006.

Abram: 30 Years Old, Single, Somali-born, 8 Years in Australia

Abram fled to Ethiopia in the care of his mother's sister when war broke out in
Somalia in 1996. He was about 15 years old at the time. He lived in Addis
Ababa, Ethiopia, for six years until he was granted a humanitarian visa through
the sponsorship of his mother's sister. He arrived in Australia in 2002.

Adan: 34 Years Old, Single, Somali-born, 12 Years in Australia

Adan fled to Kenya with his parents after the civil war broke out in Somalia.
He never lived in a refugee camp because his family had enough income to
rent a house and run a business in Mombasa. He did not attend any formal
schooling although he was sent to a Muslim college to study the Koran. He
was granted a humanitarian visa through a relative and settled in 1998.

Joshua: 30 Years Old, Single, Ethiopian-born, 10 Years in Australia

Joshua had an opportunity to visit Australia as a tourist in 2000. While in
Australia, he applied for a humanitarian visa for fear of imprisonment by
the Ethiopian government on his return. His visa was granted after three
months.

Patrick: 40 Years Old, Separated, Sudanese-born, 8 Years in Australia

Patrick fled Southern Sudan to Northern Sudan where he started a business. He experienced constant harassment from the police and, as a result, decided to flee to Egypt with his wife and children. They lived in Egypt for three years before being granted humanitarian visas to Australia in 2003.

Aimie: Single, 34 Years Old, Sudanese-born, 12 Years in Australia

Aimie was born in Sudan after his parents were displaced by the civil wars that engulfed Eritrea in the late 1970s. However, he identified as Eritrean. He was resettled to Australia through the family reunion programme after being sponsored for Australian residency by his mother.

Farah: 60 Years Old, Single, Eritrean-born, 4 Years in Australia

Farah fled to Sudan with his wife and children in 1977 during the war between Eritrea and Ethiopia. He lived in Sudan for 24 years. After Eritrean independence from Ethiopia in 1991, Farah did not go back to Eritrea; he feared persecution because the main rebel group that took Eritrea to independence did not support Eritrean refugees in Sudan. He applied for settlement through the UNHCR and in 2007 was granted a humanitarian visa to Australia.

Hussein: 37 Years Old, Married, Somali-born, 15 Years in Australia

Hussein fled Somalia during the civil war. He sought asylum in many countries of Africa, including Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe, before managing to board a flight to Australia. On arrival, he registered as an asylum seeker and was put in a detention centre to have his case processed. After about six months, he was granted a humanitarian visa to remain in Australia.

Charles: 50 Years Old, Married, Ethiopian-born, 25 Years in Australia

Charles sought asylum in Mauritius when he went there on official duty. Having been once imprisoned by the Haile Selassie government, he did not want to return to Ethiopia for fear of further persecution. He lived in Mauritius for one year before being granted a humanitarian visa to Australia through the assistance of the UNHCR.

Steve: 28 Years Old, Single, Sudanese-born, 12 Years in Australia

Before seeking asylum in Kenya, Steve was recruited by the Sudanese People's Liberation Army rebels to fight in the war at the age of 12 years. He left the army after being shot in the leg, a situation that required immediate medical attention. He was taken to Lokichogio—a town in Kenya located approximately 15 kilometres from the Kenya-South Sudan border, and where many humanitarian agencies working in South Sudan are located—by another 'soldier'. After recovering from his wound, he was taken to Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya. Steve was settled to Australia from Kenya through the assistance of the UNHCR.

Jacob: 40 Years Old, Divorced, Sudanese-born, 7 Years in Australia

Jacob was sponsored for Australian residency by a relative. He was married by the time he came to Australia but he later divorced his wife. Before seeking asylum in Egypt, Jacob fought for the Sudanese People's Liberation Army rebels from the age of 12. He left the army after four years, claiming he was 'tired' of fighting. It was then that he travelled to North Sudan where he lived for a few years, and then on to Kenya, before travelling to Egypt where he was granted a humanitarian visa to settle in Australia.

Anthony: 42 Years Old, Married, Sudanese-born, 6 Years in Australia

Anthony escaped from South to North Sudan at the age of 15 years to avoid recruitment to fight in the civil war by the Sudanese People's Liberation Army. He worked as a businessman in Northern Sudan, but he could not live there for long due to constant harassment by the police and government officials, who knew he had come from Southern Sudan. He abandoned his business and travelled to Egypt with his wife and children and registered as a refugee with the UNHCR. After eight months in Egypt he was granted a humanitarian visa to settle in Australia.

Eli: 53 Years Old, Single, Ethiopian-born, 15 Years in Australia

Eli was forced to flee Ethiopia for fear of persecution by the Haile Selassie government. In the process, he left behind his wife and child. He first sought asylum in Kenya but was rejected by government officials responsible for admitting asylum seekers at the border of the two countries. He was ordered to go back to his country, but he could not because of the civil war. He then

decided to find his way to Somalia, hitching a lift among travellers for over two months until he arrived in the country. He lived in Mogadishu, Somalia, for two and a half years. One year after his arrival in Somalia, he found a casual job. He worked for over a year until civil war broke out in Mogadishu. He was able to board a plane to Mombasa, Kenya. He lived in Kenya for five years as a refugee. During this period, he applied for settlement and was granted a humanitarian visa to Australia.

Mishek: 34 Years Old, Married, Sudanese-born, 3 Years in Australia

When civil war broke out in Southern Sudan in the 1980s, Mishek was recruited to work for Sudanese People's Liberation Army rebels. He left the country for 'military' training in Ethiopia when he was about 16 years old. After one year of training he went back to South Sudan to fight. Mishek was with the rebels for about ten years before seeking asylum in Kenya after he was injured. He was taken to Lokichogio for treatment and then sent to Kakuma refugee camp in 1997. He was married in Kakuma but was separated from his wife when she was settled in Australia. He arrived in Australia in 2008 when he was granted a spousal visa to be reunited with his wife.

SUMMARY

This study was designed to explore how intimate relations of refugee men are shaped by forces of migration and settlement. As with many other refugee male populations, little is known about the intimate experiences of Horn of Africa refugee men during migration and settlement to Western countries such as Australia. In addition, it is not clear how norms, beliefs and practices prevalent in countries of origin, as well as pre-settlement experiences, affect the men's intimate lives—sexual practices, gender relations, and their perception of manhood and fatherhood—after settlement. This study set out to investigate these issues by adopting a qualitative approach of in-depth and close-focus methods, which allowed the participants to express themselves and tell their stories of migration and sexual lives in their own words. Data analysis revealed that the men's intimate lives were influenced by broader forces associated with entitlements of citizens in various social and political contexts. It is this intriguing link of how intimate lives are shaped by access to, or denial of, certain rights as citizens that made the concept of intimate citizenship so important in this study. I discuss this intermingling of citizenship and intimacy in the next chapter.

Citizenship and Personal Life

Abstract In the recent past, the traditional definition of citizenship has been expanded to embrace a variety of interlocking strands that reveal the interconnections between nationality, race, class, gender and sexuality. This is exemplified by the assertion that in Africa, including the Horn of Africa, people operate with two types of citizenship— ethnic community and nation-state—and that, in many instances, ethnic citizenship takes precedence over national citizenship. Plummer's use of citizenship theory to explore the intimate rights of people provided a context within which to understand how embracing different forms of citizenship by refugee men influenced their experiences of intimate relationships in countries of origin, in countries of asylum and after settlement to Australia.

Keywords Citizenship · Ethnic citizenship · National citizenship · Citizenship theory · Intimate citizenship

CITIZENSHIP: A BRIEF HISTORY

Citizenship as a concept has been subjected to historical and modern interrogation by many political and social thinkers. It is largely acknowledged that the concept emerged during the French Revolution, although its features are depicted in ancient societies of Greece and Italy (Heater 2004). Turner (1993) argued that the modern use of the term 'citizenship' evolved with the development of urban civil society through trade in late Medieval and

Renaissance Europe; members of those city-states that flourished through the rise in transcontinental trade were considered citizens. Therefore, Turner asserted that citizenship is not a universal concept because it developed out of traditions peculiar to European nations. Nonetheless, many non-Western societies around the world have adapted Western constitutional principles in modern times and have increasingly used the term 'citizenship' to conceptualise and govern their people. However, the notion of citizenship in many African states remains ambiguous, as I will demonstrate in the next section.

In recent times, the term 'citizenship' has attracted much criticism, some of which is well documented by Turner and Hamilton (1994). According to these two authors, the theory of citizenship remains underdeveloped because there is no good explanation of what promotes citizenship and its historical development, and whether it competes with or complements civil society. Nonetheless, one of the best conceptualisations of citizenship that has stimulated notable debates and empirical research was provided by Marshall (1950), a British sociologist who defined citizenship in terms of people's entitlement to rights and privileges in the civil, political and social spheres of life. Although Marshall's definition has dominated most discussions about citizenship, his model was criticised because it only described the historical development of rights associated with citizenship but did not explain the growth of these rights (Lister 2007). Most importantly, many theorists criticised Marshall's definition because of its close link with the institutionalisation of privileged, white, heterosexual British men (Richardson 2000) and for obscuring different forms of social stratification that generated inequalities in society (Hoxsey 2011; Lister 2007). For example, many social theorists criticised Marshall's model because of its not taking into account the rights associated with other facets of social life, such as race, ethnicity, culture (Marden and Mercer 1998; Turner 2006), reproduction (Graeve 2010), gender and sexuality (Richardson 2000; Weeks 1998), and how these affect different groups of people. These critiques revealed gaps in Marshall's conceptualisation of citizenship by uncovering the gendered nature of the concept and its ethnic and racialised dimensions. Social theorists addressed the limits of Marshall's model of citizenship by analysing the term through various forms of social lens such as gender, sexual orientation and cultural traditions. As a result of these new ways of thinking and examining the relationship between citizenship and other social institutions, citizenship discourses have now come to embrace a variety of interlocking strands that reveal the interconnections between ethnicity,

class, nationality, gender and sexuality; we can now talk of multiple forms of citizenship, such as cultural, social, reproductive, sexual and multicultural citizenship.

Construing Citizenship in Africa

Scholars have argued that, in Africa, people operate with two types of citizenship: ethnic community and nation-state (Gyimah-Boadi 2004; Tarimo 2011). These scholars have argued that, at the community level, citizenship is defined on the basis of ethnicity and kinship ties. Consequently, people feel increasingly obliged to be accountable to their own ethnic groups by preserving traditions and cultures and promoting their community identity. At the national level, citizenship unites diverse ethnic communities in each African state under the umbrella of one nation. However, in many parts of Africa, ethnic citizenship takes precedence over national citizenship (Attias-Donfut et al. 2012). Consequently, many people's lives are structured by the traditions and cultures of their particular communities. Smith (2013) argued that these differences of understanding citizenship represent one of the main causal factors for ethnic conflict in many African countries. Similary the ambiguity around rights associated with ethnic citizenships (such as sanctioned cultural practices, norms, traditions, values and beliefs) and rights associated with national citizenship (such as commitment to rule of law and human rights) greatly impact on the intimate lives of people in Africa. For Horn of Africa refugee men, this different interpretation of citizenship impacts on their behaviour towards other people, including women and children, as I will demonstrate throughout this book.

Conceptualising Intimate Citizenship

Plummer's (2003) concept of intimate citizenship was born out of critiquing traditional understandings of the term 'citizenship'. Plummer proposed the use of intimate citizenship to explore the rights of people in relation to what they do with their bodies, how they relate to one another, how they perform eroticism, how they do gender, and how they claim identity and representations. To Plummer, intimacy is interwoven in people's feelings, identities and relationships with others. Since citizenship is closely linked to the public sphere of social, civic and political rights, while intimacy is associated with the individual and private world, the term 'intimate citizenship' seems an

oxymoron because it creates a 'link between the private and public spheres and suggests a potential bridge between the personal life and the political arena' (Plummer 2003, p. 15). Nonetheless, Plummer admitted offering a somewhat loose definition of intimate citizenship. In its application, Plummer argued, intimate citizenship:

> is concerned with all those matters linked to our most intimate desires, pleasures and ways of being in the world. Some of this must feed back into the traditional citizenship (of civil, political and social rights); but equally much of it is concerned with new spheres, new debates, and new stories. It starts to provide a normative frame—and maybe even a legal one—in which people can make decisions on the control (or not) over one's body, feelings, relationships; access (or not) to representations, relationships, public spaces etc.; and socially grounded choices (or not) about identities, gender experiences, erotic experiences (Plummer 1995, p. 151).

Hence, the concept of intimate citizenship extended the notion of people's rights and responsibilities beyond civil, political and social rights that guided the understandings of citizenship as proposed by Marshall, to include rights concerning bodily desires, pleasures and relationships. Therefore, intimate citizenship contributes to our understandings of how people's private decisions, choices and practices are intertwined with public institutions and state policies (Oleks 2009).

To make a case for intimate citizenship, Plummer (2003) commenced with the proposition that intimacies can be categorised into three broad areas: traditional, modern and postmodern intimacies. According to Plummer, traditional intimacies abound in societies of the developing nations. He posited that many individuals in these societies organise their personal lives according to the dictates of their culture, family, community and religion. He argued, for example, that in some of these societies 'marriages are still arranged, gender roles are strictly circumscribed by religious custom, and sexuality is tightly regulated' (Plummer 2003 p. 118). Plummer suggested that modern intimacies emerged over 200 years ago during the modernisation era. During that period, intimacies were entangled in capitalism; a feature that characterised modernity. Intimacies became increasingly embedded in individualism, democracy, access to information and search for authenticity. Consequently, intimacies became vulnerable to bureaucracies and commercialising forces of capitalism that ruled global markets and were subjected to exploitation as a result of being exposed to the laws of supply and demand.

Plummer argued that features peculiar to the modernisation era—individualism in particular—paved the way for postmodern intimacies that characterise people's relationships in many developed societies. He claimed that these latter forms of intimacy have now created new possibilities and provided more latitude for people in relation to choices they make about the pursuit of intimate relations. Plummer argued that, although the act of choosing is not straightforward, 'for the choices themselves are patterned socially' (Plummer 2005, p. 82), individuals in many developed societies are increasingly able to make personal decisions about how to organise their intimate lives. Plummer argued that postmodern intimacies are more pronounced in wealthier, more privileged societies. A few examples that characterise postmodern intimacies as highlighted by Plummer (2003, pp. 5–7) include:

- Widespread acceptance (or tolerance) of divorce, remarrying, having children outside of marriage, and de facto cohabitation.
- Proliferation of sexual practices that are not focused on procreation, engaging in non-penetrative sex and practices such as phone sex, cybersex and pornography.
- Women's increased ability to make decisions over their lives.

Plummer (2005) stated that the rise of postmodern intimacies reflected the end of a single explanation of how personal life can be organised. He argued that, although religion and traditions have been and still are sources of conflict and tension in life, 'people seem increasingly aware that this "one way" is visibly crumbling in the postmodern world' (Plummer 2003, p. 18). He also claimed that marriage, family, heterosexuality and sexual desire, traditionally closely linked, are now increasingly separated from one another. Sex, for example, is no longer considered to serve the purpose of procreation only; instead, it serves many purposes 'including pleasure, the establishing and defining of relationships, the communication of messages concerning attitudes and lifestyle, and the provision of a major mechanism for subjection, abuse and violence' (Plummer 2003, p. 19). Nonetheless, Plummer cautions that this categorisation of intimacies should not be assumed to apply to all societies; for in the era of globalisation many people live simultaneously in traditional, modern and postmodern societies. In the twenty-first century, Plummer argued, 'all [people] live with bits of each [form of intimacy]' (Plummer 2001, p. 239). As Thomas et al. (2010, p. 2) noted elsewhere, 'processes of globalisation have often hybridised sexual

ideologies, behaviours and identities'. Plummer's caution will become particularly relevant later in the book when the intimate experiences of refugee men in different geographical areas—countries of origin, countries of asylum, and Australia—are discussed.

Like Plummer (2005, p. 77), I use the term 'intimacy' to refer to 'an array of arenas in which we "do" personal life—doing bodywork, doing gender, doing relationships, doing eroticism, and doing identities'. Plummer also argued that people do intimacies when they get close to their emotions, when doing sex and love, in marriage, friendship, bearing and raising children, or caring for others. I use the term 'intimate relationships' to refer to relations that emerged for the participants while 'doing intimacy' prior to displacement, during asylum and on settlement in Australia.

GENDERED CITIZENS

To understand how intimate citizenship influences everyday life, it is important to unpack gender as the analytical lens through which men and women organise and pursue intimate relationships. In theorising intimate citizenship, Plummer regarded gender as an important social structure that influences how individuals organise personal lives. He argued that the family unit is a site 'for the reproduction of gender relations and patterning of power relations between adults and children' (Plummer 2003, p. 70). However, he postulated that families are structured by politics and law that characterise the public sphere. Consequently, one cannot completely understand gender without analysing how people's lives, as men or women, are influenced by how gender is construed by what happens in the public arena.

Therefore, gender theory is useful in understanding the distinct experiences of men and women and their relationships. Social science disciplines, sociology in particular, have provided one of the most extensive analyses of gender in scholarly writing (Holmes 2007; Wharton 2012). There is insufficient space here for a concise history of what led to changes in gender theory in sociology. However, it is important to note that, in the West, a critical analysis of gender took hold after the second wave feminist movement of the 1970s (Wharton 2012). Today, it is widely acknowledged that women and men are not homogeneous categories (Holmes 2007; Wharton 2012), that gender is 'relational' (Wharton 2012, p. 6) and varies across cultures and societies, and is subject to change over time (Connell 2009; Holmes 2007).

Connell (2009, p. 11) presents one of the most salient definitions of gender:

> Gender is the structure of social relations that centres on the reproductive arena, and the set of practices that bring reproductive distinctions between bodies into social process [...] gender concerns the way human society deals with human bodies and their continuity, and the many consequences of that 'dealing' in our personal lives and our collective fate.

More recently, Wharton (2012, pp. 18–19) has argued that gender matters in three ways:

- It is one of the organising principles of the social world (including intimate relationships) because it recognises our identities and self-concepts, structures our interactions, and is one basis upon which power and resources are allocated. Therefore, gender shapes the identities and behavioural predisposition of individuals because it enters into how people see themselves, the ways they behave, and how they view others.
- It shapes social interactions because when people are identified as female or male, categories of power are produced. These power relations influence social (and intimate) interaction between the sexes.
- It organises social institutions, that is, the 'rules' that constitute some areas of social life. These social institutions include large, formally organised, public sectors of society, such as education, religion, sports, the legal system and work, as well as the more personal, less formally organised areas of life such as marriage, parenthood and family.

Therefore, gender gives meaning to individuals, influences social interactions and intimate relations, and shapes social institutions. In consequence, 'we cannot fully understand the social world without attending to gender. [But also] we cannot understand gender without understanding the social world. As social life unfolds, gender is produced. As gender is produced, social life unfolds' (Wharton 2012, p. 19).

In unpacking gender as a concept, gender order is significant in understanding how men and women make sense of their experiences when engaging in intimate relationships. Matthews (1984) introduced the term 'gender order' in her historical analysis of feminism in Australia. She saw

gender order as the socially constructed ways in which societies create men and women and patterns the relationships between the two sexes, although it does not presuppose the nature of that ordering. She argued that gender order could therefore be matriarchal, patriarchal or egalitarian. Connell (1987) developed this concept further in her social theory of gender and used it to discuss the ways in which gender relations are organised in the society and in particular institutions such as workplaces, schools and media. She defined gender order as 'the historically constructed pattern of power relations between men and women and definitions of masculinity and femininity in a given society' (Connell 1987, pp. 98–99) that develops out of three interrelated structures of gender relations: (1) division of labour; (2) power relations and the way authority is connected to masculinity; and (3) cathexis—those emotionally charged social relationships between sexes. For Connell, gender relations are a process, subject to resistance, conformity, contestation and acceptance. Therefore, they are open to disruption and change.

The gender lens provided a template to explore participants' ideas about maleness and how this interpretation influenced their intimate relationships during migration and on settlement. Plummer (1995) argued that people's gender-related stories highlight differences and set up boundaries that project the 'other' as gendered beings. Therefore, in analysing the men's experiences, it was useful to examine some of the social institutions that have shaped views about what it is to be a man. Patriarchy, a form of gender order that involves a system of male oppression over women (Hammer 2002), is the main source of authority in many African communities (Pinn 2009). Men, as individuals and in groups, benefit from what Connell (1987, p. 79) referred to as patriarchal dividend, that is, 'the advantage men in general gain from the overall subordination of women'. Domination, which is exercised in language, thinking, doing and acting (Bourdieu 2001), is produced within social structures such as class and race (Skaine 1996) and is so deeply ingrained into social life that it often appears natural (Lerner 1986). Lang and Smith (2004) argued that men become oblivious to the fact that their privileged position in relation to women is purely derived from being born male (Lang and Smith 2004). In consequence, gender inequalities remain largely invisible. Is it the case that experiences of varying gender orders in the process of migration and settlement influence the way refugee men view themselves as men and how they relate with women and children? This is a question that this book will attempt to address in its various sections.

CRITIQUE OF INTIMATE CITIZENSHIP

Plummer's theorising of intimate citizenship was heavily influenced by Giddens' (1992) understanding of intimacy in late modernity. Giddens argued that there is increased malleability in erotic expression that has emphasised pleasure over reproduction, leading to a form of emancipation for both men and women to express sexual intimacy based more on individual choice and erotic desires. Therefore, for Giddens (1992, p.3), intimacy in late modernity involves 'a transactional negotiation of personal ties by equals'. As a result of this transformation of intimacy, which Giddens referred to as 'a transition in the ethics of personal life' (Giddens 1992, p. 96), many people increasingly expect to receive, as well as provide, sexual pleasure. Giddens argued that more couples in Western societies are increasingly being bound together by choice and pleasure where the nature of their sexual relationship is not dictated by the need to reproduce or the desire to conform to traditional categories of sexual identity and marital status or to fit in within a particular sexual practice. Giddens (1992, p. 2) referred to this way of enacting intimate lives as 'plastic sexuality'.

Giddens' analysis of intimacies in late modernity, from which Plummer draws some of his argument, has its critics. For example, Jamieson (1999) argued that Giddens' idea that personal life is becoming more intensely individualised is not new; it is a longstanding theme in sociological writing dating back to the 1940s. Indeed, this critique is evident in Plummer's failure to show a clear demarcation between *modern* and *postmodern* intimacies. Nonetheless, Giddens' argument provides a distinct parallel to Plummer's notion of intimate citizenship in which he argues that, in late modernity, people are increasingly able to make decisions about their intimate lives.

However, there is a salient difference between Giddens' and Plummer's analyses of intimacy. Central to Giddens' work was an assumption of gender equality and the belief that people have the same capacity to make decisions about their intimate lives (Heaphy 2007). Unlike Giddens, who saw intimacies in late modernity as radicalising individuals, Plummer (2005) was also concerned about social inequality and considered gender as one of the social institutions that impact upon people's ability to make decisions about their intimate lives. To Plummer, therefore, the intimacy of late modernity can be liberating but can also be oppressive. In addition, unlike Giddens, Plummer explored how intimacies, more than ever before, are impacted by '*rights, obligations, recognitions and respect around those most intimate spheres*

of life—who to live with, how to raise children, how to handle one's body, how to relate as a gendered being, how to be an erotic person' (Plummer 2001, p. 238). In his theorisation of intimate citizenship, Plummer (2003) recognised gender as having profound implications for the intimate lives of people. Therefore, he suggests the importance of analysing the core features of gender—from the simple categories of men and women to the more complex interrogation of transgender communities and those who shun gender boundaries—in order to understand how it impacts on people's intimate lives.

Plummer (2003) argued that the major criticism of the theory of intimate citizenship stems from the classic problems that face citizenship theories in general: the inability to handle inequalities and address processes of social exclusion. He argued that citizenship theories call into question who citizens and non-citizens are. For example, citizenship theories have demonstrated how women and gay people have been traditionally excluded as a result of a failure to grant them the same rights as those enjoyed respectively by men and heterosexuals. However, when the rights of women and gay people become recognised by the state, citizenship is extrapolated. Over time, other new groups such as transgender, transsexuals, transvestites and ethnic minorities emerge and their rights need to be recognised too. Consequently, citizenship continues to be extrapolated.

Plummer (2003) also argued that intimate citizenship falls into a 'trap' when it has to confront the reality of discussing paedophiles and childhood sexualities. Can paedophiles have rights in relation to their sexuality? Can we talk about paedophile-citizens? Can children have rights to engage in sexual intimacies? Can children be considered citizens as far as sexual rights are concerned? Another major challenge for citizenship theories lies in analysing inequalities of globalisation where the world's poorest have limited or no rights to participate as global citizens (Plummer 2005). Should these individuals be classified as non-citizens? These questions call for careful and deliberate discussion about citizenship and rights. The paradox of intimate citizenship is this: the more issues it explains, the more convolution and ambivalence these issues create for the concept. And this book certainly pushes the borderline of intimate citizenship when discussing intimacies of refugee men who become citizens of countries of settlement.

SUMMARY

The concept of *intimate citizenship* provided a theoretical framework within which to examine how experiences of being a citizen in a home country at some point in life, the loss of civil rights during migration, and the subsequent reinstatement of those rights after settlement to Australia shaped the way Horn of Africa refugee men organised and pursued intimate relations. Weeks et al. (2001) argued that citizenship is about belonging; it shows the nexus between rights and responsibilities of an individual that entitle a person to be included within the polity. Therefore, citizenship is not so much something that is claimed or given, but a process that is lived; it is a reflexive practice through which people experiment with what being a citizen could be and mean in their everyday lives. These refugee men embraced multiple forms of citizenship at various stages of their lives—prior to forced displacement, during migration and upon settlement. In the next chapter, I discuss how belonging to certain ethnic groups and being citizens of countries of origin influenced the intimate lives of these refugee men.

Terrains of Intimacy in the Horn of Africa

Abstract In the Horn of Africa, intimacies are largely influenced by cultural norms, religious beliefs and patriarchal traditions. *Ubuntu*, a philosophy found in many African communities, reinforces the idea of belonging and being answerable to relatives and community members and sustains the ways in which individuals organise and enact intimate relationships. Also, a lack of legislation to promote and protect the rights of women and children, or the presence of prejudiced laws inhibiting such rights, perpetuates patriarchal institutions through which men as a group enjoy a range of privileges due to their gender. It is within these terrains of cultural norms, patriarchal traditions and communal way of living that the refuge men in this study enacted and organised their intimate relations.

Keywords Ubuntu · Traditional rights · Patriarchal traditions · Rites of passage · Legislative context

UBUNTU AND LIFE IN THE HORN OF AFRICA

The concept of *ubuntu* offers a deeper understanding of how different cultures of Horn of Africa communities influence the intimate lives of people. *Ubuntu* underscores a concern for the wellbeing of others and emphasises the communal over the individual (Graybill 2002). The

actual term *ubuntu* is specific to the Nguni language of Southern Africa (Watson et al. 2011) but its equivalent meaning is found in many communities across Africa: 'bumuntu by kiSuma and Kihayi in Tanzania, bomoto by Bobangi in Congo, and gimuntu by kiKongo and giKwese in Angola, umundu by Gikuyu in Kenya, umuntu in Uganda, umunthu in Malawi, and vumuntu in shiTsonga and shiTswa in Mozambique' (Hailey 2008, p. 3). *Ubuntu* is a philosophy of life that connotes humanness, caring for others and giving much value to one's community (Graybill 2002). It is an expression of the consciousness of belonging together that stresses symbiotic and cooperative relationships between individuals. *Ubuntu* emphasises that 'the identity of the self is understood to be formed interdependently through community' (Battle 2009, pp. 1–2).

The meaning of *ubuntu* is mainly extrapolated from expressions. For example, the Nguni proverb *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* translates as 'I am because we are' (Gildenhuys 2008), while the Sotho people's phrase *Motho ke motho ka batho babang* translates as 'one becomes a human being through other human beings', and Xhivenda people say *Muthu I bebelwa munwe* which means 'a person is born for the other' (Mkhize 2004). Swahili, a language spoken in many East African countries, has a similar saying, *mtu ni utu*, which translates 'to be a human is to be humane', while a comparable saying, *mundu ni umundu*, in Gikuyu has an equivalent meaning (Muchiri 2009). Tutu argued that it is very difficult to understand *ubuntu* through the transition to any Western language other than to say that it

> means [that] my humanity is caught up, [it] is inextricably bound up in theirs. We belong in a bundle of life. We say, 'a person is a person through other people'. It is not 'I think therefore I am'. It says rather: 'I am human because I belong.' I participate, I share. (Tutu 1999, p. 35)

In many African communities, the principle of togetherness and interdependence is instilled throughout a person's life. As a man grows older, he is expected to become more and more attached to his community as he attains personhood, marked by naming rituals and ceremonies conducted during circumcision, marriage and burial (Mbiti 1989). Throughout life, a man is expected to continue to learn the values of *ubuntu* such as group solidarity, caring, being sensitive to the needs of others, and making a

contribution towards the wellbeing of his family and community (Muchiri 2009; Watson et al. 2011). Consequently, as a man grows old, he attains more personhood and, as a result, commands greater respect from those younger than himself (Mbiti 1989). This is one reason why, traditionally, older people in African communities commanded respect from younger people. Mbiti (1989, p. 106, emphasis in the original) best demonstrates the application of *ubuntu* by arguing that:

> The individual *does not and cannot exist alone except corporately* [...] *Only in terms of other people* does the individual become conscious of his own being, his own duties, his privileges and responsibilities towards himself and towards other people [...] *Whatever happens to the individual happens to the whole group, and whatever happens to the whole group happens to the individual. The individual can only say: 'I am because we are; and since we are, therefore I am'.*

It is clear, therefore, that *ubuntu* puts community concerns before individual desires; *ubuntu* underscores a concern for the wellbeing of others and emphasises the communal over the individual (Graybill 2002). The individual life, identity and worldview are grounded in social interaction with other members of the community. The individual man comes to see himself in the life of the community (Hord and Lee 1995). He is defined by the community and, at the same time, he defines himself in relation to others in his community. In other words, 'one is unintelligible without the other' (Battle 2009, p. 8). A person's successes, achievements and failures in life are therefore not his alone; they are shared by the members of his family and those close to him.

Although significantly shaping relationships for many African people, *ubuntu* is not explicitly talked about in daily conversation; rather, it is demonstrated in the way people are acculturated and individuals gendered. For example, as a male child grows older, he is exposed to a social environment that encourages him to be more competitive and assertive than a girl (Dau and Akech 2010). As his gender identity is formed, it becomes a platform that enables him to enjoy more privileges compared with women in most spheres of life. Such patriarchal privileges are sustained by social institutions that reinforce the values of observing cultural traditions and being answerable to a community of people—mainly relatives and close community members.

How *Ubuntu* Permeates Intimacies in the Horn of Africa

Horn of Africa communities practise the kind of lifestyle that Plummer associates with traditional intimacies. This is because members of these communities pursue intimate lives within a constrained framework of cultural norms, beliefs and traditions that are heavily influenced by values of communal living. As noted by El-Hamamsy (2001), even though individuals are able to make some personal decisions on intimate issues such as marriage, pregnancy and the number of children they may wish to have, the influence of the family in such decisions remains substantial. Consequently, it becomes difficult for people in many African communities to exclude their family and community from the choices they make in life.

The communal way of living also affects how sexual relations are conducted and regulated in Horn of Africa communities. Although pre-marital sexual relationships are forbidden, these communities have a social mechanism to sanction such relationships. In my study, participants in the Sudanese FGD reported that, in instances when pregnancy occurs outside marriage in their community, the couple are required by their families to marry before the birth of the child. Such an obligation to marry could be read as an attempt by the community to sanction the sexual relationship by institutionalising it into marriage, regardless of the views of the couple concerned. By getting married, the couple adhere to cultural norms by which members of their communities are expected to engage in sexual relationships. Nonetheless, there was consensus among all FGD participants in my study that pre-marital sexual relationships among people living in a rural setting were subjected to more community surveillance than those in urban areas. Participants attributed this difference to the fact that people in rural areas live in close proximity to relatives and community members. This made it easier for community and family members to observe the sexual behaviours of others and reinforce cultural norms in regard to sexual relationships. As some participants reported, living in cities and away from the family provided the opportunity to engage in pre-marital sexual relationships due to the ability to overcome the cultural constraints imposed by living in a rural setting:

> I was a freelance. There was nobody who asked me questions [such as] where have you been? How come you are late? I [used to] pay for sex, who is gonna

ask me? And all my friends were from the [city], crazy guys. I was a bit shy when I [moved] into the [city], but I was changed, and I used to pay for sex too. (Joshua)

Also Horn of Africa refugee men tend to enjoy more privileges than women in most spheres of life. These privileges start early in life when boys are indoctrinated through initiation ceremonies and cultural practices to dominate women and girls. These rituals are viewed as pathways through which boys learn about their culture and traditions and prepare themselves for adult life as men. In most Horn of Africa communities, initiation into adulthood is conducted during puberty and is often accompanied by rituals that involve endurance of pain, such as scarification, circumcision, tooth removal or tattooing (Sybil La Fontaine 1985). For many young men in African communities, circumcision is viewed as a pathway to adulthood that grants the right to enjoy the privileges of manhood—to own property such as livestock and to marry (Mburu 2007; Schlee and Shongolo 2012). A key informant from the Dinka community reported how, in the traditional setting, the rites of passage from childhood to adulthood were carried out among males:

In Dinka, to be a man you go through stages...You were taught different things that lead you to manhood. And they give you some difficult [tasks] to show you that manhood was not actually easy, that you should be responsible for family, for community and for the whole country...when you reach 15 to 16 [years], they give you this mark that I have here [showing the scarification on his forehead] which means that you are now entering into the manhood stage.

Puberty initiation rites would be accompanied by a long period of seclusion. During this period, initiates would heal their wounds and receive informal education on sexual matters and their roles as men (Mason 2006). Arnold van Gennep (1960) argued that puberty rituals symbolised death to childhood and resurrection to adulthood. During this process, initiates would be withdrawn from their communities to undergo the rites of passage [death], experience a discrete period of transition away from their communities [seclusion], re-emerge as adults and then reintegrate into their communities [resurrection]. These rituals symbolised that initiates were ready to assume adult responsibilities. FGD participants agreed that attaining adult status granted men the right to initiate a relationship

with a woman and to marry. The denial to women of the right to choose whom to marry was expressly stated by Sudanese men:

> The girl can never say that you are old. Even if you are 40 years or 50 years you can marry [her]. (Sudanese FGD)

A similar belief was held by Mishek:

> In our culture even though you are 50 years or 60 years you can marry a 15 year [old girl] or even 14 [years old]. She cannot say that you are older. No, even though I am old.

As boys mature into men they are culturally expected to plan for marriage and start families of their own. They consequently see themselves as 'burdened' with the responsibility of bringing forth new community members through siring children after marriage. As one participant in my study put it, 'a man must think marriage . . . that [is] part of the culture'. Another participant believed that 'marriage is the way of culture'. Yet another participant held a similar belief:

> If you are born as a boy, when you grow up, you say one day I will get married. Not that one day a lady will marry me. No, one day I will marry, I will make a house, I will make a home, I will make a family. It is a decision from the men. (Patrick)

Therefore, marriage is seen as a duty for all men to perform at some point in their lives and is regarded as a significant accomplishment on the part of an individual. Marriage symbolises a man's achievement in life and creates a pathway to demonstrate his virility through the siring of children:

> To have kids is natural, it is culture, it is God's will, it is a lifestyle, it is part of the sex too. It is happiness. It is like representing you, it is like the result of what you are doing and your future . . . it is not just something that happened by accident, it is something I have been dreaming and I put it in action, and I worked hard, and I paid dowry. For me to have children or family is not something just normal. It is like part of my life . . . When I started my house it was a dream; it was my future. (Patrick)

It is a cultural tradition in many Horn of Africa communities to name children in accordance with the father's lineage (Palls 2008). Therefore, a

man with children has hopes that his name will be carried on to the next generation. This is one of the main reasons for men to marry in many African communities (Mbiti 1989). Consequently, marriage forms a part of male identity and is a worthwhile undertaking on the pathway to becoming men:

> In our culture you can't name someone without a family name ... you have to do it in order to leave your background alive ... when I pass away and my son marries the wife, the first name will be my father, and second son will be named after me ... Because when I have one child and he passes away then I have nothing. And maybe after two years I pass away too, I have nothing. It is better to have five or six [kids] to keep your background alive. (Anthony)

Through marriage and procreation a man attains a sense of purpose and fulfilment as a member of the community; his personhood is enhanced by ensuring he is likely to be remembered for many generations to come. Consequently, a married man has higher social status and commands more respect than the unmarried man (Gehman 1989).

The traditional right for men to choose a marriage partner is associated with early marriage of girls in some Horn of Africa communities (Population Council/UNFPA 2007; Stern 2012). The UNHCR (2002b) study also revealed a high incidence of early marriage among Somali and Sudanese girls in Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya. Such marriage practices, which are generally sanctioned by the culture, ensure that men, no matter how old, can still acquire wives from among young women and girls who have little say. The denial to women of the right to choose a marriage partner is further demonstrated in families that practise arranged marriage. A study by the Population Council and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) (2007), for example, showed that 94 % of Ethiopian girls' marriages had been arranged by parents. The study reported that most of these girls had not consented to the marriage. In such situations, the search for a spouse starts when the man is prepared to marry. This is not the case for the young women who are required to live with their parents until a potential suitor asks for their hand in marriage. In my doctoral research, a few men reported having met their wives through arranged marriages. These men noted that arranged marriage was made much easier in situations where the man's family was wealthy and therefore perceived as providing economic security

for the bride-to-be and her family. Consequently, the ability of a girl to make an independent choice was heavily influenced by her family:

> If [her] family are happy with the man, she should be happy too . . . [she] don't have individual freedom to say 'no, I object to this'. So it is up to [her] parent to say 'yes, we want this man'. (Sudanese FGD)

Arranged marriage assigns control of the marriage to older relatives and further inhibits young women from having the right to choose a spouse. Denial of the right for a woman to have a choice in marriage is also demonstrated in the cultural tradition that requires a widow to marry the brother of her deceased husband. In such communities, the widow is viewed as being owned by her late husband's family, who have the right to use her reproductive potential to preserve their lineage:

> A woman cannot have a new [man] until her husband dies. And in our culture you can't have anyone. You have someone related to your husband and the kids they will be named after your name, even if you died, because you paid [bride wealth] for that woman. She is under your responsibility. Even if you die she will have kids related to you and the kid will be named after you. (Sudanese FGD)

This is further evidence of the privileges and traditional rights that enable men to dominate women in some Horn of Africa communities: even the physical death of the man does not mark the termination of his right to procreate. As Fitzgerald (1993) pointed out, death is just a process to elevate the dead man's personhood by joining the living dead and thus commanding more respect among his living relatives. Therefore, one of his brothers must honour the dead man by siring children with his wife. This increases the chance of the name of the deceased being passed on to the next generation and preserving his lineage.

Bride wealth is another social institution that illustrates how male privilege permeates intimacies in the Horn of Africa. Bride wealth is a central and essential component of marriage; it establishes an ongoing relationship between two families, and legitimises marriage and childbirth (Shorter 1973; Tamale 2009). The extent to which marriage negotiation occurs and bride wealth is paid varies between communities. In many Ethiopian communities, for instance, the groom is usually

expected to present a gift to the bride's family (Gish et al. 2007). As one Ethiopian participant reported:

> you buy [ornaments] in our tribe . . . you have to buy her necklaces, and ear rings . . . cloths and things like that . . . it is a lot of money . . . you have to show her *gasmi* [love]. (Eli)

This is unlike in the Sudanese community where Stern (2012) observed that marriage can be an expensive process because of the huge cost associated with paying the bride wealth, buying gifts and preparing the wedding ceremony. Among the Dinka of Southern Sudan, bride wealth has been traditionally paid with livestock. This put enormous pressure on young men, because traditionally they relied on animal husbandry and cattle rustling from neighbouring communities (Mburu 2007). Sudanese participants in my study reported experiencing similar challenges in raising bride wealth. As one participant reported, bride wealth is agreed upon during the negotiation between the groom's and bride's families.

> [The negotiations] might start with 150 cows and above. They negotiate until maybe you agree on 100 [cows] . . . Each cow can be valued for about 800 Sudanese pounds [approximately 300 Australian dollars]. (Jacob)

While bride wealth serves to legitimise a marriage and the children of the union, it also reinforces the gendered differences between couples by creating expectations between couples. For some men, payment of bride wealth is the basis upon which they justify dominating their wives. This is because women are perceived as 'goods' that men buy during marriage (Tamale 2009). Hunnicutt (2009) argued that bride wealth is a basis upon which men dominate women, both structurally and ideologically, by reinforcing the belief that men are naturally superior to women. According to Kambarami (2006), payment of bride wealth leads to the subordination of women, to the extent that their sexuality is controlled by men. For example, a girl is expected to remain a virgin and, once married, she is valued for her childbearing abilities (Cavendish 2010; Stern 2012). She is expected to engage in sex only with her husband and to beget him children who will be named after his relatives, and not to question her husband's sexual liaisons. In this way, her sexual desires are subjected to control by her husband, while he himself often engages in pleasurable sex by pursuing extra-marital affairs or even marrying another

woman. This was demonstrated by Mishek who fathered a child with another woman in Kenya, his country of asylum, when his wife was in Australia. When asked whether he was concerned that his wife would know of the relationship, he said:

> She [the wife] knows [that] in our culture there is nothing she can do . . . Even if [I] want to marry ten [women] there is nothing she can do. If she doesn't like [it] then I will tell her to go. I am the one who goes and pay something [bride wealth] to her family. She is not the one . . . How she denies me [the right to marry another woman]. If she doesn't like she can go away . . . but for me no . . . It is only me who can stop myself by saying I don't like it. But not someone like my wife [to] come and [stop me].

Mishek's view is linked to the practice of polygyny: a traditional right for men to marry more than one woman. Some scholars argue that polygyny allows wives to share duties and help each other during sickness (Appiah and Gates 2009; Boserup 2010) and reproduce on behalf of another woman if she is infertile (Boserup 2010). Letuka and Armstrong (1996) asserted that, in many traditional African settings, polygyny ensured that women were taken care of because society expected them to marry. During those times, the husband was given permission by his first wife to marry again. However, the first wife was not abandoned after her husband married another woman; instead, she received higher status in the family and, as a result, was able to exercise authority over younger wives. It is important to note that polygyny remains contested in some communities. For example, many Christian sects consider this practice to be a sin comparable to adultery and have continued to lobby for its abolition (Magesa 2010). Also, although polygyny is allowed in Islam (Philips and Jones 2005), it remains challenged and disapproved of by Muslim feminists, who argue that it is not only a form of female slavery but also increases family violence (Leaman 2006). However, polygyny remains widely acceptable in countries such as Somalia (Hamilton 2007) and South Sudan (Stern 2012).

Polygyny has cultural, social and economic benefits for men. This practice increases men's chances of fathering many children which, in the long run, would elevate his social status in the community and preserve his name in future generations (Zeitzen 2008). In agricultural communities, women are economic resources for the family. Therefore, a polygynous man who is able to utilise this labour from his wives and children increases his wealth over

time. Although the situation that led Mishek to cohabit with other women in Kenya was different from the traditional ways of acquiring another wife, he was influenced by polygyny in his community when relating to his wife. He felt that this privilege allowed him to make decisions about marrying another woman that would not be contested by his first wife.

In the Horn of Africa, a husband who forces his wife to have sex with him does not regard the act as inappropriate, or indeed a crime. This view was reflected in the Sudanese and Ethiopian FGDs where participants regarded marriage as an institution that granted men unconstrained rights to have sex with their wives at any time. Therefore, marital rape was inconceivable:

> For us, there is nothing like raping when you are husband and wife . . . when you signed the [marriage certificate], that is a commitment, giving consent that you will fulfil the needs of your husband. And then you as the husband will fulfil the needs of your wife. (Sudanese FGD)

> Naturally [it] is ridiculous; it is bizarre to [say] I am raping my wife. You married your wife as the husband to have relationship, sexual relationships with her. (Ethiopians FGD)

Such views demonstrate that men have established sexual dominance in that they do not expect their wives to refuse any sexual encounter. As a result, in most communities, men are able to exercise control over women's sexuality and reproductive potential. Richardson (2000) argued that the lack of legislation to protect women from being sexually violated by their husbands may be considered a state-sanctioned right for men to have access to women's bodies on the grounds of the husband's conjugal right to sexual fulfilment in marriage. In such circumstances, 'a man's right of sexual access to his wife's body is privileged over her right to consensual sexual practice. He has the right to take by force that which the law defines as rightfully his: sex within marriage or, more specifically, the act of vaginal penetration' (Richardson 2000, p. 115).

Since men are expected to provide for their families, in many African communities a man who raises the required bride wealth is regarded as having the ability to provide for his family; this is an act that earns him respect from his in-laws:

> I paid 75 cows. And then the family will respect [me] because [I] have taken their daughter and [I] have given them something. (Patrick)

Nonetheless, it is the man's ability to continue providing for his family that helps him to maintain a higher social status in relation to his wife and gain respect among his peers and the community (Silberschmidt 2001; Morrell and Swart 2005). In the Horn of Africa, marriage is seen as a pathway through which a man asserts authority over his wife and to sire children who will be named after him. Such a cultural mind-set prepares men to think of marriage as an institution they should actively plan for, establish and make decisions about. Payment of bride wealth also reinforces the gendered nature in which men and women relate in marriage. For example, there is an expectation that in marriage women will be subservient to their husbands. This is exemplified in South Sudanese communities where women are expected to show respect to their husbands by obeying whatever he says (Stern 2012). Also, in some Ethiopian communities, women are expected show respect to their husbands by addressing him without calling him by name, and displaying her subordinate position in marriage (Obeng 2002). As Ethiopian FGD participants agreed,

> A man has a lot of responsibility, naturally . . . the woman can't take a lot of responsibilities . . . a lot of [manual] work is done by men . . . women are inside at home . . . they cook, they take care of the house, cleaning, the food cooking . . . when [the husband] comes back, his home is his rest place not working place . . . he demands from the woman to bring water, to bring food on the table and everything.

Such patriarchal traditions are engendered as girls mature into women. Molvaer (1995) reported that young girls in Ethiopia are taught by their mothers that when they grow up and marry they are not supposed to answer back when their husband insults them, but rather to give a kind reply. The girls are also advised that upon marriage they should accept their mistake humbly when they are beaten by their husbands.

Similar sentiments were evident in the accounts of many participants in my study. For example, a participant in my in-depth interviews commented on the quality of a good wife: 'in my own country [Ethiopia], the more [a] woman is silent [the more] she is beautiful. It is part of her beauty. She is quite decent, obedient, [and] then man can build love.' For some other participants, marriage was enhanced by the communal way of living and the strong values attached to the views of other family members. For example, two participants, Mustafa and Eli, who had permanently separated from their wives when they fled their countries of origin during the

civil war, felt that it was important for them, being men, to remarry when circumstances allowed. Mustafa said that he was obliged to marry for the sake of his extended family: 'My family members were exerting pressure on me to get married. I was not convinced . . . but of course, just to please them, I accepted.' At the time of the study, Eli said he was currently searching for a marriage partner. For most participants, marriage was a significant rite of passage to undertake because it gave them a sense of achievement, authority and identity as men. In this sense, marriage was the basis upon which men claimed dominance over their intimate relationships with their wives and children.

In the Horn of Africa, marriages are guided by customary law (Maina 2009), Sharia law that allows men to marry more than one woman (Mir-Hosseini 2000), or Christian marriage acts (Gopal and Salim 1998). These laws and acts have roots in a patriarchal tradition that is sustained by values of *ubuntu*, as stated by one participant when he was getting married:

> They [her family] called the girl and told her, 'you see the cows, even if you go there and you do something bad, we don't have time for you here. You have now become a part of the other family. If you go and make crime there, it is up to you. If they kill you it is up to you [since] you are the one who came to us to tell us that you love that man, and we agree and have taken cows [as bride wealth] from this man.' (Mishek)

Additionally, the ways in which some participants were heavily influenced by religious beliefs in organising intimate relationships within marriage further demonstrated features of traditional intimacies. In both Christian and Islamic scriptures, Colossians 3:18 and Koran 4:34 respectively, women are instructed to be submissive to their husbands in all ways and accord them respect. Tegegn (2011) stated that Islam and Coptic Orthodox Christianity in Ethiopia, the two major religions in the country, preach unquestioning obedience by a wife to the will of her husband. Some participants drew on such religious dogma to justify their argument that husbands have authority over wives. As one Christian participant reported, 'the beauty of a wife is obedience, is to submit to the husband, as the Bible [states]'. A similar view was put forward in the Eritrean FGD:

> In Eritrea, whether Christians or Muslims, we are affected by religion. The religion says that the women have to respect the husbands. (Eritrean FGD)

The extent to which women face inequality in the Horn of Africa is so great that in some communities a husband's view that his wife is disrespectful can be a basis for domestic violence. In this study, a few participants mentioned they had used violence against their wives in their home countries. For example, Patrick acknowledged that he used to hit his wife in South Sudan, his country of origin. As he claimed, 'in my country I can even kill her, she is my wife'. Aimie, though a single unmarried man, supported this culturally sanctioned norm:

> That is my country's law . . . The woman she do wrong, you hit her because you are [like] the father, you are the husband . . . Her father does not [ask] you why you hit his daughter. Well, you are the husband. You are like her father. (Aimie)

Studies in some Horn of Africa communities have reported that occasional wife beating is generally perceived as a way to instil discipline and ensure the husband is accorded respect (Gardner and El-Bushra, 2004; Stern 2012). Therefore, in marriage, some men regard it as their right to use physical violence against their wives. This was a common view held by participants in my study.

Due to the values of communal living, marriage in the Horn of Africa is not a union privately determined by two individuals; over and above the couple, marriage links together two families, clans, and even communities (Higgins and Fenrich 2011). Therefore, the family remains highly influential in these relationships. As one participant in my study noted, 'two families agree and the whole community comes together in a [marriage] ceremony'. Older relatives are highly regarded and are usually involved in resolving conflict between married couples, as noted by a key informant:

> If I am a married man [and I have] a certain problem within the family, between myself and my wife for instance, the first person who should know . . . is my brother . . . or my uncle . . . or the community leaders . . . They would come and solve the problem . . . They would come in and sit down with [us] before we think of the issue of going to court and police.

This view was also supported in the Sudanese FGD:

> In Africa . . . our things are managed at the family level. Elders are the ones responsible to investigate and then sit down with the [couple] . . . they will counsel you until [you] solve [the issue].

The significant influence that older relatives and community elders have in resolving marital disputes is one of the main reasons why there is reluctance to criminalise violence against women in the Horn of Africa. The family unit is considered a domestic sphere that the state is reluctant to govern. Sudanese FGD participants reported that in their countries of origin it was inconceivable for a woman to take her husband to court: 'in our culture you can never go to court with a woman [your wife] when you have relatives'. Therefore, in the case of a dispute with the husband, married women were required to discuss with community elders who would then decide on ways to address the issue. Since many community elders were men, it is highly likely that decisions would be made in favour of husbands.

The way in which cultural traditions privilege men in marriage continues in the case of divorce. In some communities, a man has the right to divorce his wife for a variety of reasons, such as if she engages in an extramarital affair, neglects household duties, repeatedly disobeys him, and is not sexually available to him (Fadlalla 2009; Fluehr-Lobban 1987). The situation is different for women seeking divorce, since they are required to prove that their living with their husband is detrimental to the welfare of the community. For example, a Muslim woman must prove beyond reasonable doubt that her husband is preventing her performing duties or compelling her to commit sin, that he is physically abusing her without cause, or that he is suffering from permanent erectile dysfunction (Madani 2006). Similarly, Fadlalla (2009) reported that, for a woman to be granted divorce under customary law, she has to convince her family that her husband is unable to procreate due to impotence, neglects his duties in providing for his wife and children, or continually treats her with disdain and physically assaults her for no good reason.

Also when divorce occurs, it impacts heavily on women compared with men. Divorced women suffer stigma to the extent that many have little chance of remarrying (Weatherford 2002). In addition, the ex-husband's family has the right to demand a refund of the bride wealth paid (Stern 2012). In most cases, the man is also granted immediate custody of the children in separation or divorce (Fadlalla 2009). Consequently, divorce is a difficult choice for women, including for economic reasons, as noted by one of the participants:

> If she is divorced she would be a burden on her family and the family has to feed her, and this is a new burden for the family. So the family cannot encourage her to do that. So they try to solve the problem and to leave their daughter [in] the man's house. (Mustafa)

Since patrilocal residence is the common form of arrangement for a married couple (Madhavan 2001), a divorced woman is required to leave the family house, which is usually located within the ex-husband's family home. To avoid the challenge of looking for a new residence, many abused women may be forced to endure the trauma of living with a violent husband.

Another significant cultural practice that privileges men is the ability to fulfil the traditional breadwinner's role. Men are likely to be better educated and to occupy jobs with higher status and pay compared with women (James 1995). The men are also economically advantaged in that they inherit family properties, such as land and animals, unlike women who are expected to marry and move to their husband's families (Deng 2010; Matsuoka and Sorenson 2001). Therefore, upon marriage, many women are financially dependent upon their husbands. While the majority of the men are likely to engage in paid work, women tend to be carers within the household, performing tasks such as child rearing, food preparation and laundry (Newman 1984). Unlike formal employment, household labour is unpaid and therefore does not provide any extra income to the family. In consequence, it is usually undervalued, creating an expectation on the part of some men that their wives will remain subservient, as noted by a participant in my study:

> Women are at home, they are there to produce children and also service the men . . . she has to be an obedient wife. She should not ask much questions. She has to obey the orders, always. But sometimes she can protest against it, but it stops there, because economically she is dependent on the man. (Mustafa)

The fact that performing household duties, childbirth and child rearing are often perceived as non-productive forms of labour shows how patriarchy masks its power. Branaman (2014) argued that, for social feminists, domestic labour is a form of men exploiting women. This is because as married women expend considerable time providing unpaid labour, which would ideally cost a lot of money if it was performed by hired house help, their husbands have more leisure time. This situation has arisen as a result of paid labour being defined as work, whereas unpaid labour is not. Therefore, men feel entitled to freedom from domestic tasks when at home. Radical feminists have argued that unpaid women's labour in the domestic sphere benefits men, both individually and as a group (Abbott et al. 2005). This is because women spend most of their time maintaining

the household, thereby sustaining and improving men's standard of living. Such views about productive and unproductive labour reinforce the belief, among some men, that their work is more important than that of women. In consequence, men's ability to provide an income for the family has been assumed to give them authority over their economically dependent wives.

LEGISLATION

The communal way of organising social life creates an environment that sustains patriarchal traditions and perpetuates cultural practices that discriminate against women and girls. For example, men's violence against women is sustained by either a lack of legislation promoting women's rights, or the presence of prejudiced laws inhibiting such rights. Consequently, women in many parts of Africa remain vulnerable to violence at the hands of men. This was an issue identified in the Eritrean FGD:

> In my tribe I can say surely they were abused ... if she didn't agree on what the husband says, whether right or wrong, she will be even beaten ... she is there only to accept whatever it is dictated to her ... But ... there is nothing bad there ... [this tradition] fits us, it left us with one society not broken families.

Studies report many other forms of violence against women and girls in the Horn of Africa, including rape and abduction of women and girls and forced marriage (D'Awol 2012; Leaning et al. 2009; United Nations 2011). These crimes are sanctioned by patriarchal cultural traditions that are intended to control and manipulate women's intimate lives. For example, one way of punishing a man who commits rape is to force him to marry the victim in order to preserve family honour, as is common among the Dinka and Nuer of Southern Sudan (Fadlalla 2009). This cultural practice shows how the crime of rape is regarded as an offence against the family rather than against the individual, a view shared by one of the participants in my study:

> There is nothing like raping in Sudan ... They don't call it raping. This is a minor thing. It is not a crime ... [community elders] just say you have to marry each other. And this is the process of what to do. But it is not a crime. You can't say that you don't want to marry that girl because everybody knows that you [had sex] with her. (Benson)

Other common forms of oppression against women include marital rape and domestic violence (London 2005). The general lack of legislation to protect women from violence creates an environment that enables some men to perpetrate violence without fear of retribution.

In some Horn of Africa countries, online sexually explicit materials have been subject to filtering by the government, an action that the authorities justify on the grounds of preventing the erosion of cultural values and the corruption of public morality (Boler 2008; Deibert 2009). One participant from Sudan said that accessing such images would lead to heavy punishment:

> The government see that it is very bad . . . They put you in jail, beat you, because you do something bad for your country. (Aimie)

Due to such restrictions, many participants in my study reported not having come across sexually explicit images prior to displacement. However, this changed for all participants after settlement to Australia. I will return to this topic later in Chapter 5.

Another example of the intersection of legislation and sexuality relates to same-sex relationships. In most African countries homosexual relationships are considered un-African. There is also legislation that criminalises same-sex relations in many countries of Africa, (ILGA 2012). For example, in Ethiopia and Eritrea, men found to be in same-sex relationships risk being imprisoned for life (Varney 2010), while in Sudan and some southern parts of Somalia, homosexual acts are punishable by death (ILGA 2012).

A key informant reported that the communal way of living in the Horn of Africa made it more difficult for a person attracted to the same sex to talk about their sexual orientation. This is because of the shame he brings to his family:

> African culture does not accept that men can be with another man . . . So those [relations] are very hard to come by . . . families will not tolerate knowing that their son is actually attracted to another person of the same sex.

Another key informant said that same-sex relationships are opposed by religion and regarded as immoral and sinful acts. Therefore, it is extremely problematic for a man attracted to the same sex to speak out about his sexuality:

Same-sex relations in Africa are a taboo. One, the culture does not allow that. Two . . . the religion does not allow that. You can be a Muslim, a Christian, it doesn't fit same-sex relations.

These accounts support Plummer's theory of societies that practise traditional intimacies: the desire to confirm to cultural traditions and to be accepted by families or communities largely affects the way individuals pursue sexual relationships. These accounts were further reinforced by participants' recollections of same-sex relationships in Africa. Although none of the participants reported having had sex with another man, one of them recounted violence experienced by his cousin who had engaged in a same-sex relationship in his country of origin:

A long time ago . . . one of my cousins in the village was sleeping and was dreaming to have sex and then he jumped on another man and the other man was sleeping [laughing loudly] . . . and when the other man woke up he got [my cousin's] dick in his arse [laughing loudly] . . . [The man] went to sharpen the spear and then in the morning he went looking after [my cousin]. Then he killed [him] . . . And when the police come, and was asking him why did you kill this man [he said it was because the man liked having sex with other men]. So then, the police say that was all right, they did not arrest him. (Steve)

Although there is some evidence that same-sex relationships existed in many indigenous communities in Africa before colonisation (Murray and Roscoe 1998), there was a general perception, in the FGDs and all in-depth interviews, that same-sex relationships were Western sexual practices introduced by colonisers. The following view was typical across the in-depth interviews:

In the entire third world this [is] not there, but in places where the British people were colonising the country for a long time, for example in Sudan for 60 years, sometimes it happens, because of the Europeans. (Farah)

It is useful to point out that homosexuality, as a distinct sexual category of behaviour and personhood, originated from Western countries (Foucault 2012; Weeks 2007). The usage of the term began to permeate African communities during and after colonisation (Zyl 2005). Therefore, same-sex practices that were part of the repertoire of organising traditional sexual relationships in many African communities were gradually redefined

as homosexual activities. A good example to demonstrate this point was given by Steve, a participant who had earlier narrated the killing of a man who had had sex with his cousin. Steve reported that holding hands with a man was a norm in his community and, therefore, not regarded as a homosexual practice. However, in another society, Steve's behaviour could be perceived as an innuendo of same-sex attraction (Cooper 2013). Western scholars who encountered similar practices in Africa amplified these and other related same-sex activities and projected them as distinct forms of sexual practice. It is due to this historical link of homosexual identity to the West that participants regarded same-sex relationships as alien to African communities.

The lack, or presence, of an appropriate legislative framework adds another layer that impacts on how people navigate intimate relationships with the patriarchal traditions in the Horn of Africa communities. At the current time, there is constant lobbying by human rights activists for such countries to develop legislation that would protect individual rights and to abolish legislation that has led to human rights abuses (Obono 2010; Tamale 2011).

Summary

Men in this study came from societies that practise collectivist cultures and place high value on communal living. In their countries of origin, the men's intimate relationships were organised and sustained by the values of *ubuntu* that encouraged community members to uphold cultural traditions for the greater benefit of the ethnic group as a whole. To use Plummer's word, these communities increasingly practised traditional forms of intimacy in that, even though the men were able to make some decisions concerning their intimate relations, the influence of the family and relatives in such decisions remained substantial.

In their countries of origin, these men also enjoyed many privileges in their intimate lives compared with women, as a result of cultural practices such as payment of bride wealth and marital conflict resolution by male community elders, and patriarchal traditions such as patrilocal residence upon marriage, patriarchal naming of children, male entitlement to children upon divorce, and polygyny. The state also had minimal influence on intimate relationships and, as a result, men were able to be more successful in establishing authority over women and children.

A wave of sporadic and protracted civil wars forced these men to flee their countries of origin and seek asylum in neighbouring countries. This resulted in disruption of the social and cultural fabric within which these men organised and pursued intimate relationships. Migration also opened opportunities for the pursuit of new intimate relationships. I discuss these issues in Chapter 4.

Intimate Relations in Countries of Asylum

Abstract On crossing national borders, men in this study lost rights associated with being citizens of their countries of birth. In their countries of asylum, these men were now regarded as refugees with limited civil rights and their lives were characterised by living in limbo and confinement in refugee camps or marginal existence in urban settings. Migration also disrupted the familiar ways of life that guided how these men organised and pursued intimate relations. Countries of asylum also represented sites with diverse opportunities for reorganising intimate lives. This provided more latitude for some men to pursue intimate relations beyond the confines of cultural traditions and values of communal living that dominated life in their countries of origin.

Keywords Refugee camps · Urban refugees · Separation of intimate partners · Casual sex · Coerced sex · Transactional sex · Countries of asylum

LOSS OF CIVIL RIGHTS AND DISRUPTION OF FAMILIAR WAYS OF LIFE

In the face of adversity, refugees are forced to flee their usual places of residence and seek asylum in other countries. During such periods, individuals are uprooted from their familiar ways of life which often leads to the interruption of social support networks (Rousseau et al. 2001; Schweitzer et al. 2006) and to a weakening of the norms and values that

regulate sexual behaviour (Khaw et al. 2000; Roberts and Patel 2010). Factors such as separation from their usual sexual partners, being unaccompanied by relatives, peer influence and the desire to conform to masculine ideas about sexual practice in host societies present opportunities for some migrant men to increasingly engage in sexual activities (Carballo and Nerukar 2001; Thomas et al. 2010).

A study by Holt et al. (2003) revealed that, after displacement, young Sudanese refugee men in Ethiopia frequently travelled from the Dimma refugee settlement to the adjacent Fandinka squatter town to have sexual encounters with female Ethiopian sex workers. These authors reported that many of these young men had fled to Ethiopia during the Sudanese civil wars of the late 1980s and early 1990s. Having moved away from cultural settings where their sexual behaviours would have been subjected to greater surveillance by families and community members, these men found it easier to engage the services of sex workers in the host society.

In my study, four men reported having been separated from their spouses in the process of asylum seeking or settlement. Mustafa and Eli reported that they had been permanently separated from their wives when they fled to countries of asylum. Mustafa reported that he had divorced his wife because she refused to join him in asylum, while Eli reported that his wife had started cohabiting with another man after he fled Ethiopia. Subsequently, Eli acquired a new sexual partner and cohabitated with her for one year. However, they were separated when she was resettled to Canada. The other two men, David and Mishek, fled to the countries of asylum with their wives and children, but were separated from them for one and four years respectively, as their wives settled to Australia as dependents of someone else. The two men joined their wives later after being granted a spousal visa. During the time their wives were in Australia, the two participants reported engaging in casual sexual relationships. These men argued that they had not been certain they would eventually be reunited with their wives, due to the length of time they might have had to wait for their visas to be granted. During this time of separation, some men ended up pursuing long-term relationships in countries of asylum.

Sexual Intimacies in Refugee Camps

In the process of fleeing their countries of origin to initial neighbouring countries of asylum, participants in my study did not necessarily experience substantial shifts in the organisation of intimacies. One of the participants

who lived in a refugee camp reported inability to pursue sexual activities because of the physical and cultural setting of the camps:

> There are a lot of restrictions . . . People in the camp grouped themselves into tribes, you don't mix. So you cannot engage a girl easily . . . It is very dangerous. To hug a girl is a problem, not even [having] sex. (Benson)

From a cultural perspective, a refugee camp can be a site for reviving traditional ways of regulating intimate relationships in situations where a community attempts to retain and re-establish the sexual norms, values, practices and beliefs of their homeland. This is made possible when a group of individuals who share a similar cultural or religious background live in the same location. In the process of interaction, these individuals recreate and attempt to uphold the traditional norms, beliefs and values that existed in their previous society. Therefore, the camp can be perceived as a site of preserving the community's 'purity' around intimacy and sexuality. For example, Malkki's (1995) study of Hutu refugees living in Tanzania reported how the individuals in the refugee camps perceived those living in town as 'impure' due to their attempts to integrate into the host culture by engaging in practices such as intermarriage. To them, the camp represented the homeland where everyone, in solidarity with one another, adhered to the cultural norms, values, beliefs and practices of the Hutu people. For that reason, the camp symbolised a place that would prevent refugees from 'contaminating' themselves with members of their host communities.

Similarly, a study of Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya reported high levels of sexual abstinence by never-married young people aged 15–24 years (Intergovernmental Authority on Development and UNHCR 2010). This behaviour was attributed to the homogeneity of the population in which 93 % of the 260,000 refugees living in the camp were Somali. Since the majority of Somali people practise Islam (Kemp and Rasbridge 2004), a religion that prohibits pre-marital sex, living in a camp created a social and cultural environment that enabled close monitoring of intimate relations. Consequently, those living in the camp were more likely to act out their sexual intimacies within the confines and expectations of their social setting. For the young people, this resulted in abstinence. In my study, Muslim participants in the Eritrean and Somali FGDs who lived in the camps reported similar views about reduced sexual activities among unmarried young people. In addition, men who participated in in-depth

interviews reported that religion acted as a barrier to pursuing intimate relationships with women who professed a different faith. For example, Eli, a Christian who had lived in Mombasa refugee camp in Kenya, said that, although Muslim women were the majority in the camp, it was difficult to initiate a relationship with any of them because of differences in their faith. Since Islam forbids a woman from pursuing a relationship with a non-Muslim man, unless he converts (Abdul-Rahman 2007), Eli argued that crossing the religious border would have resulted in hostility between Muslims and Christians in the camp:

> We are Christians, we never had [sexual or any] contacts with them . . . If you get one of their women, somebody will kill you . . . Christians should not have sex with a Muslim girl. (Eli)

Studies have also reported early onset of sexual activities and high-risk sexual practices among refugees in camps (UNHCR 2002a, 2004). However, it was not clear from these studies whether these refugees were engaging in sex within or outside the camp. My research did not support the aforementioned conclusion, as all participants reported restrictions in pursuing sexual relationships in the refugee camps due to the presence of family or community members in a camp who reinforced acceptable cultural norms regarding intimate relations. A participant reported engaging in casual sexual relationships with refugee women during his time in the camp. Single at the time, David recounted that, after completing his studies, he had secured employment as a humanitarian worker, a job that provided him with an opportunity to pursue sexual relationships:

> When, for example, some new people came from Ethiopia or from Sudan city, they knew that there was someone who works for [a humanitarian organisation] and had good relationship with the Sudanese Government. If there was something wrong, I would go straightaway and solve their problems . . . there was an opportunity to have sex if they were interested, but I never forced a girl, just if she is interested . . . If a girl was interested to have sex with me that was OK. But if not—I can't say that if she is a new arrival I can't touch or have sex with her. Just I read her first and then know if she is interested or not . . . some girls were from the camp and others from the city, but we always used to meet outside the camp.

David's pursuit of sexual relationships was facilitated by employment that gave him a position of authority. Consequently, he was regarded as someone who could provide favours or make life a bit easier for his sexual partners. However, he reported conducting these sexual escapades outside the camp. David's experience demonstrates that research in camp sites should investigate and report on where sexual activities take place in order to better understand the context within which refugees pursue sexual relationships.

Sexual Intimacies Outside Refugee Camps

In addition to encampment, a large number of refugees live outside camps, mainly in urban centres (Pavanello et al. 2010; UNHCR 2007b). These urban refugees are often not accompanied by their families and may not live in the same locality as their community members. Consequently, the sexual norms and values of their former societies are less likely to be reinforced in the host society. This opens up possibilities for some refugee men to pursue sexual relationships more easily compared to when they were in their countries of origin. For example, in their study of refugee men in Cairo, Egypt, Coker et al. (2003) reported that Sudanese refugee men who were single or unaccompanied by their spouses experienced frustration at the lack of sexual partners. These authors reported that this situation contributed to increased sexual encounters between these men and commercial sex workers in that city. Living outside the refugee camps made it easier for some men to engage in casual sexual relations and transactional sex in host societies since there was less reinforcement of cultural norms and traditions and because they were less likely to experience ongoing monitoring of their sexual activities by relatives and other members of their communities. This enabled some men to interact more closely with host communities, often exploring sexual liaisons with non-community members. As one participant stated, 'there was no cultural restrictions' outside the camps. In consequence, some of the participants reported that it was only after leaving the camp that they started to engage in sex. The disruption of communal life in the camp created opportunities for these men to engage in pre-marital sexual relationships. For example, after leaving the camp to pursue his settlement case, Steve, who was 19 years old at the time, reported

having a sexual relationship for the first time in his life with a Kenyan girl he met in the town where he was residing:

> I still remember it was at night time [laughing loudly]. When I feel to have [sex], I went towards the [barber shops] and there were a lot of women there. I was talking too much about Australia and [one girl] was interested to say 'Hi how are you' and then we [started] talking. That was the day [I] found a girlfriend...[We] went to a motel and I couldn't sleep until in the morning [laughing loudly]...Because it was really my first time to have [sex].

Steve continued to have a sexual relationship with this girl and later learnt she was pregnant. After his partner gave birth to the baby, Steve was granted a humanitarian visa and settled in Australia, leaving his girlfriend and child behind. Such an experience raises an important question about whether men who migrate without their intimate partners continue to pursue these relationships on settlement.

Similar experiences regarding the ease of finding sexual partners outside the refugee camp were reported by a number of other participants. Abram, for example, reported restrictions in terms of interacting with members of the opposite sex while living in the Islamic country of Saudi Arabia, his first country of asylum, and Somalia, his country of origin. In such Islamic countries, men are generally restricted from mixing freely with women who are not family members (Groth and Sousa-Poza 2012). One of the arguments that has been put forward to support this practice is that it limits the possibility of sexual attraction between men and women (Jones and Tell 2010). Due to such norms, men who lived in cities dominated by Muslims reported difficulties in meeting potential sexual partners. Nonetheless, there were always ways to get around such social restrictions:

> I can't lie to you that I didn't have sex in Sudan...There were no clubs...Sometimes if you go with a girl and a policeman saw you walking with a girl he would call you 'come, come. What is the relationship between you and the girl?' If you say 'sister' you have to show the [identity card] or if it is your wife you have to prove with the marriage certificate. Otherwise you will get punished...Because [Sudan] is a Muslim country, they have Sharia law, you can't go with ladies...but we had friends [who owned] houses. You can call her on the phone 'I am in this [house], can you come?' (David)

Abram, a participant who identified as Muslim, said that he was not able to pursue any sexual relationships in Saudi Arabia, his country of first asylum, but this changed when he moved to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, his second country of asylum. At the time, he was single and unaccompanied by his family:

> Ethiopia was eye-opening. Ethiopia was my way through to Western standards, naked girls, strip clubs, drinking in public, getting high. It was the key to Western lifestyle . . . When I went there I got into a relationship with a girl . . . She was my first sex lover.

Similarly, three other participants reported that living in non-Muslim cities and away from their families and relatives enabled them to pursue casual or transactional sexual relationships. The city provided greater privacy in pursuing such sexual relationships because there was reduced likelihood of the men's sexual adventures being discovered by their relatives and community members.

In one case, a participant reported that his first and subsequent sexual encounters involved rape of a girl in Kenya, his country of asylum. Adan blamed his actions on the strict Muslim upbringing that glossed over any discussion about sexuality in his community:

> There are no people that educate you when you are young. You become mature and you really—People tell you 'hi, don't do that, don't do that'. But it is like they have never come to the sense that this guy one day he will come and say I want to do this no matter the consequences. What they told me was to never go near a woman whatsoever because that is not a good thing to do.

Although Adan deeply regretted his actions, he justified his behaviour using post-hoc rationalisation that was based on being uninformed about sex as he was growing up. While this is not an excuse for committing a crime, it is important to note that Adan never had any formal schooling; he reported that he was taken to a religious school to learn Islamic theology. In his analysis of Islam, DeLong-Bas (2007) noted some consensus among scholars that traditionally men were allowed to have sexual intercourse with female slaves. These slaves were considered property and, therefore, a master had a right over the slave's body according to his wishes (Ali 2010). Such doctrines may have influenced Adan's view

regarding how to sexually exploit the girl who was working in his family business. Adam was well aware of his position of power:

> You always go after the weak . . . anything that is weaker than you are. And the only thing that pushed me to her was that, for one, she was an easy target for me . . . her family was struggling . . . I could get her fired so that she doesn't have to work for us.

A few other men who came from Islamic societies where sexual relationships were pursued within a strict code of religiosity that restricted free mixing between men and women and prohibited social venues, such as bars, were inclined to pursue casual sexual relationships when they sought asylum in non-Muslim societies. Living away from a social environment that reinforced religious values about intimate relationships allowed these men to interact more freely with members of the host society and pursue intimate relations more easily.

Transactional Sex

There is overwhelming evidence of the link between unemployment and transactional sex. Refugee women have been reported to engage in transactional sex in exchange for basic needs such as food and clothing (Landau 2008). However, little is known about whether refugee men sell sex. A few studies have documented transactional sex between rich Western women and local African men in tourist destinations in Africa such as Kenya (Meiu 2011) and Gambia (Nyanzi and Bah 2010). Montclos and Kagwanja (2000) provided an insight into the economic life of refugees in countries of asylum, reporting that some refugees provide agricultural labour to surrounding communities while others are employed by humanitarian organisations. However, many are impoverished by the situation in the camps and, at times, are forced to sell some of the food they receive from humanitarian organisations in order to buy other basic goods such as clothing. Just as with some refugee women, the stripping of economic resources during forced migration can predispose some men to situations where they have had to sell sex. As one male confessed:

> Some [women] pay you, they give you money . . . to have sex with you . . . if you are lucky to have her, she will have sex with you and will be very happy and she will pay you. (David)

David's experience demonstrates Plummer's (2003, p. 128) theorisation of how intimacies are enmeshed in the process of globalisation 'to cultures of development, tourism, mass consumption, organised crime, and sex work' and where 'each culture maintains its own distinctive cultural forms, reworking its experience of globalisation to accord with its own history and traditions, and to suit its present needs'. To David, engaging in sex work took specific meaning and served a specific purpose: having been economically destabilised by forced migration, he viewed his body as a resource to earn money to cater for his basic needs.

In my study, two participants said that they were aware that it would be easier to live in the country of asylum if they started a relationship with a woman from that country. In many African countries marriage to, or being in a long-term cohabitation with, a citizen entitles a non-citizen to many privileges accorded to citizens of that country, and provides a pathway for permanent residency (Manby 2010). One of the men aware of such legislation was Steve whom I reported earlier as having cohabited with his Kenyan girlfriend, until he settled to Australia. Mishek, the other man, said that he purposely pursued a long-term intimate relationship with a citizen of Kenya, his country of asylum. Apart from meeting his sexual desires in the relationship, it was beneficial to him as a refugee because the Kenyan Government granted him rights to work, attend school and move freely, just like any other Kenyan citizen. This exemplifies how rights related to citizenship are intertwined with the pursuit of intimacy. Mishek used his intimate relationship to gain rights and privileges that he could not have had if he had not been in a relationship with a Kenyan citizen. Mishek continued with this relationship until he was settled in Australia and reunited with his wife.

SUMMARY

Movements from countries of origin to sites of asylum disrupted refugee men's decisions and practices around intimate relationships. This is because countries of asylum represented new cultural, social, economic and political sites that offered both a continuity of some traditional ways of life and a disruption of others. When the men found themselves living close to relatives and community members, such as in a refugee camp, some of the social institutions from countries of origin were likely to be re-established. Therefore, men's intimate lives usually continued to be substantially influenced by cultural traditions and values of communal living.

Those men who lived outside refugee camps did not live in close proximity to their relatives or community members. As a result, these men were less subjected to the communal way of living and experienced reduced surveillance of their intimate lives by relatives and community members. This provided more latitude to make choices concerning intimate relations beyond the confines of traditional constraints. For the first time in their lives, some men were now able to increasingly make decisions around their intimate lives largely based on individual choices: a key feature of Plummer's argument as to why postmodern intimacies have thrived in today's societies. Experiences in countries of asylum provided an important precursor of the ways in which these refugee men perceived intimacies on settlement to Australia.

Intimacies on Settlement

Abstract Settlement granted the refugee men civil rights to engage fully as members of Australian society and the opportunity to rebuild their lives. Settlement also meant a transition from a society where intimate relations were organised within a constrained framework of cultural traditions and collective lifestyle to one that was characterised by individualistic lifestyles. Relatives and community members also had less influence on how these men organised their intimate lives in Australia. Consequently, settlement marked a new beginning for the men to re-engage with long-held views about intimacies and make decisions about how much to readjust their lives in a quest to fit in a country they had now come to call home.

Keywords Settlement · Postmodern intimacies · Public display of affection · Sexual images in the public domain · Interracial relationships · Being a husband and father

The Shift from a Communal Way of Living to a More Individualistic One

Settlement involves a shift in residence, geographically, but also socially and culturally. Castro and Murray (2010) argued that the most challenging life event the majority of migrants face is understanding host cultures. When migrant men settle into a new society, they may experience new sexual norms, values, beliefs and practices (Parrado et al. 2010) and a shift

in doing gender (Connell 2005). Studies have also shown how challenges in countries of settlement can influence the sexual behaviours of men. For example, in their studies of Latino immigrants in the USA, Parrado et al. (2010) identified unemployment and language as barriers to the acquisition of good interpersonal relationships in the new environment, an issue that affected how men negotiated sexual relationships. The Shedlin et al. (2014) study of Colombian refugees in Ecuador reported that unemployment elevated the individual's vulnerability and exposed them to sexual risk-taking. Another study, conducted in South Africa, showed how a loss of self-esteem by migrant men led to increased violence against women and to extra-marital affairs (Morrell and Swart 2005).

As discussed in Chapter 4, some participants had already experienced substantial changes in their sexual lives in their countries of asylum. Therefore, settlement from Africa to Australia did not merely represent a simple transition from traditional to postmodern ways of organising sexual relationships. Nonetheless, Australia provided participants with new possibilities for alternative ways of organising their intimate lives. This chapter examines the new intimate issues that confronted participants on settlement in Australia and how this influenced their understanding of the country's sexual cultures. The chapter also discusses participants' experiences of pursuing sexual relationships in Australia.

Flourishing of Postmodern Intimacies in Australia

Suffice to say, Australia is a good example of a society where many features associated with postmodern intimacies flourish because the country provides a social space for individuals to exercise more choices in their personal lives. Australia presents people with opportunities to increasingly make personal decisions regarding the pursuit of intimate relationships. This is facilitated by the social and political environment that has enabled some of the features of postmodern intimacies to thrive. For example, there is legal recognition of commercial sex work that provides a range of services for clients with diverse sexual interests ranging from 'outer-course' practices, such as use of sex toys, to bondage, discipline and submission fantasies (Seib et al. 2010). It is also easier for people to access abortion services (Petersen 2005) and reproductive technologies (Terry and Shorey 2000; Wang et al. 2011). There is also tolerance of a variety of family structures including single parenthood (Vaus 2004), and a women's mode of dress that might be considered in some non-Western societies as sexually provocative (Macdougall 2008). Many people

in Australia also have at their disposal technologies that make it easy to access sexually explicit materials including pornography (Flood 2007; Voon 2001), and to engage in a variety of sexual activities such as phone-in sex services (Sullivan 1997), cyberspace sex (Mackay 2007), virtual sex (Matthews, 1997) and online sex dating (Nayak 2011).

Although some of these intimacy choices remain contested—I have in mind same-sex marriages, adoption and choosing the sex of a child—there exists an environment in Australia that allows for the thriving of claims to freedom by individuals in organising their intimate lives. Many people, particularly those who have been brought up in Australia, may agree with Plummer's (2003, p. 24) argument that:

> We surely must be allowed to choose whom [and if] to marry . . . we feel we should not be prevented from divorcing, provided any children will be adequately cared for. It is also surely now our right to have children: even if we are infertile or have no sexual partner, we can still choose to have a child through assisted conception. Indeed, we have the right to decide how many children we will have and even whether their prenatal life should be terminated through abortion . . . we also claim the right to choose the kind of erotic life we wish to lead, be it bisexual, homosexual, heterosexual, polysexual, polyamorous, or monosexual . . . To suggest the opposite—that others can tell us whom to marry, when we can have children, what kind of sex we should have, or how to live in our old age—is to conjure up a world now rapidly in decline.

The availability of this array of choices in Australia has resulted in programmes that inform people about taking responsibility for the choices they make in their intimate lives. This has been the basis of formulating sex education initiatives (Milton 2003). Congruent with this argument is the recognition that sex education in Australia plays a pivotal role in informing individuals to take responsibility for what they do in their intimate lives (Peppard 2008).

Participants in my study drew on their past experiences in countries of origin and asylum to interpret some of the features of postmodern intimacies they encountered on settlement to Australia. I discuss these experiences below:

Public Displays of Affection

Some participants had already been informed about some of the socially acceptable practices they would encounter in Australia during pre-departure orientation sessions:

> They [immigration officers] told us everything . . . you see people just kissing don't be surprised, go ahead [with] what you are doing; don't be surprised because in Africa you can't kiss in public . . . Also when you see people are just drinking in the public, don't mind, because it is not your country . . . In Australia it is normal, you drink everywhere, kiss everywhere . . . And when you came here you see everything they told you. (Anthony)

Consequently, some participants were already alert to the fact that they were settling in a society where people displayed their affection for each other more publicly compared with where they came from:

> In Australia they do a lot of [kissing in public]. It is very common. You can stand with a girl hugging and kissing each other . . . In [our] culture it is rare, very rare, no one practises this. (Benson)

> We don't kiss in the public. That is a Somali thing. (Abram)

> Sometimes you see like boys and girls kissing each other, boyfriend, [and] girlfriend. It is forbidden in our country . . . it spoils everything here in this country. (Eritrean FGD)

The public display of intimacy through kissing and cuddling between couples is indeed normal and tolerated in Australia (Dwyer 2011; Johnson 2002). This differs significantly from the Horn of Africa communities where the display of affection is an intimate act that ought to be conducted in the privacy of the home. Any public display of affection in these communities is usually frowned upon (McLean 2005). Consequently, most participants in my study considered the public display of affection to be a violation of cultural norms and expectations.

Sexual Images in the Public Domain

Another aspect of interpreting Australia as a sexually permissive society was associated with the presence of sexual images in the public domain. This was an issue a key informant identified as new for many men:

> It is a totally different shift coming from a country where they don't talk about sex to a country [where] you see billboards talking about sex all the time . . . the TV talk about sex, the billboard talks about sex, the school talk about sex . . . So you learn about your sexuality more from outside the house.

Discussions about access to sexual images generated varied opinions in the FGDs. For example, older men in the Ethiopian FGD expressed embarrassment when they saw sexual images in the media:

> It [was] a real shock coming from Africa [where society is] patriarchal [with], life traditions [and] religious familiarity. When you put the TV on and you see [nudity]...It is a shock. You have to go immediately and put [sic] off the TV.

However, a young participant in the same FGD reported having come across sexual images in the public domain prior to settlement:

> Whatever is shown in the TV or whatever you see on the bus displayed, from my point of view, I don't think it has any way to do with affecting the Ethiopian immigrant or Ethiopian people living here because from back home you [were] already familiar on whatever is displayed in the multimedia these days.

This demonstrates how features of postmodern intimacies are able to permeate societies throughout the world; whatever happens in one part of the world is increasingly being experienced elsewhere, as a result of technological advances that enable the rapid transfer of information. However, Australia is more advanced in terms of information technology than Horn of Africa countries. In Australia, therefore, many people are able to access sexually explicit images and videos through the internet as I noted earlier in this chapter. Rosenthal and Browning (2005) have argued that the media can play a prime role in shaping cultural constructions of gender and sexuality. For example, the availability of information technology has been shown to affect the sexual practices of some men from refugee backgrounds. In a recent study of young people with refugee backgrounds in Australia, participants reported witnessing more public display of sexual expression in Australia compared with their countries of origin (McMichael 2008). Some young people in that study attributed the increase in sexual activities among newly arrived young people to the exploring of multimedia platforms that enabled greater access to sexually explicit materials.

Similarly, participants in this current study reported better access to mass media and other information technology on settlement. Some men reported an increase in viewing sexually explicit images from the internet,

in mass media outlets and in movie stores. According to Adan, this influenced the way they viewed sexual activities upon settlement:

> We have been educated by the media and everything. And now the more [a] whore you can be, the [more a] superstar you are. The more you can fuck around, it is not a big deal . . . Actually it is becoming a fashion right now, everybody is getting into it . . . we are here and we need to live the Australian dream, you know. That is what is happening now.

Women's Clothing Choices

In many parts of Africa, miniskirts and clothes that expose or amplify women's body parts, such as breasts, thighs and abdomen, are regarded as influences from Western culture (Mwakikagile 2000). This is despite evidence that in many traditional African communities women were scantily dressed (Allman 2004). Nonetheless, in many African communities, there is a cultural or religious expectation for women to dress in such a way that they cover most of their bodies. For example, Muslim women are expected to wear *hijab* to avoid sexually attracting men (Hasan 1996; Jones and Tell 2010). Women who violate this expectation are often frowned upon and, at times, sexually assaulted and stripped naked in public (Geisler 2004; Kilonzo 2012) or subjected to public flogging, arrest and imprisonment (Fathelrahman 2005) on the pretext of disciplining them and encouraging others to preserve cultural and religious values. In Somalia, for example, Akou (2011) reported that a woman who left too much of her body uncovered was labelled a prostitute and this brought shame on her family. She reported that women who were dressed in miniskirts were often subjected to physical violence by men and arrested by the police. In many other parts of Africa, such attitudes have also been used to justify rape on the basis that women dressing in such a manner are promiscuous and seduce men into having sex (Hansen 2004; Muchoki 2011; Muchoki and Wandibba 2009). These behaviours demonstrate how communities in these societies attempt to control female sexuality by reinforcing cultural norms regarding women's clothing. However, in Australia, women are more likely to wear short skirts, dresses and shorts as observed by participants in the Eritrean FGD:

> Some of the girls put their clothes up to here [showing the height of the clothes], very short. They show this one [pointing to the thighs], their internal parts.

This manner of dressing is not immodest by Australian standards (Seal and Penrith 2008). Other than wearing clothes that expose genitals or breasts in public, an offence that can be classified as indecent exposure and is punishable by law (Godwin et al. 1991), women are free to decide how to dress. Nonetheless, most Muslim participants in my study regarded women's manner of dressing as both confronting and sexually explicit. One participant complained that this way of dressing by women exposed men to more 'sexual temptations':

> In Australia, girls go out having short dresses . . . and chest out, just pushing the men to have sex. They are pushing the men, even though the men might not be interested. When you see you are like . . . In Africa ladies don't push you because they wear long dresses. You can't see their breasts, you can't see their thighs. So you are not pushed to do sex. (David)

Young Muslim men in the Somali FGD agreed that it was difficult to abstain from sex in Australia, due to the effects of the way women dress:

> To be honest with you, I remember back home, and how [women] dressed . . . it is definitely easier back home to abstain. Here there are more temptations. You go to school, you sit next to a girl wearing a miniskirt, you know? Like God created all men with temptations. We are created with that. So it makes it harder for me to look away, it makes it harder for me to keep abstinence than back home . . . it makes that desire, very desirable for you.

Another Muslim participant expressed his desire more explicitly:

> If you go through [sic] the street you can see a lot of women, you see they wear small, [short dresses] you feel I want to have [sex]. (Aimie)

In addition, some Muslim participants alleged that the way some women dressed in Australia prevented them from fulfilling their religious obligation to stay sexually pure by avoiding admiring women. These participants often referred to a particular verse in the Koran that instructs men to:

> . . . restrain their gaze, from looking at the women whom it is lawful for them to marry, and from others' private parts, and guard their private parts and chastity. This is what is purer for them. God is fully aware of all that they do. (Koran 24: 30)

The application of this instruction in pursuit of intimate lives was given by Amie, a participant who professed Islam:

Now it is Ramadan[1] you see Muslim men, they are scared to come out on the streets. Why? Because you see all the girls, young, like clothes are short, open here [showing the chest], mouth, hair. If you see that...you feel I need to do sex with her. That means that you break your fasting.

Aimie went on to say that looking at a woman once was not a sin, but when you look at her the second time, it means you are admiring her, and that is a sin:

The first look is for you...it is nothing because I don't know who is coming...But the second look...it is not for you. Why, because...I am attracted and look to her [again]...you want to have [sex] with her...morally it is not good. This is what we consider.

For some young participants, this principle of Islam that cautions men to desist from admiring women was one of the hardest to practise in Australia. One of the men in the Somali FGD used this interpretation to rationalise his sexual behaviour in Australia:

Actually being a young guy and not married in this country, I find [it] very difficult to practise that part of my religion because the dress code is totally different from the way girls or women dress back home. Here they dress basically almost naked; they just cover up a bit. So when a young guy like me has a look, try to look away, look again, look away, look again, it makes it very difficult to practise [laughing], that you are not supposed to look again. If you look once you are supposed to look away but it [is] very difficult. (Somali FGD)

The influence of religion on people's intimate lives is something Plummer acknowledged while analysing societies where traditional intimacies prosper. In such societies, religion is viewed as a source of moral authority that defines what is good and bad, and how people ought to live. However, in Australia, religion does not have an exclusive authority over what people do in their personal lives. As a result of such features of postmodern intimacies, traditionalists 'see chaos around them and seek a return to an older order in which a clear voice of authority and a firm moral structure held sway' (Plummer 2003, p. 46). This was certainly the case for elderly Muslim men in my study who viewed Australia as a morally corrupt society that was not controlling the way women dress and was as a result exposing men to sexual temptations and sins. As one man summed up his view in relation to the way women dress

in Australia, 'we [as men] are abused by this culture'. The longing to be in a society where religion dictated women's code of dress, as was the case in their home countries, was apparent in the accounts of some participants.

Tolerance of De Facto Relationships

Another example given by participants to support the argument that Australia was a sexually permissive society was in relation to marriage. As noted by some participants in Chapter 3, cohabitation was less common and strongly discouraged back in their home countries. Though cohabitation is acceptable in Australia (DIAC 2011a; Vaus 2004), some participants believed it was morally wrong for a couple to live together while not married. For them, the acceptance of cohabitation was proof of sexual permissiveness in Australia:

> Many of them are living illegally, they don't hurry up in marriage. They live as partners and they even have children . . . So it is completely a mess, totally different from our society. (Eritrean FGD)

Australia provides a variety of pathways that legitimise relationships between couples. It recognises de facto relationships between a man and a woman. Such couples, even though they are not married, enjoy equal privileges to those who are married (Halford and Acker 2012). However, de facto relationships were construed as immoral in the Horn of Africa. As I previously discussed in Chapter 3, in the case of pre-marital pregnancy the couple may be forced to marry in order to sanction the sexual relationship. Therefore, tolerance of cohabitation in Australia was viewed by some men as suggesting sexual permissiveness in Australia.

Participants in the Sudanese FGD complained about the prohibition by Australian laws against marrying more than one woman:

> We are not allowed to have many women; we are only allowed to have one woman . . . in Sudan you can have more than ten women . . . as long as you are paying something to get them. And they stay with you. Nobody will complain.

A few key informants believed that such criminalisation contributed to extra-marital affairs on the part of men from polygynous societies. This was confirmed by one participant who said he was in three concurrent intimate relationships that he regarded as similar to being in a polygynous

marriage. He said he desired to maintain these relationships because they gave him a sense of achievement as a Somali man:

> It is empowering. It is confidence . . . You know I am from a country where we have four or multiple partners and stuff. (Abram) As this account reveals, the criminalisation of having more than one wife at a time in Australia has led some men to practise what Spronk (2005, p. 65) refers to as 'modern polygamy' by engaging in multiple de facto relationships. Although polygynous marriages are not recognised in Australia, it is not a crime to live together with more than one partner, or to have multiple intimate partners (Parkinson 1996). Abram felt that the ability to pursue multiple intimate relationships reaffirmed his attachment to a traditional right that men in his ethnic community were entitled to. By maintaining de facto relationships, he attempted to pursue this traditional right within the confines of Australian law.

Increased Probability of Engaging in Sexual Encounters

In theorising intimacies, Plummer (2003) argued that postmodern societies are characterised by the proliferation of sexual activities for pleasure, and by the increased ability of women to make decisions over their lives. This was a recurrent theme in both FGDs and in-depth interviews, who regarded casual sex as a norm in Australia.

For some participants, views on the ease of having sexual encounters in Australia were shaped by their experiences of being approached by women for a relationship. The men interpreted the initiation of a relationship by a woman as suggesting her sexual availability. For example, Steve reported being asked by a girl to become intimate friends. This led to his view of women in Australia as being sexually available for men:

> Here it is very easy to find a girl to have sex with her . . . it is very easy to meet the girl one day and have sex with her . . . The girls are carrying the love on their hands; they are not carrying the love with the heart . . . In my opinion the girl [should not approach a man and] tell a man 'I love you'. No! The woman [should not] say that [to a man].

A similar view was held by Benson, who recalled a girl proposing to him:

> A girl [should not] come to you [as a man], you go to a girl . . . Most of the cultures I went through no girl who can come and say 'I love you' . . . I

cannot allow such a thing. I can't agree. If there is another way she can attract me that is smart, but not saying to me directly like that. But it is happening here in Australia.

Movies also shaped some men's perceptions about women's sexuality. It is often the case in movies that a woman is portrayed as using sex as a way to obtain what she wants from a man (Newman 2008). Such movies influence the perception of viewers that any woman who initiates a sexual relationship must be exploiting a man. Such a woman must be avoided, because she uses sex to her advantage, as Abram believed:

I have watched a lot of movies [in Australia], and when a beautiful girl comes to you in a club and she is throwing [herself] at you, only a dickhead will go after her for that shit. A real man should not fall for that shit.

Men who strongly opposed the practice of a woman initiating an intimate relationship also believed that any man who is 'tempted' by a woman to engage in a sexual relationship degrades his masculinity. As another participant believed, 'you [as a man] make the move'. Therefore, for these men, a 'real' man should initiate a relationship by proposing to the girl. These men came from communities where women were expected to be passive while men took the lead in initiating intimate relationships (Ntarangwi 2009). Initiating relationships privileges men in choosing sexual partners and, as a result, increases their ability to make decisions concerning the relationship. Therefore, women who initiate sexual relationships in Australia are considered a threat to men's sense of manhood. Again, these participants encountered postmodern features of organising intimacies in Australia where people are less inhibited by traditional values about which gender should initiate an intimate relationship. Therefore, some women are able to initiate an intimate relationship without necessarily waiting for a man to do so. However, some men found this behaviour among women decidedly odd.

Furthermore, participants reported that the increased social interaction between men and women in social venues symbolised the ease of pursuing sexual relationships in Australia. For example, Alaki recounted, with nostalgic memories of his initial settlement days:

I had two cousins here. They took me out to clubbing and, sitting in the middle of five white girls. I felt popular. I was like, woah, this is how you guys living . . . This is the second day in Australia, I don't even know where I

live . . . So seeing around some of new things you know, new things like a lot of drugs, a lot of partying, a lot of alcohol, a lot of women, I found it cool.

Having come from countries of asylum where there was restriction on movement, or where men were not allowed to mix freely with women—such as in Muslim countries—these participants regarded the opportunities to visit public venues, such as bars, in Australia as increasing the chances of meeting potential sexual partners.

Although some participants continued to hold onto their traditional views and oppose the sexual permissiveness of Australian society, a number of them said they had adjusted over time. As one participant reported:

I remember when I first came to this country about ten years ago, I saw so many things which I thought were really bad . . . I see a billboard with a naked lady advertising some items, I thought oh, this is trouble. The first thing I did is to turn my face from there . . . But now, there is no problem . . . it is no longer an issue to me . . . even if they are almost naked, I don't get agitated any more . . . because it is exposed too much to me. It is like half of my day is to see [this] . . . So that makes me think it is no longer an issue to me. (Somali FGD)

This account demonstrates how cultural norms constantly shift and change over time. As Benhabib (2002) argued, the formation of cultures involves a complex dialogue with other cultures. This dialogue involves questioning the different beliefs, values, norms and practices of other cultures. When people start to tolerate these differences, new subcultures emerge. Similarly, by being constantly exposed to new ways of organising and pursuing intimate relationships in life in Australia, the refugee men normalised behaviours they previously regarded as immoral using their former cultural standards. Such participants, although still considering such behaviours immoral, reoriented their worldview to accommodate the changes they experienced in Australia, as one of them acknowledged:

I have now accepted these things . . . Culture is like a software. Like a human software. Computer needs software; human needs software. And human software is culture . . . I have African culture software and I am also trying to have Western software . . . In my earlier days I used to have conflict between this culture and my culture but there is acceptance that came later. (Hussein)

It is therefore clear that some participants had come to tolerate the post-modern values associated with making personal decisions about intimacies.

Sexual Behaviour in Australia

Settlement to Australia not only provided a lens for men to interpret the sexual cultures of Australia but also opportunities to organise their intimate lives beyond the confines of cultural traditions. Some men reported that living in Australia provided more opportunities to engage in casual sexual relationships compared with countries of origin and asylum. These men argued that the presence of entertainment venues such as bars, sex venues and brothels provided opportunities to meet potential sexual partners for casual relationships. As one of the participants boasted in regard to his sexual escapades:

> When you don't have a girlfriend or you don't wanna hook up with somebody...you can take anyone...No commitment...You go to a club and you pick up a girl just like that [snapping fingers]. (Charles)

Another participant talked about the thrill he received by engaging in casual sexual relationships:

> It is like you can make it clear to a girl that I don't want to have a relationship but you just want to have sex with her for a night. There is a bigger chance of having one-night-stand without the slightest offence, which I like, I like it [laughing loudly]. It is like you know you can have a feeling, have sex and release all the stress without someone obligating you, without someone coming the following day and telling you I am pregnant or I have feelings for you. (Abram)

One of the key sub-themes that emerged when investigating the sexual experiences of the men concerned interracial sexual relationships. A key informant argued that some young men he had worked with pursued interracial relationships as a form of sexual adventure:

> [The young men] told me that they wanted to practise [sex]...when it comes to sex without marriage [the young men] say, 'we go to the [white] girls'...when it comes to the marriage they say 'we go to the community, from someone in our community'.

Another key informant noted that the belief in the sexual prowess of African men contributed to increased desire among some men to engage in interracial sexual relationships:

> The African men are good at sex. So this is what we know. You see now? And the white girls are there out waiting for African men, to taste, you see.

In-depth interviews confirmed that discourses about sex and race contributed to the way some men perceived sexual intimacies in Australia. Some participants, for example, were highly conscious of stereotypes about the sexual aptitude of African men:

> One thing for us African men, you know, we love sex. I don't know if it is based on the evidence of science, but from my experience, from what I hear from friends and the people around, we are sexually very active. (Alaki)

> We can fuck good. We have been blessed by that. That is not a bad thing...I cannot talk on behalf of all Australians but...the most shocking thing I heard from that woman, she didn't say [that] to please me or she didn't have to say...she said, 'Hi Adan, I had a man, I had a husband for 11 years, he didn't even make me come. And when you show up you give me multiple orgasm.'...Actually here, if you are African you've got potential [for sex], my friend. As a matter of fact there are a couple of white women I know, I can mention them, about four or five of them, they are actually going back home to bring Africans here. She will tell you, 'what African guy does for me...I don't even think any woman can get what I get today from an African guy'. (Adan)

For some young men, engaging in a sexual relationship with Anglo-Australian women brought a sense of achievement:

> Coming to Australia was a new thing...I had never slept [had sex] with a white woman before, and it was a good experience as a young person coming to Australia. (Alaki)

Interracial relationships between black men and white women are encompassed by a complex history of race relations and racism (Childs 2005). Several authors have discussed the sexuality of black men and white women since the era of the slave trade (Collins 2004; James 2003; Wooten 2006). A common theme emerging from these studies was the resultant black/white tension due to the alleged sexual prowess of black men. Past studies in the USA have also revealed the depiction of African men as sexually hyperactive with insatiable sexual appetites (Collins 2006; Frankenberg 1993). In an analysis of hardcore pornography in the USA,

Dines (1998) argued that the focus of African male actors was on their huge penises; these were regarded as a source of great pride that gave them an advantage in finding white women as sexual partners. Such perceptions have been previously thought to define sexual relationships between black men and white women (Cheney 2005).

Ellinghaus's (2006) study of interracial relationships between black Australian indigenous men and white Anglo-Australian women during the colonial period reported that, at the time, it was assumed that a white woman would not consent to having a sexual relationship with an Aboriginal man; a black man was perceived as a serious danger to the white woman. Similar perceptions have been documented across many colonial settings around the world (Grant 2003). These racial stereotypes have thrived over the years and permeated societies. Views about the sexual prowess of African men have been reinforced through a shared meaning of sexuality and race. As a result, the sexual practices of some men in my study were influenced by stereotypes of an African man: a symbol of sexual prowess and admiration by white women. This influenced the sexual behaviours of some participants.

Recent studies theorising interracial sexual relationships have also revealed why some black men desire to pursue intimate relationships with white women. In the United States, Persaud's (2008) study of interracial sexual relationships between African-American men and white women revealed that black men preferred white partners because of the perceived willingness by the women to engage in a diversity of sexual practices such as oral sex to please their partners. Similar findings emerged in my study. A number of participants, who reported having had sexual relationships with women from diverse cultural and racial backgrounds, spoke of their preferences for Anglo-Australian sexual partners. These men claimed that, compared with other women, Anglo-Australian women were able to satisfy men's sexual desires. One of the participants who had previous sexual relationships with African girls argued that he preferred having sex with Anglo-Australian partners, because he was able to explore a variety of sexual practices:

> The only African woman that sucked my dick was one I met in [a city in Australia]. She didn't even know how to do it ... She was so deep in traditional shit. But the white woman will suck your dick, lick you everywhere, everywhere, they even lick your arse, they are so dirty [laughing loudly]. They will do anything for you. Like if they like you and you get along they will do anything ... I find it really easy to have sex with a white woman. They don't really care about what people think as much as the [African] women do, so

they just do whatever they want. African women won't do nothing [sic] for you. Except they open the legs and you fuck them . . . with a white woman when it comes to sexuality, I feel more free, I just say whatever I want, do whatever I want, I just walk naked in the house, and fuck . . . You feel comfortable around them. (Joshua)

Similarly, another participant said he also preferred to have relationships with Anglo-Australian women because of their open approach to sexuality:

African women are more like they are hiding something, they are not like— sometimes we walk around home naked with my [white] girlfriend. I have never seen an African woman do that with me. There are some parts that she doesn't want you to see. While for [Anglo-Australian women] everything is just in front of me, it depends on me on how I want to use it now. For African women you will never see—they do not bring everything to the table, because I am putting myself to the table too. There is always, 'turn off that light, close that window, bring the blanket over, come in here' and I am like 'come on girl, I want to see the whole thing right now, there is no one else in here'. (Adan)

Adan said that he also preferred to have sex with Anglo-Australian women because they were more willing to engage in adventurous sex, such as group sex. Adan reported engaging in 'threesome' sex: one time with his male friend and an Anglo-Australian woman, and, on another occasion, with two Anglo-Australian women. Adan argued that it was highly unlikely for women from other races to engage in such orgies.

Abram also preferred having Anglo-Australian women as sexual partners because he found them more sexually extrovert than African women:

I will be straight with you. I have had a lot of sex with African girls. They are not adventurous with sex . . . you have to be dominant . . . when to have sex, when not to have sex, or [whether we should be] having sex in bed or when the kids sleep.

Another participant justified his pursuit of sexual relationships with Anglo-Australian women, saying that many African women were not willing to engage in a variety of sexual practices that he enjoyed:

The women don't wanna give you a head job . . . good sex is when the girl is functioning and doing a lot of positions and being free about sex. (Alaki)

Sexual activities beyond penile/vaginal sex are considered taboo in the Horn of Africa (Cherie and Berhane 2012). A number of participants in this study reported engaging in oral and anal sex for the first time in their lives with Anglo-Australian partners. Although these men reported they enjoyed receiving oral sex from their Anglo-Australian partners, they were reluctant to provide oral sex in return. As one of them said:

> I was like sometimes I am selfish, you know. I can call myself like that because I don't do what they want me to do because it is uncomfortable to me, like licking pussy; it was not in my place . . . Because that is a Western thing . . . But they suck my dick and I am happy . . . I had a couple of white girlfriends and whenever like any discussion came up about sex I would just tell them I don't do that kind of stuff. They don't believe me the first time. Some of them have asked me why and I said I just don't feel comfortable going down on there and it wasn't in my culture at all. And I tell them how primitive our sexual thing is in Africa . . . I enjoy their openness about sexuality, but I am still not comfortable going down on to that kind of area. (Joshua)

Settlement in Australia clearly provided opportunities for some participants to meet Anglo-Australian sexual partners. For some men, these interracial relationships were characterised by some excitement at having a sexual encounter with a woman who was not from their race. These men viewed Anglo-Australian women as more sexually adventurous than African women, because of their readiness to engage in a variety of sexual practices including oral and anal sex. Although these men enjoyed the sexual pleasure they received from Anglo-Australian sexual partners, they were not willing to sexually satisfy their women by giving oral sex. This conservatism was associated with the taboo of giving oral sex. Nonetheless, many of these men found it easier to explore new sexual practices with Anglo-Australian women. This was more likely because the men found sexual partners who were willing to engage in new sexual practices—sexual activities these men would have found difficult to pursue with some African women because of the taboo associated with oral and anal sex in the African cultures.

Another issue that emerged during in-depth interviews was that some men regarded their relationships with Anglo-Australian women as not only sexually desirable, but also beneficial in terms of adjusting to the demands of life in Australia. A key informant reported that some refugee

men sought Australian sexual partners who would enable them to fulfil their basic needs:

> They hook up with women . . . hooking up with some ladies who are work-ing, who are single . . . just for sex . . . they [the men] have that government payment as a social security. But for some it is not enough. They [the men] want to go to places, they want to [for] shop this [and], shop [of that].

Indeed, two participants in the in-depth interviews reported pursuing sexual relationships with Anglo-Australian women for financial gain. Alaki, for example, reported challenges of unemployment after settlement. He reported attending university, but dropping out because he needed to secure an ongoing job that would enable him to make some money to support himself and his relatives back in Africa. Alaki was single when he arrived in Australia and he viewed his relationship with an Anglo-Australian woman as a means to fulfil his basic needs and navigate the Australian system:

> You are a migrant, you walk up here, you don't know anything . . . being with a white girl makes your life easier . . . White girls, they do things for you . . . she has her parents here that help her. If you are stuck of something [her] family will help you . . . White girls will be providing you a lot of comfort. As you are here, with no family . . . they provide you stuff . . . She can accommodate you, she get help . . . Because she is born here, she knows the country, she knows the system, she knows how things work . . . African girl is just like me, she doesn't have anything. She wants something. And me and her getting stuck together is two immigrants that cannot help each other on anything [laughing] . . . it looks like two blind [people] going together. (Alaki)

Another participant, who also migrated without his family, reported pur-suing sexual relationships with an Anglo-Australian woman who was professionally responsible for facilitating his transition into Australian society during his early settlement days:

> I went out with the counsellor who was counselling refugees who come from different backgrounds . . . If someone came from a war-torn place and they still had things that bothered their mind, or if they were homesick or anything like that, the counsellors [would] help. . . . and another friend of mine had a hit on her friend, another lady counsellor and also a facilitator in

the hostel.... So whatever you wanted to do in terms of transportation, education, the law, and also banking, when you go shopping, all this mannerism and stuff, you learn [from them]. (Charles)

These men's decisions to have relationships with Anglo-Australian women immediately after settlement were influenced by their sense of being vulnerable in Australia. Besides being predisposed to many challenges that migrants from refugee backgrounds in Australia face, migrating without family members took these men away from the communal nature of organising their sexual lives in their countries of origin. Consequently, they made personal decisions to pursue sexual relationships with women whom they believed would assist them to navigate life in Australia with ease.

Being a Husband and Father in Australia

All participants in my study moved to Australia having experienced patriarchal privileges and male dominance over women and children. On settlement, married men experienced a major shift in performing gender as husbands and fathers due to a range of issues ranging from explicit settlement challenges to new rules and regulations that govern how they relate to women and children. Studies show that many refugee men in Australia experience a challenge in fulfilling the provider's role effectively, due to a lack of employment or being in a low-income occupation (Abdelkerim and Grace 2012). This was an issue identified by one of the FGD participants who reported unemployment as a main barrier for many men to successfully adjust to the demands of life in Australia:

Most of our men, they don't have experience in working overseas, because we have been cattle keepers, others were in the bush, others were in Egypt [as asylum seekers]. So they could not have a chance to work. So when we came to this country, you know, we don't actually get jobs. (Sudanese FGD)

Key informants reported that unemployed men experienced high levels of stress which had a negative impact on them as men. One of the key informants believed that inability to provide for the family contributed

to a man's sense of having lost authority and control over women. As one key informant reported:

> [He] becomes less of a man because he is not able to exercise the power, the domineering power that he used to exercise.

This was an issue confirmed in all the FGDs. Many participants believed that some married women were disrespectful to their husbands because of the men's inability to provide for the family. Participants argued that, on settlement in Australia, many married women were engaging in paid work, rather than staying at home. Consequently, they believed that Australia provided married women with more opportunities to become economically independent from their husbands. Indeed, a study by Tilbury and Rapley (2004) reported that, on settlement, many African refugee women in Australia acquire skills that enable them to gain employment and supplement the family income. Therefore, in families where husbands are unemployed, the women often become the main financial providers. Most participants believed that, in such situations, the unemployed husband had less authority over his working wife:

> When you sit home [without a job] and your wife sees you [not working] every day, she might think that she is the boss. (Somali FGD)

> The role of men ... is actually lost. So men don't feel like they are men any more. (Sudanese FGD)

A similar view connecting the ability to provide for the family with men's authority was upheld in the Ethiopian FGD:

> [Men] are losing their track [sic] in different ways in leadership. In the family ... if you provide, you are actually looked up to ... the children or the wife will be under you. You will be the leader of the family because you are providing for the family.

Irrespective of whether the women were in paid work or not, the expectation that they continue to provide domestic labour on settlement was shared by participants in the FGD. Married participants reported hesitation in sharing household duties, even though they acknowledged that

in Australia women were more likely to supplement the family income through paid work:

> Most of the women expect us to do the housework...but their job is looking after the kids, feeding the kids or the men, and the men [are] expected to have the job outside the house and he is responsible...[for] the financial conditions of the family. (Ethiopian FGD)

Men's resistance to sharing household tasks emerged from the experience of gender order in their previous societies where duties such as cooking, cleaning and rearing children are associated with the domestic sphere for which women are responsible. Having grown up in Africa, these participants had strong opinions regarding gender roles. As a result, helping out with household tasks in Australia was interpreted as degrading to their sense of being men. On account of such perceptions, some participants experienced difficulties dealing with the fact that Australia provided a space that redefined the roles of both men and women. These men expected their wives to continue performing household duties, even though they acknowledged that some women would also be working and making a financial contribution to support their families.

The division of labour among men and women was a major arena in which most participants in my study questioned their role as men on settlement in Australia. The ability to provide for their families was an important achievement that formed the identity of men in their formal societies. However, upon settlement, some men were unable to successfully fulfil this traditional role, particularly if they could not find a well-paid job. This had a negative impact on their sense of being men. In consequence, some of these men perceived they were no longer able to assert authority over women and children because of their inability to provide an income for their family. Yet, many of these men continued to hold on to traditional views about the division of labour and therefore resisted helping out with domestic tasks.

The welfare system in Australia also contributed to a shift in the way participants experienced gender order on settlement. All key informants reported a general belief by refugee men that the welfare system in Australia favoured women. This led to some married men having a sense

of powerlessness in decisions relating to their families. As one key informant said in relation to welfare support:

> The man complain that because now [the wife] has money, she keeps money, she is in charge, and she can use [the money] the way she wants … [The man] feel like [his] territory has been conquered … So they [men] say [that] the Australian system has grabbed all their powers … they feel inferior; they feel looked down [upon by women].

The presence of welfare support, which provided an alternative source of income for women, also contributed to a perception of men's loss of social status and respect by their wives:

> The issue back home was that the man was the breadwinner of the family … as husbands [we] were looking after the family, financially. When most of them came here they couldn't get suitable job to get income to provide for their family. So the father is dependent on the government and the wife is dependent on the government … she might think 'what is the difference between you and me? You are getting money, I am getting money, we can run the family equally' … When she sees things like that, she thinks we are same and you are nothing. (Somali FGD)

This view is puzzling, since a lot of men with refugee backgrounds have been unable to provide for their families after displacement as a result of their assets being stolen or destroyed or when they are blocked from accessing them (Jacobsen 2005). A possible explanation for this difference in perception among the participants in this current study is the fact that, although the majority of these men and their families relied on humanitarian organisations in their countries of asylum, the support they received was rarely monetary; it was largely in the form of food rations, building materials and medicine (Montclos and Kagwanja 2000). In Australia, however, welfare support is in the form of money that, as mentioned before, can be deposited directly into the women's bank accounts. This becomes a source of anxiety because women are now able to make some decisions about the use of this money. Therefore, a change of economic arrangement created new power relations between the genders and, as a result, affected how unemployed participants interpreted their wives' perceptions.

Some participants claimed that some married women had instigated conflict with their unemployed husbands in order to separate or divorce and in the process benefit from the welfare support offered to single mothers:

> When we came to this country we don't actually get jobs...And if you fail to get a job in this country, your wife will not be happy with you. And this is the problem that is facing us because they [the wives] know that they are not benefiting from you. You are just a recipient like the way she is [a] recipient from CentreLink.[2] (Sudanese FGD)

A similar view was common across in-depth interviews:

> [Some women] kick the husbands out because the government gave the kids to the wives and the women, they like kids, not because they are going to take care of them [but] because they are the resources, the income, because the government give the income to the women and if, when they kick the men out, the government will ask you [as a man] to pay child support...this is a stupid concept (Patrick)

> When the men go out, [women] go to CentreLink and then they say 'oh, we [women and children] have been separated from my husband and now I am a single mum'. They get more payment...they are just trying to get more money but not to look after the kid...to get more payment from CentreLink, and government accommodation. They want to get public houses. So when they get separated from the husband they get help. They are given government house, which sometimes is cheaper. (Anthony)

One participant alleged his wife constantly accused him of violence in order to receive welfare benefits. When I asked him why they separated, he reported:

> These women, they know if they take the kids, the government will pay them and they will increase their income and then they will get a government house which is cheaper because they are with no husband. And then you will pay the child care to her. That is why [women] don't like to be with the husbands. It becomes like a business to them. (Patrick)

There is a dearth of studies in Australia that have investigated these claims. However, a study among Somali women in the USA reported that some women would deliberately separate from their unemployed husbands in order to get more financial benefit from the welfare system (Heitritter 1999); but since there is a very different social security system operating in

the USA, it is with caution that these findings can be regarded as applicable to Australia. Fisher's (2009) study also reported that in Australia some refugee women chose to open a separate bank account to receive welfare support directly from government. Some participants argued that, as a result of this financial arrangement, these women were more likely to make independent decisions about the use of this money without necessarily involving their husbands. Some participants saw this as a threat to men's authority over the family income. They spoke of men as being better financial managers while the women were presented as spendthrifts who were only concerned with their own welfare—an issue that led to conflict between couples:

> They are . . . buying a lot of stuff for themselves. They are buying jewellery, necklace and whatever, which costs a lot of money . . . They expect men to go to work . . . pay the rent . . . But if you [say], 'no, you can't use this money. This money is for rent', that is where [the] problem starts. (Sudanese FGD)

Even in situations where women would buy household goods—their area of influence in the traditional sense—they were still regarded as not making the best use of the money:

> Our wives, they control money . . . they like to buy things . . . expensive furniture in the house. (Patrick)

This ability of some women to make some financial decisions further contributed to the perception among many participants that men had lost the ability to make decisions about family finance. This was viewed as degrading men's social status in relation to women's.

Unlike Africa, there is an established welfare support structure that assists poor families and individuals in Australia. Due to their refugee experience of having been stripped of their economic resources during migration, the majority of newly arrived refugees are likely to rely on welfare support to fulfil their basic needs for an extended period of time after settlement to Australia. While this welfare support is extremely beneficial in assisting these refugee families in their transition to Australia, it also has specific effects on gender relations: it is a source of tension and conflict among some married couples from African refugee communities (Fisher 2009). In my study, some participants felt disempowered in exercising authority over women who, on

settlement, were not entirely dependent on men for financial support. This lack of control challenged their sense of authority over their wives.

Settlement challenges also affect the way men view the sexual relationship with their partners. Studies conducted in the USA (Cottle 2001; Komarovsky 2004) and East Africa (Silberschmidt 2004) have revealed that men who are no longer able to provide for their families perceive themselves as having failed in life—a situation that leads to despondency and affects men's sexual relationships with their wives. This demonstrates how the ability to fulfil the provider's role is linked not only to men's view of authority, but also to their intimate relationships. As a result of losing their economic ability to provide for their family during migration, some men questioned the basis upon which they could pursue sexual relationships with their wives and the foundation on which they once exercised their conjugal rights. This was an issue identified by a key informant:

> I can connect responsibility and good life with good sex . . . [unemployed] men feel they are passive, they are not doing what they are supposed to do . . . they don't feel that they are contributing to the family. Sex to them is responsibility, we are responsible, we are contributing, then we will [have] good sex with [our wives], but when you don't feel [that] you are contributing you might do sex but it won't be a good one. It is like an animal [having sex].

Participants in the Sudanese FGD believed that the sexual lives of men were affected by the perception of loss of authority over their wives:

> When you have problem in your house you never even think about sex. All the time you come home . . . you don't wanna see her . . . You know why back home we get five or ten [women]? You say 'Oh my God, that is too much, how can a man handle them?' We handle them, because I am happy. I am living like a king, I go to that woman she treats me well, I go to another one she treats me well. So all the time I know somebody is missing me . . . And I am happy to make love. But here she is only one and she gives me a headache, what do you think? It is gonna be really hard . . . There is no Viagra [in Sudan]. We don't use this. Now I heard in this country that our people have started using this [Viagra] because of pressure, he is not in the mood.

In this sense, men's identity was very closely tied to a man's ability to provide financial security to his family which earned him respect from his wife. A similar view was evident among participants in the Eritrean FGD:

> In Islam, one can marry up to four wives. But if you cannot…feed them, well, you cannot marry them.

Participants' experiences of gender order in Australia were characterised by men's perceived inability to assert authority over, and earn respect from, women. This affected the way these men viewed their intimate relationships with their spouses in Australia. This shows how intimate relationships intersect with broader shifts in gender order. As I discussed in Chapter 3, Horn of Africa refugee men enjoyed higher social status than women. This is attributed to traditions perpetuated by beliefs, norms, values and cultural practices that regard men as superior to women. These traditions are usually sustained by social institutions, such as the payment of bride wealth, that symbolise a form of men's authority over women. In addition, most men provide an income for their family, while the women generally provide labour in the domestic sphere. Such patriarchal practices elevated men's status and increasingly enabled them to exercise control over women and children. The communal nature of social life strengthened this status quo, as men and women were expected to conform to prescribed norms and cultural practices for the 'greater good of the community'. In these circumstances, conformity to prescribed gender roles was more likely because social life is more meaningful for an individual based on relationships with family and community members. Consequently, most men in my study had not experienced substantial changes in gender relations until they settled to Australia.

Key informants believed that some refugee men had become violent towards their wives on settlement in Australia. As one commented:

> Some men, when they become powerless, they become aggressive. And try to fight women and try to prove their worth and that ends up in domestic violence.

None of the participants in the in-depth interviews or FGD reported being violent towards his wife. Nonetheless, a number of Australian studies have reported increased rates of men's violence against women in Horn of Africa refugee communities (Department of Community Development 2006; Family Violence Prevention Fund 2009; Fisher 2009, 2010; Rees and Pease 2007). Therefore, there is a need for further research to investigate the link between violence against women and a perceived shift in gender relations by Horn of Africa refugee men.

Bringing up children and performing the role of a father provided insights into the meaning of fatherhood for the men. The birth of a child is a major event in the life of a man as it shifts his social identity from having no children to becoming a father. As I discussed earlier, a man's social status in the Horn of Africa societies was enhanced by his ability to sire children and, as a result, preserve his name for future generations. Being a father also gives a man new responsibility as a parent. As Conley et al. (2004) stated:

> Parents convey a set of values, standards, and beliefs to children about themselves and others, train children how to express and regulate their emotions, transit certain styles of communication, model particular behaviours, and teach a variety of skills, competences, and ways of interacting in the world.

Parenting also takes on a gender dimension as the man finds himself engaged in the roles of being a father. LaRossa (1988, p. 451) argued that fatherhood includes two distinct but related elements: (1) the 'culture of fatherhood', which includes shared norms, values and beliefs surrounding men's parenting; and (2) the 'conduct of fatherhood', or what fathers do as parents. Therefore, the institution of fatherhood incorporates a gendered expectation of men and the role they play as male parents. Nsamenang (2010) asserted that most African studies portray fathers as authority figures in their families who rarely participate in nurturing their children. Therefore, it is not well understood what

> it means to be a father for these men, whether different men understand fatherhood in different ways, whether it is important for fathers to do more for children in cultures that assume mothers take the primary parenting role, and which new fathers and new fatherhood styles are emerging in Africa.

A similar argument was made by Ahmed (2013), who reported a dearth of studies exploring fatherhood in many African countries including Sudan and Somalia. Higgins and Fenrich (2011) acknowledged that, within communities that practise communal living, generational and gender hierarchies are so engrained in the society that parents and older community members exercise considerable authority over the younger people.

In settlement countries, a few studies done among Horn of Africa migrant men have reported how they view their role as fathers. In Israel, for example, Roer-Strier and Strier's (2006) study reported that Ethiopian men depicted a father as being responsible for socialising the

children and forming the child's personality. Participants in that study also reported that fathers in Ethiopia were honoured and commanded a lot of respect from their children. Ethiopian children were expected to show respect for their fathers by avoiding looking directly into their fathers' eyes while addressing them. In Este and Tachble's (2009) study of Sudanese fathers in Canada, the men viewed themselves as being responsible for providing for their children and teaching them morals. Men in that study argued that one of the challenges they faced in parenting was disciplining their children who were deemed to have gained more rights on settlement.

Milos' (2011) study of South Sudanese in Australia also reported that parents were concerned that they were losing control over the behaviour of their children. Participants in that study alleged that this was the result of young people becoming more economically independent from their parents as recipients of social security payments and assistance with accommodation from the government. Similar issues emerged in my study. All key informants reported that the challenge of raising children in Australia had left men with a sense of being inadequate as fathers. One of the key informants who worked with young people believed that some parents were struggling to raise their children in Australia because of not understanding the different society context in which they now live:

> Raising a kid in a new country is different from raising [them] in Africa. In Africa the whole society raises the kids. Not only you . . . but here the society promote individualism . . . and I cannot discipline other people's kids.

Indeed, raising children is a communal responsibility in many parts of Africa. Extended families, particularly in rural areas, live close to each other and support one another in raising children (Evans et al. 2008; Veldwijk 2011). This cultural practice is based on the concept of communal living that charges older people with the responsibility of looking after younger members of the community, as agreed by participants in the Ethiopian FGD:

> We had our traditions . . . there [were] some full stops [rules] on what you do. If you [are] speaking to an elder [for example] you know what to say to the elder. You must respect the elder, even if he is not part of the family, you must respect that elder. Whatever you say, you look at him [sic] like your father.

This social support system is usually disrupted during forced migration. For the refugee men, settlement to Australia means that extended family members are unable to assist in bringing up children. In addition, settlement challenges require individuals to spend considerable time searching for employment, studying or working. In such circumstances, it is challenging to revive the practice of taking care of another person's children. This means that many parents are on their own as regards bringing up their children. Form men with children, this means greater responsibilities in parenting, which means greater expectation to contribute to domestic labour.

Key informants reported that many parents were unsure as to how to bring up their children in a society where they had limited community support networks. As one of them commented:

> The parents feel very much disempowered from all these issues. They don't know what to tell their kids . . . they [the young people] don't have any one to talk to . . . They feel like . . . nobody understands them and then the [parents] don't understand the actual problems [the young people] are dealing with in the Western context. [The young people] feel very much lost.

These informants believed that this uncertainty about parenting in Australia increased conflict between young people and their parents. They felt that, while young people increasingly adopted new norms, values and beliefs, their parents expected them to follow the traditions and cultures of their communities. For example, one key informant argued that:

> [In Africa] you live with your parents until you get married, no matter how old are you [sic], you are still a child according to our culture whether you are a man or a female . . . You don't leave your parents until you get married. After you get married, your family also, and your community, they still have a role to look after you. They see you are still a young couple, you are still establishing yourselves . . . That was how our life was back home.

According to another key informant, a young person was unlikely to leave his family house due to the challenges of affording basic needs:

> Back home it was like the father rules. Whatever the father says it goes . . . That time the young people had no choice . . . is like you are my child, you are under my rules, you listen to what I say or otherwise you just leave the house. And no young person wanna leave his family house because

it is like this is a shame [for] the family and for him . . . [and] how can [you] leave my parents and live outside, who is going to support you?

Some men also voiced their frustrations against the welfare system for offering financial support to the children. These men believed welfare support encouraged children to rebel against the authority of their fathers, a behaviour that was considered tantamount to disrespect. Participants in all FGDs agreed that in countries of origin children relied on their fathers for upkeep. Therefore, even in situations when there was a major conflict between a young person and the parents, it was extremely challenging for the young person to leave the family house. Therefore, men were more likely to succeed in imposing authority over their children:

In our country, the respect itself comes because if I go out from the house tomorrow I have no breakfast, I have to obey the law of this house to live, to feed myself, to go to do [sic], to dress, everything. (Ethiopian FGD)

However, participants regarded the welfare system in Australia as encouraging some children who had disagreements with their fathers to leave the family house:

This is the system problem. Because we didn't experience back home these issues . . . the system allows the [children] to run away because they have got support, the government feeds them. So they run away. (Ethiopians FGD)

Children are encouraged by the government saying that you will get more money if you leave your house. Instead of staying with the family where you get 160 dollars, you stay alone and you get 400 [dollars] . . . this separates [the family], it is really bad . . . we think that there is a conspiracy from this [society] to destroy our families . . . it is some sort of planned system to break down the strong family bond. (Eritrean FGD)

We blame the government. . . . They [the children] learn everything. They learn [the telephone] number of police, they learn the way of freedom [where] you don't mind your dad and mum . . . when you see him going and doing something bad and you call him [saying] 'Hi, my son, why you do like this?' They just tell you fuck off! In our culture your [child] cannot tell to dad [sic] fuck off! Or fuck you. No. you call him and talk to him. And he has to return to you slowly, with respect. But here our kids are fed up. When you tell him, they start fighting you. When you want to fight him [discipline him

by smacking], they take phone and they call police. Police come and say you have abused the baby and they take the child to go and grow outside (Mishek)

In the Horn of Africa, children are expected to honour their parents and older people (Selvam and Collicutt 2013). Experiences associated with settlement affected the way some participants in FGDs and in-depth interviews perceived their role as fathers.

In addition, fatherhood has been traditionally linked to the provider's role (Williams 2008). Therefore, the ability to provide for children as a father is an important aspect of establishing authority. As discussed earlier, this was a role that participants identified as difficult to fulfil, due to challenges in finding stable employment in Australia. Consequently, some fathers in my study felt a sense of being stripped of their parental rights and responsibilities, and, as a result, of the ability to discipline their children. This situation was compounded by the welfare system that can provide some support for children from economically disadvantaged families. One of the men in my study summed up his experience of fatherhood in Australia by arguing that: 'we no longer call them our children because they are the government children. Because we are powerless, we don't have power to teach our kids.'

Men in my study settled in Australia with culturally informed notions about how to relate to women and children. However, these men experienced new ways of organising gender relations that often differed significantly from those of their previous societies. In addition, they are confronted by laws and policies that govern intimate relationships amidst a range of settlement challenges, such as unemployment, that threatened their ability to provide for their families. This meant some men were no longer able to successfully exercise their traditional authority over women and children as they had done in former societies. This led to a sense of having lost the ability to assert authority over women and children in Australia.

Summary

On settlement, refugee men in this study encountered a distinct perspective of organising intimate relations that was largely based on individual choices and minimal influence and surveillance by relatives and community members. Some men, particularly older married men, found it challenging to adjust to the ways in which intimacies were displayed and enacted in Australia society; they viewed such ways as offensive and unacceptable according to the standards of their cultural

norms, beliefs and values. In addition, the ability of some men to assert authority over their spouse and children was affected on settlement as a result of being unable to adequately fulfil the traditional breadwinner's role and as a result of the increased economic independence of women. This impacted on the way some men enacted their intimate relationships with their wives and children, as spouses and fathers respectively.

Nonetheless, some young and single men in the study did not necessarily perceive these new ways of enacting intimacies as bad; some viewed this as an opportunity to explore their intimate lives beyond the confines of the norms, beliefs and practices of their former societies. These young men welcomed the increased capacity to make individual choices regarding intimate relations that enabled them to indulge in a variety of sexual activities and enjoy the attention provided by the stereotypes of the sexual prowess of black men. Nonetheless, some of these men continued to regard the views of their families and community members as important influences in the choices they made regarding long-term intimate relationships. Therefore, these men were continuously navigating the desire to adapt to the more individualised nature of organising intimate lives in Australia and the expectations from their relatives and community members to conform to cultural traditions and values of communal living.

NOTES

1. This is the holiest month in the Islamic calendar, in which participating Muslims must fast by refraining from eating, drinking, smoking and sex during daylight hours.
2. A programme delivered by the Australian Government Department of Human Services to provide welfare support to families and individuals.

Intimate Rights of New Citizens: A Paradox

Abstract On settlement to Australia, the refugee men regained civil rights they had lost as a result of forced migration. The men's traditional rights as citizens of their ethnic communities continued to influence their views about entitlements in organising and pursuing intimacies in Australia. However, the men's traditional rights were now challenged by legislations and the new ways of life in Australia that increasingly protected the rights of women and children. For some men, the complexity of understanding their entitlements to their traditional rights in Australia was aggravated by multiculturalism, a policy that encourages migrants to retain their cultural traditions in a predominantly Anglo-centric society. This became a foundation for new claims of recognition of traditional intimacy rights by these men—claims that allow us to see the nexus between intimacy, citizenship and migration.

Keywords Multiculturalism · Australian law · Intimate rights · Women's rights · Children's rights · Navigating the loss of traditional rights

RESTORATION OF CIVIL RIGHTS IN MULTICULTURAL AUSTRALIA

Having been granted humanitarian visas that gave them rights to live permanently in Australia, men in my study foresaw a bright future for themselves and their families. Away from civil wars in their countries of origin, and the challenges of living in limbo in the countries of asylum, these men had a chance to rebuild their lives in a country that promotes

multiculturalism and welcomes people from diverse racial and ethnic back-grounds (Commonwealth of Australia 1999). But how does settlement impact on traditional intimate rights of refugee men from Horn of Africa communities? The concept of multicultural citizenship may assist in exploring this issue further.

Australia is a classic example of a society where different cultural groups from around the world have converged. As a result, Australia represents a society where diverse groups of people claim rights of inclusion and respect for alternative ways of belonging based on cultural backgrounds. The history of events and shifts in policies that led to the adoption of multiculturalism in Australia has been analysed in greater detail elsewhere (see Jamrozik et al. 1995). On the one hand, multiculturalism can be viewed as a state of affairs. Turner (2006) argued that multiculturalism, as a state of affairs, depicts coexistence of a diversity of communities and cultures in the same society. On the other hand, multiculturalism can be viewed as an ideology. In this case, multiculturalism becomes a problematic concept, because it encourages migrants to retain their culture in a predominantly Anglo-centric society (Mann 2012). The Australian Government's commitment to multi-culturalism is outlined in its 2003 document entitled *Multicultural Australia: United in Diversity*. An extract from the document reads:

> Every Australian benefits from our diversity and all Australians have the right to be active and equal participants in Australian society, free to live their lives and maintain their cultural traditions. (Commonwealth of Australia 2003, p. 5)

As an ideology, multiculturalism has had its critics. Marden and Mercer (1998) argued that multiculturalism has failed to promote equality among the many cultures and communities in Australia, because some people are still not able to practise their cultures and customs as they did in their countries of origin. Therefore, some argue that, although Australia is presented as a multicultural society that professes multiculturalism as an expression of national identity, the concept has remained highly superficial in practice (Jamrozik et al. 1995; Jupp 2007).

Rights of Women to Be Protected from Men's Violence

Though many people in Australia find themselves increasingly able to exercise certain rights in their intimate lives, they are also charged with the responsibility of ensuring that they do not hurt anybody else in the

process. To support this, there is legislation to protect people from being exploited by others. For example, it is a criminal offence to have sexual relations with under-age individuals who are deemed unable to make informed choices in having sex (Gans 2012). It is also a criminal offence to have non-consensual sex with any person, including a partner in a civil union or marriage (Putt and Higgins 1997). It is also a crime to be violent towards an intimate partner (Alexander 2002). Also, the Child Protection Act aims to protect the welfare of children when their parents separate or divorce (Saunders and Cashmore 2011).

As discussed in Chapter 3, men in my study migrated from societies where gender order was dictated by patriarchal cultural practices that gave them more privileges and authority than women. The men enjoyed a higher social status and wielded significant authority over women. In the process of fleeing their countries of origin to first countries of asylum, the men did not necessarily experience substantial shifts in gender relations. For example, Horn's (2010, p. 164) study of married couples from Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia and Congo in the Kakuma refugee camp, Kenya, found there was a 'hierarchy of responses' to resolving intimate partner violence. Horn also noted that community elders, immediate family members and friends were consulted first, and if the issue was not resolved, it was taken to humanitarian agencies, the police being informed only as a last resort.

All the FGD participants in my study agreed that men continued to exercise and enjoy considerable authority over their wives and children in countries of asylum. All the married men who participated in the in-depth interviews said their wives continued to obey their authority without question in countries of asylum. These men also maintained the privilege of having disputes with their wives resolved by community elders in countries of asylum. However, in Australia, marital relationships are guided by marriage laws and family law acts that have originated from state and federal statute law, and case law (Croucher and Dominello 2005). Religious beliefs have little influence on the legal system that guides marital relationships in Australia (Coleman and White 2006). The marriage and family laws make considerable attempts to place men and women as equal partners in marriage and to intervene in situations of domestic violence, separation, divorce, and custody of children. In addition, Australia legislates against gender-based violence (Pease 2001) and conflict between married couples is usually handled through the criminal justice system (Holder 2001).

Participants in my study felt these laws undermined the traditional right of men to exercise authority over their wives. Patrick, one of the participants in the in-depth individual interviews, argued that unlike in South Sudan, his country of origin, the laws in Australia prevented him from disciplining his wife through beating. Similarly, Jacob felt that the inability to exercise this traditional right contributed to a loss of respect on the part of his wife:

> When you come here with your wife, sometimes she doesn't want to listen to you. She doesn't want to do what you are telling her ... Sometimes [she] will tell you 'this is not Africa ... here we have the freedom, we have our rights, everyone is equal here'. She doesn't agree with you ... she can decide to do whatever she likes also. So here, we don't have power very much.

Another area of legislation that affected the ability of the men to exercise authority over their wives on settlement to Australia related to coerced sex in marriage. Coerced sex, under any circumstances, including in marriage and any other form of intimate relationship, is a crime in Australia (Putt and Higgins 1997). Therefore, marriage does not automatically grant a husband the right to have sex with his wife: the woman must consent.

Some married men lacked an understanding of the context in which marital rape can happen. As discussed in Chapter 3, there is a lack of legislation on marital rape in most African countries. Therefore, the presence of a legal system that acknowledges rape within marriage was challenging for those men who felt they had the right to have sex from their wives at any time.

> In Africa, any time, if you want to make sex with her it [was] easy. But here in this country it is different. If you want to have sex with her, she might refuse. (Jacob)

A similar concern was raised in one of the FGDs:

> Everyone that is sleeping with his wife [is] wondering when he is going to be charged with rape ... she can sue you any time, like she can say he raped me. So that brings a shock to everyone sleeping with each other and just wondering when she is going to sue me. (Ethiopian FGD)

Participants were also challenged and confused by Australian law that can intervene in intimate relationships when domestic violence is reported.

As discussed in Chapter 2, these men came from societies where there was limited government interference in relationships between married couples; rather, community elders were usually called upon to resolve domestic disputes between married couples. However, Australia provides a social space where people are increasingly organising their gender relations based on the rights of an individual. This way of organising gender relations closely aligns with Plummer's (2003) concept of postmodern intimacies.

In Australia, a court can issue a restraining order against a perpetrator of violence (Alexander 2002). This form of mitigating intimate partner violence does not exist in the Horn of Africa. Since a couple's residence does not have a 'patrilocal' connotation in Australia, the possibility of men being forced to leave the family house when there is a major conflict was regarded by participants as symbolising men's 'weakness' in relation to women in Australia:

> Some wives here [in Australia] they think themselves as having power. Not power for fighting [but] just power for the money and power for the police. Because when they call the police the police will say 'you are here in the family like a lion or like a hyena. Go outside.' This is the power of the wife. (Anthony)

> Here in Australia my wife has a right to tell me go. I can't kick my wife [out of the house] but my wife can kick me out. So I get stressed [saying] 'oh, if I do this my wife will kick me out'. (David)

Two participants in my study reported that their wives had applied for intervention orders against them and, as a result, these men were forced to leave the family house. As one of the men recalled, the attempt to discipline his wife through occasional beating was interrupted by law enforcement agents:

> Like me with my wife we disagreed many times—because most of them [the women] they start swearing to you bad words which is not good for the man to be [told] and when you become angry you touch her and then she call police. (Patrick)

Discussion about intervention orders generated emotional responses in all FGDs as participants did not support the idea of the state being involved in marital affairs. In the Sudanese FGD, for example, one participant was so angry about intervention orders that he said he would

consider killing his wife if she ever took out an intervention order against him. He opposed separation of husband and wife:

> Separating men from their families, that is what is affecting us. We don't want separation from the family; we don't need any small argument from the family to be taken to court...Intervention order is something we don't really like. It is driving us crazy. (Sudanese FGD)

The act of committing violence against a spouse was rejected by another participant claiming that he would be concerned only with the possibility of a man not being able to see his children as a result of separation:

> No, calm down, calm down. My friend, look...Don't do it, no, that is stupid. To me that is stupid. It is not the end of the world. You lose your wife is not the end of the world. You are the man, you still can get another wife. (Sudanese FGD)

Indeed, there has been a spike in reports of women being killed by their partners after separation. On 14 March, 2016, the West Australian newspaper reported that a 24-year-old man had been charged with the murder of his former partner, in Melbourne's west. The paper reported that the pair, both from South Sudan, had been in a relationship for several years, and had a two-year-old son together. The woman was killed after she split from her partner and moved out of the house they were sharing (Staff reporters 2016).

Patrick, one of the participants who had been issued with an intervention order, accused his wife of starting a quarrel because she knew he would be ordered by the police to leave the family house. Patrick claimed that his wife would often instigate conflict and then call the police with allegations that he had physically assaulted her. He reported that the police found him at no fault on two occasions. However, he was advised to leave the house for a few days to give his wife the opportunity to calm down. This contributed to his view that his wife had more rights than he had, and that it did not matter whether he was violent or not, because he would still be asked to leave the family house to avoid tension after a conflict. This left him with a lot of bitterness, as demonstrated in the following account:

> When I started my house it was a dream, it was my future...when there was the problem in Sudan I said let me take my family somewhere for them to survive, because it is my responsibility...I brought my wife here with my

children because my job was to make sure that they are going to school and I
didn't want them to have a life like the life I have been before. I wanted
them to be better than me.

Patrick felt he was the leader of his family and had the responsibility for
making ultimate decisions around issues affecting his family. However, he
perceived he lost this responsibility when he received an intervention order
that forced him to leave the family house. This contributed to his sense of
having lost his leadership role as a man.

When my wife kicked me out [of the house] I can see this is like the end of
my life, and not only me but also including her and my kid, because she
cannot do what I can do.

Participants' concerns about ways of dealing with domestic violence
emerged from the shift in the way disputes between married couples are
handled in Australia. As mentioned in Chapter 3, disputes between married
couples were previously resolved by community elders. This is not the case
in Australia; employees working for agencies that fall under the criminal
justice system are required to follow stipulated laws when addressing marital
or family disputes. Employees' marital status or gender is not relevant to the
way they manage these cases. This led to accusations by some participants
that these government officials contributed to the breakdown of marriages:

In Australia, the people who look at family problems [are] called social
workers [and] most of them are female and most of them are single, and
they don't have any respect about family relationships. And they say to
women about their rights. That is the beginning of the fracture of the
family. (Eritrean FGD)

In this country…they call the police. So when the police come, they
recognise the right of the person who called them. And then you get
charged…These are big issues, not only [for] Sudanese but generally
Africans in this country. (Sudanese FGD)

Rights to Contraception

The influence of a shift in gender relations on participants' sexual lives was
evident in views about contraceptive use by women. As discussed in
Chapter 2, people in Australia are exposed to a wide range of technologies

that assist in reproduction. There is also a variety of contraceptives in the form of diaphragms, coils, pills and injections (Family Planning Victoria 2012). These technologies and contraceptives give women in Australia more choices in their intimate lives: how to have children, when to have children, and deciding on how many children they want. This became a source of discomfort for some men in my study. As I discussed in Chapter 3, men's ability to sire children was closely linked to their masculinity and social status in the community.

Two key informants who worked in the sexual health sector reported that many Horn of Africa married men had a negative attitude towards contraceptives. According to these informants, these men opposed contraceptive use by their wives because of the men's desire to have many children. They reported that the perception among men that some women were more likely to use contraceptives in Australia led to conflict between couples. FGD participants agreed that women had more opportunities to access contraceptives in Australia than in their countries of origin and asylum. However, discussions about contraceptive use elicited varying opinions in the FGDs. For some participants contraceptive use was against their traditional beliefs because it prevented them from having many children. Muslim participants in particular believed that contraceptive use was against their religious teaching but could be used on medical grounds:

> If there is something to do with the healthy issue, maybe the doctors said she can't have a baby for the next three years because it has something to do with health, well then you have to use contraceptives. (Somali FGD)

There is little consensus among Muslim scholars on the Koran's view about the use of contraceptives by women. However, contraceptive use is allowed in situations where pregnancy may affect the health of a married woman (Abdul-Rahman 2007). A Muslim woman is presumed not to have the right to use contraceptives and her only recourse is an assessment by a medical doctor. There was consensus among Muslim participants across FGDs that, if a woman did not have a health problem, she was expected to continue bearing children:

> Medically if she has issues, if for example she has severe back pain where she can't hold pregnancy or she has got other diseases...if she doesn't have the

disease, why should she use? She can even get support from Centrelink. Why is she then afraid? She was even doing it with no guarantee of finance back home [in Eritrea]. (Eritrean FGD)

Therefore, some participants supported the use of contraceptives by women only as a temporary measure: to ensure that a sick woman regains her strength and then continues giving birth to as many children as possible:

You can't use [contraceptives] for good, what they call in this country [Australia] family planning, where you get two kids and that is enough. That, in our culture, does not exist…you can never say two kids [are] enough. (Somali FGD)

In-depth interview participants shared a similar view; married men defined their sense of manhood through the ability to sire children and consequently disregarded the opinion of their wives in relation to family planning:

My wife cannot use anything. Me too, I cannot use condom, even if I get 100 [children]. If I can have them I will be happy. No one can come and say 'no'. This is in our culture, in our blood. (Mishek)

For some men, the use of contraceptives by a partner suggests she is sexually promiscuous:

If a woman uses that [contraceptives], she is a slut. And I am one of the people who believe that. Because why do that? Because she knows she wants to stop getting pregnant. She is moving around [with other men]. (Sudanese FGD)

This view is supported in findings from many cultures that show men opposing the use of birth control by women because of the belief that it suggests a woman's intention to be unfaithful; the logical explanation is that protection from pregnancy allows a woman to be sexually promiscuous (Heise 1995).

A similar rejection of contraceptive use was apparent among single men. Amie, for example, reported that he did not see himself supporting the use of contraceptives by his future wife because he wished to have many

children. He argued that the use of contraceptive by his wife would trigger him to look for another woman to have more children with:

> If you don't have many children, you stop me for one child; tomorrow I go marry another one. That is for sure. Why? Because I need big family, if I don't bring [children] from her, I can bring from the other one. Why? For me it is easy, because she took my name. The child takes my name . . . every child from my children, he takes my name. Everyone call my children using my name.

Contraceptive use among participants was interpreted against the backdrop of men's desire to procreate and preserve their lineage by naming the children after their relatives and proving their virility, which raises their status in the community. These accounts demonstrate how these men were influenced by patriarchal ideologies that have traditionally tied women's sexuality to reproduction and denied them an identity, except as an appendage to men. These views revealed men's essentialist views about a woman's body and views of masculinity. Upon marriage, a woman is there to serve the needs of men; her body is owned by the husband who uses it to sire children who are named after him. Therefore, restricting women's use of contraceptives demonstrates men's traditional rights over women's reproductive decisions, as justified by religion and cultural norms.

Prior to settlement, Horn of Africa women had few opportunities to access or even afford contraceptives. As a result, they were likely to have few choices when it came to making decisions about timing on when to get pregnant and the number of children to have. In Australia, however, women can use contraceptives without men's knowledge. For a married couple, the husband may have little control in relation to contraceptive use by his wife and the number of children they might have. It is this lack of control over women's use of contraceptives by men that created tension in gender relations among participants. One key informant believed these views could lead to women using contraceptives in secret:

> Most African refugee men, from what I have gathered, do not tolerate their partners using contraceptives . . . [So] the partners use contraceptives but they don't openly use them because they are afraid of the response of the men [their husbands].

However, not all men opposed the use of contraceptives by women. The few men who supported contraceptive use argued that, due to the high cost of living in Australia, it was important to do family planning:

> I think it is a great idea . . . we live in a culture where it is not possible to have a child every year. This is the reality we face as Somalis in Australia. This life is very busy and to work for the family you have to have [fewer] children. (Hussein)

Anthony reported that he had agreed with his wife to use contraceptives and not have any more children. He noted that circumstances surrounding his life in Australia compelled them to use contraceptives to provide their children with better care and support. He argued for contraceptive use:

> I have five children. These five children, I want to pay for education, I want to pay for camping, books, clothes, everything. Before we get more children we are thinking, if we get more children what will we do? And where will we get the money because I am not working and she is not working? What will we do? This country is not like Africa. In Africa maybe you get more wives, more children. But they don't go to school, [not] all of them. Some are looking after the cattle, some go to the farm to grow the vegetables . . . But [in] this country you need more education. We don't have any cattle here, we don't have any farms here [laughing]. If you are not careful about your kids, tomorrow they will be working in the factory like you. But you want to stop the factory job with your kids, you want them to get good education.

These participants supported the use of contraceptives by women, arguing it was an essential part of family planning to avoid unplanned pregnancies. These men had reflected on their own circumstances and spoke of the benefits of using contraceptives. Consequently, they supported the use of contraceptives by women as long as their husbands were aware of it. Since children are a sign of male identity and virility, the woman's attempt to use birth control is often interpreted as an affront to her husband's masculinity. Participants who opposed the use of contraceptives hoped that, by doing so, they would control their wives' fertility and, as a result, increase the chances of having many children which would improve their social status as men. However, other men were progressively shifting their traditional values attached to reproduction and masculinity and regarded contraceptive use by their wives as crucial in managing a family in Australia.

RIGHTS TO A DIVORCE

In Chapter 3 I discussed how the economic dependence of women in the Horn of Africa leads to their tolerance or acceptance of men's decisions and actions in marriage. In such situations, and against a backdrop of cultural expectation to uphold the values of the community, opposing men's authority by, for example, those women who were not happy in their relationships with their husbands initiating a separation or divorce process, was almost impossible. This is unlike Australia where, due to the legal system in place, women can easily pursue separation or divorce when they are not satisfied with the marital union. By the 1970s, for example, the country had witnessed a wave of actions by the feminist movement that led to the implementation of legislation that criminalised domestic violence and advanced gender equity (Pease 2001). These changes have increased the ability of women in Australia to exercise greater rights in their pursuit of intimate relationships. This is demonstrated in the 1975 Family Law Act that established a no-fault divorce law (Commonwealth of Australia 2012). Under this law, a court is not required to investigate the reasons behind a marriage breakdown; grounds for divorce are based on the assumption that there have been irreconcilable differences between the couple, demonstrated by 12 months of separation. This Act created a pathway for a woman to seek a divorce without being required to prove that the husband had wronged her. The availability of such a legal system, that enables women to pursue divorce, was a source of tension, confusion and anxiety among some participants:

> The issue of the court is one of the biggest problems . . . here in Australia, the court is actually, is not recognising our culture despite the fact that we pay [bride wealth] for our women . . . this is one of the problems that is making our men crazy. (Sudanese FGD)

The fact that Australian laws do not recognise the role of bride wealth in a couple's relationship, as was the case in previous societies, was a source of anger among some participants:

> It is not easy to get a woman in our culture . . . We are not getting [the women] for free. You pay something to live with them. They [the court] shouldn't have a right of saying 'oh, she can go', when you have paid something [bride wealth]. Here [in Australia] there is something they call

'keep the receipt'. They always say that. Everything you gonna keep the receipt [when you buy something]...if you buy something and it is not good you take it [back to the shop] and you still get your money back, or you change it. Where are we going to change the woman who is not good?...You paid for the woman...Where are we going to take our receipts back?...How about our money? Are we going back with our receipts so we can get our money?...Freedom here is for the people who are free. You get [her] for free she has freedom [and] she can go any time. If I get my woman for free, any time she wanna go she can go...But I paid sometime, why would I let her to be free? But now everything is being made too easy [for the women]. (Sudanese FGD)

Another participant in the same FGD commented:

Men spend a lot of things, they have invested a lot of time, a lot of money to get married to those ladies...but in this country now, the ladies become free...the government is saying 'no, we don't recognise how many cows you paid'.

These accounts reveal the commodification and objectification of women in marriage. This is unlike in Australia where the legal system provides for women to apply for divorce with no obligation for her family to return bride wealth. In fact, after a divorce the husband is usually required to pay child support to assist his ex-wife provide for the children. I will discuss this issue in the next section.

Some FGD participants believed that the legal institutions in Australia contributed to women's reluctance to follow religious teaching about marriage and divorce. Consequently, they felt that post-settlement some men had lost the ability to exercise authority over women, as bestowed by religion:

When a man and the woman marry, they have a religious contract where she has certain rights and the man is [in] charge. Here [in Australia] the respect of women to men somewhat is reducing down...Here, they don't consider about religion...it is the legal system of Australia which decides the wife has right to go without even acknowledging the husband, to separate and even divorce. Now the contract with the marriage was not done here...But the women say 'no, you are in Australia; forget about your previous contract, you are here'. (Eritrean FGD)

These participants found themselves in a country that tolerates different religious groups and accepts religious diversity. As I discussed in Chapter 3,

marital unions in the Horn of Africa are heavily influenced by Sharia laws and Christian marriage and customary marriage acts. However, in Australia the institution of marriage is legitimised by the secularly derived marriage and family law acts (Croucher and Dominello 2005). Participants' former social societies in Africa often privileged the men by giving them 'divine' authority over women. The fact that it is much easier for women to pursue separation and divorce resulted in anxiety among those participants who held onto religious views of marriage to inform their attitudes and behaviour when relating with their spouses.

The experience of losing the traditional rights that enabled men to exercise considerable authority over women led to their view of Australia as a country that prioritises women. This was a recurring theme across the in-depth interviews and FGDs:

> Here, we feel like it is hell. We feel like it is the end of the life . . . because the life is tough. The life is opposite to what I have been before . . . the life is four levels here: number one is the women, the second is the children, the third is the pets, dogs, and then number four is the men. People say that because men have no power here. They are powerless . . . this country is for ladies, it is the country of the women. (Patrick)

> One key informant, who was also from the Horn of Africa, held a similar view:

> Men [are] the head of the family back home. Now we feel as men here, African men, we are like number four. First one is the woman, second will be children, we say maybe number three will be cat or dog and we are the last [laughing]. That is the way we think. Because if your wife does not listen to you any more, if your child, your own child does not listen to you any more, so what do we say? Where is your position? If there is a dog at home or a cat at home, [the women] look after it more than you.

Such views present the foundation upon which to reflect and question participants' views that Horn of Africa women with refugee backgrounds in Australia are in a better position than men. This is because it remains uncertain whether or not the situation of the women from these communities has really improved. Although a recent study argued that women were better off than they used to be in Africa as a result of access to adult education (Saffu 2010), other studies have indicated that the majority of these women continue to face major obstacles to receiving better education (Hatoss and Huijser 2010; Tilbury and Rapley 2004) and that they face significant economic hardship

due to lack of employment (McMichael and Manderson 2004). A more recent study also reported that these women faced more challenges than men in finding employment (Abdelkerim and Grace 2012).

Rights to Child Custody and Child Support

Child custody and child support are two issues that contribute to refugee men's sense of losing traditional rights. As I discussed earlier in Chapter 3, patriarchy traditions in the Horn of Africa perpetuated the belief that children belong to a man. Consequently, after separation or divorce, the man is usually given custody of his children. This seemingly predictable way of awarding custody does not apply in modern Australia. It is important to note that rights to child custody have been contested over a long period of time in Australia where, for example, since the late 1800s the 'tender-year doctrine' has prevailed in court decisions over child custody (Douglas 2006, p. 2). This discourse was based on the premise that young children were better off in their mother's care, as she would provide them with the special care and support they needed in early life. This biological presumption attracted criticism from the 1950s as the number of women joining the workforce to supplement family income increased (Kay 1990).

Since the 1970s, the 'tender-year doctrine' has had less significance in outcomes of custodial disputes in Australia. Graycar and Morgan (2002) reported that in a 1979 child custody case, for example, the High Court of Australia rejected this presumption, arguing that men had become more involved in raising their children and sharing household duties. Therefore, they were as able to care for the children as were the women. As a result of criticism, the tender-year doctrine was replaced by another controversial legal presumption referred to as 'the best interest of the child', based on the premise that the child's welfare should be paramount in the court's assessment of which parent should be awarded custody (McComsey 2010, p. 128). This meant that either a father or mother could be awarded custody.

Participants in my study complained that they had lost the traditional rights to child custody after settling in Australia:

> Why always the judge says kids go to the women, why. Even if it is a woman's problem, why do they give the kids to the woman? It is something affecting us. Why not men? (Sudanese FGD)

Abram, who had separated from his partner, drew on his experience to explain why men were not being granted custody of their children:

> I knew where to get help and I was determined. I wanted to have my child…I know that is not the case with a lot, a lot of my fellow African men. They lose their kids for simple things just because they don't know the procedures of how the law system works…I see so many men who fall victim [to] the system. Men will look at someone they don't know [and think] that that person is good. They have coffee, they drink together, they have never seen him violent. They just assume that that person lost [the case]…simply because he is a man. So a lot of [men] take examples of that—and they don't even try. They say 'what is the point of trying, I am going to lose anyway. Why should I spend some money?'…a lot of men are convinced that they don't have rights…They always [say] 'women always win'…a lot of men believe that the justice system is for women…That is why most of the guys get so frustrated and even disrespect the court. They don't want even to go to the court because it is a lose-lose game for them. (Abram)

Abram highlighted two main reasons as to why African men may not get custody of their children: the lack of knowledge of the procedures to apply for child custody and the belief that the legal system in Australia favours women. The latter reason was evident in the accounts of Patrick and Jacob, two participants who had gone through separation and divorce respectively, and, at the time of interview, did not have custodial rights to visit their children. As noted earlier, a man had custody of his children in the event of separation or divorce in home countries. Since separation or divorce in Australia may delegate custody of children to either parent, Patrick and Jacob regarded this as losing their traditional rights to custody of their children. As Patrick said:

> I see as if this is my end, my life end. Like now, they said I will not see my kid or my wife for one year…I am confused what to do, or what to say, or what I can do because it is like you are doing something and somebody will come and take it out and throw it away. And throw it in the bin or on the bush or sea.

Patrick's view was that children always belonged to a man. Therefore, granting custody of the children to his wife signified a loss of this traditional right, leaving Patrick struggling to understand what to make of the separation with his wife.

In addition, some participants complained that, after separation or divorce, the courts ordered men to pay child support:

> The same government will follow you saying you have to pay the child support and that is what is making our men crazy. Because you will ask the question, 'why should I pay?' The same government sending me out [of the family house] is the same government following me to pay child support. (Sudanese FGD)

This group of men regarded action by the court as unfair, particularly in situations where the man had an intervention order and, as a result, was not able to be with his children. Jacob and Patrick report that they stopped working to avoid paying child support. Patrick noted that this was a common tactic used by men to avoid paying child support:

> Most of the men now they don't want to work because this [child support] is a stupid concept . . . because you have kids with your wife . . . you pay for dowry for your wife, and when you are here the wife will treat you like a dog, like a slave in your own house. (Patrick)

Mishek also reported a similar plan in case he separated from his wife:

> My wife cannot get even one dollar [from me] for child support. If [we separate] I will stop working. How can they get your money if you are also on Centrelink?

These accounts reveal resistance to the legal system that obliges men to provide child support on separation or divorce. Reverting back to welfare support meant the government would not be able to enforce the requirement for these men to pay child support.

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS TO PROTECTION FROM EXCESSIVE DISCIPLINE

In Australia, corporal punishment of children is generally unacceptable. Society promotes children's rights, and parents who physically discipline their children risk being accused of child abuse (Mathews 2001). Esser (2007, p. 243) argued that in Australia modern child-rearing practices encourage individuality and self-direction and children are encouraged to ask questions in order to learn and that, in Australia, 'a certain level of

assertiveness and disobedience is considered to be normal, even healthy to a child's development'. Therefore, parents are encouraged to shift their disciplining practices from smacking to advising; a shift from an authoritative approach to a persuasive one.

Fathers in my study interpreted this new child-rearing practice in Australia as a further reduction of their traditional rights to discipline their children. Participants stated that on settlement some children discarded the cultural norms that required them to respect older people. They argued that one of the ways some children showed disrespect to their fathers was by swearing:

> Here, kids swear at their fathers. They use the words 'fuck you' and whatever. And 'fuck you' is something that is really painful in our culture. You can't say that to somebody older than you. (Sudanese FGD)

These participants argued that they had lost their traditional rights to parent their children because they were no longer able to discipline children through smacking. In addition, a participant believed that the presence of a welfare system that can support children who have trouble with parents, and the presence of child protection services that can intervene when there is a major conflict between parents and children, have further eroded men's perception of parental authority:

> Children now are on the streets because of government took the power from the fathers...young people do not complete their schools, they just walk around making troubles because they [have] no guidance. (Mishek)

Because of this, some participants felt they had lost their traditional rights to shape their children's behaviour on settlement. They were worried that, as a result, their children would not grow up as responsible adults. Indeed, there have been new reports about gang-related criminal activities by a few young people in Australia. As I was writing this book, the Guardian newspaper of 14 March, 2016, reported that some young Sudanese men from the Apex gang were involved in violence during the Moomba festival in Melbourne (Crane 2016). On the same day, the South Sudanese Community Association in Victoria released a media statement condemning the violence and calling the government to dialogue with the community to address the underlying factors that are putting young Sudanese people on the street. An extract from the press release read:

> This is not an excuse or defence of these youth but rather an explanation that the relevant government departments have removed these youths from

their family under child protection laws. In the end, through these government policies, the parents and the community is helpless with no resources to intervene in any way either through fighting guardianship with child protection departments or rehabilitating young persons. It is about time that the government reviews its child protection policies and makes consultation with the community about ways of dealing with these young persons. (South Sudanese Community Association in Victoria)

NAVIGATING THE LOSS OF TRADITIONAL RIGHTS

The desire to reclaim perceived loss of traditional power and authority upon settlement contributed to some men in my study devising a variety of compensatory strategies.

Reintroducing Traditional Conflict Management Strategy

Some participants supported the idea of engaging the community in solving disputes between couples as it used to happen in Africa. Participants in the Eritrean FGD reported successes of the Somali community in mitigating conflicts between married couples in Australia:

> The Somali came [up] with relatively good response for their community. If there is any dispute, social dispute or family dispute, they have got a committee of elders. They are first called before the police . . . If it is not criminal case [the police] wait until the results of this committee . . . Before, the women used to kick out their husbands. Now they stopped. That is also what we need [as Eritreans].

This strategy was confirmed by the Somali FGD participants who reported that marital conflicts in the Somali community were increasingly being handled by community leaders. A participant from the Sudanese community reported attempts by his community to reintroduce this traditional way of managing conflict between married couples:

> In 2008 we sat as a community. We said, 'no, look, the family issue should be discussed by the elders, not go through to the police'. If something very bad like blood [come out], yes, it is good to go to the police . . . The police should only come in when something dangerous happens . . . But bad language, the swearing [is] not the police business, this should be family business. (Anthony)

These are examples of adaptation of particular practices within the Australian context. Traditional conflict management was welcomed by most married participants because it was seen as useful in giving the community some control over managing marital conflicts and advancing communal unity. However, this strategy is also more likely to reintroduce patriarchal ideologies that sustain men's traditional rights in making decisions regarding their intimate relationships, a process that is likely to perpetuate inequality between the husband and wife. Although some participants reported there had been some success in reintroducing this traditional mechanism of mitigating disputes between married couples, one participant reported that his ex-wife refused to attend any mediation session organised by his community elders:

> I tried many times but my ex-wife didn't want to sit with these mediators . . . She said 'I don't care, I don't want to come. Do whatever you want.' (Jacob)

It is from some of these patriarchal notions that refugee women in Australia, such as Jacob's ex-wife, found themselves liberated, as well as finding new alternatives in having disputes resolved through the criminal justice system. Consequently, a woman's refusal to attend mitigation community sessions was regarded as an act of defiance towards male authority as a result of protection by the Australian legal system. As Patrick lamented:

> Our wives became Australians. If you mention about [conflict resolution by] family it cannot work because they [the women] are doing something that they know . . . they will not even accept because they are doing this because they are enjoying the freedom here. They don't care. Even if you bring family, they will not listen. They can even call police for your family here.

One participant reported maintaining a close relationship with community elders back in Sudan. Anthony reported that he usually consulted with them regarding disputes with wives:

> I have a connection with my family in Sudan and I have connection with her family. They give her advice on how we can live in a foreign country. They tell her that you have to take care of your family and take care of yourself. [This is because] when we separate, the family will be lost.

This reflects an example of adaptation—the attempt to hold onto the traditional ideologies of organising intimacies that placed more emphasis on communal living and where conflict between married couples was resolved by the community elders. Due to the cultural expectation that married women respect and remain loyal to their husbands, those men who were able to maintain contact with their community elders succeeded in introducing to Australia some traditional ways of organising their gender intimacies. Married women in Australia who feel accountable to their families in their countries of origin may not wish to challenge the traditional way of resolving marital disputes. Therefore, men such as Anthony who were able to maintain strong connections with their community elders in Africa succeeded in sustaining dominance over their wives.

Making Threats to Leave Australia

Another strategy involved threatening women with the possibility of resettling back in Africa in case of separation or divorce. Mishek, who had earlier reported that he planned to stop working in case of separation from his wife, had also considered resettling in Africa:

> I told my wife that if she attempts [to separate or divorce me], that that is the day I will leave Australia. And I go back to my country, let Australia come and get me in my country [saying mockingly]. That is the time I will organise myself and I will go. Child support. She can't. Let her suffer with the government.

A similar view about resettlement was provided by Patrick:

> Those [men] who are smart they [go] back to Sudan . . . to start a new life there . . . a new beginning, get a new wife and leave this [their wife in Australia] for the government . . . Because these [our wives here] are for the Australian Government.

These accounts reveal the anxiety some men feel at the prospect of having to continue to provide for their children in case of separation or divorce from their spouses. The participants' thoughts of resettling back in Africa demonstrated a loss of the self-esteem they had enjoyed in their former societies through their successful fulfilment of their roles as men. As noted earlier,

marriage in many parts of Africa gives legitimacy to the children along with a right to be provided for and to inherit their father's property. As I discussed in Chapter 3, men usually retain custody of the children in the event of separation or divorce. Since separation or divorce in Australia may result in women being awarded custody of the children (Jamarani 2012), many participants regarded this as stripping men of their traditional rights.

In general, men's traditional rights granting them authority over women and children were challenged on settlement in Australia. Some of these practices through which they asserted their authority were outlawed in Australia. They were confronted with institutions that discouraged them from violence against their wives and children. In addition, Australia has laid down procedures to address violence against women and guard the welfare of children in situations when the parents separate or divorce.

Due to the prohibition against exercising traditional rights around marital unions, most participants in this study talked of Australia as not being a multicultural country. One participant believed that, if Australia was multicultural, everyone would be able to retain their cultural practices and traditions around marital relationships:

> Multiculturalism is like a plate where everyone brings his food and we all share without one saying this is very bad food. If you don't want take this [food] take from another one. This country is for all of us. You can't dictate and no other people should also dictate on our personal life. (Eritrean FGD)

In their attempt to make sense of how Australian law has encroached on their intimate lives, these participants failed to understand that Australia embraces multiculturalism, but prohibits cultural practices and traditions that violate individual rights and freedom. According to DIAC (2007, p. 6), the four principles that underpin Australian multicultural policy are:

1. Responsibilities of all—all Australians have a civic duty to support those basic structures and principles of Australian society which guarantee us our freedom and equality and enable diversity in our society to flourish.
2. Respect for each person—subject to the law, all Australians have the right to express their own culture and beliefs and have a reciprocal obligation to respect the right of others to do the same.

3. Fairness for each person—all Australians are entitled to equality of treatment and opportunity. Social equity allows us all to contribute to the social, political and economic life of Australia, free from discrimination, including on the grounds of race, culture, religion, language, location, gender or place of birth.
4. Benefits for all—all Australians benefit from productive diversity, that is, the significant cultural, social and economic dividends arising from the diversity of our population. Diversity works for all Australians.

Furthermore, Australian citizenship is the unifying force behind Australia's diverse multicultural community (Commonwealth of Australia 2003). Before they became Australian citizens, these participants were required to make a pledge demonstrating their commitment to the rule of law, democracy, and values and principles in Australia which include, among other things, 'respect for the equal worth, dignity and freedom of the individual; freedom of speech; freedom of religion and secular government, freedom of association, and equality of men and women' (DIAC 2007, p. 4). Participants in my study were therefore required to abandon their cultural practices and traditions that threaten these new values. However, it was clear that some participants in this study were unaware that their cultural practices and traditions from their communities were contravening Australian laws, values and principles. Consequently, the multicultural experience of some participants was characterised by uncertainty as to what the concept of multiculturalism represented.

Young Men's Plans to Marry Overseas

For some single men, the sexual permissiveness in Australia, and the belief that men have lost their ability to assert control over their wives in Australia, contributed to a desire to marry overseas. Earlier studies have reported a wave of single men from refugee backgrounds in western countries going back to their home countries and refugee camps in neighbouring nations to search for marriage partners. Such men regarded African girls living in western countries as either sexually promiscuous (Shandy 2003; Grabska 2010) or as having the ability to make independent decisions (McSpadden 2004). These views have a strong association with the way postmodern intimacies permeate social life in many western

societies. Similarly, some single men in this current study reported that they preferred finding a marriage partner overseas, asserting that African girls in Australia were either promiscuous or that they did not show enough respect towards their husbands:

> I call myself a [Sudanese] lost boy ... Most of the lost boys [go] back to East Africa to get girls because they don't believe these girls here. Because these girls are like wazungus [white people], they have adopted a western lifestyle. [The young men] leave girls here and then they go back to marry the girl they think are clean. (Benson)

To these participants, the postmodern ideology of individual choice that guides how intimate relationships are organised in Australia provided a social space for people to express and explore their sexuality.

Although some of the single men were excited to have greater opportunity to engage in pre-marital sexual relationships in Australia, they also held different views in regard to marriage partners. Part of the reason for this is related to the high value attached to marrying a virgin by communities, as I discussed in Chapter 3. Horn of Africa young women in Australia are exposed to similar postmodern ideologies of organising sexual intimacies as men. In consequence, these men make the assumption that the girls are also more likely to be engaging in sex. To some, marrying a girl who had been living in Australia was more likely to bring disgrace to the man and his family because of the possibility that someone else might know of her past sexual relationships. This view meant that some single men preferred to marry partners from overseas to minimise the chances of such an outcome:

> People are complaining men are going back home, they marry there, this and this. And then they are asking—I will give you a good example, it happened to my uncle. That was in Khartoum. Back home somebody like very special to you [come to visit] you gonna kill something like a chicken or a goat to welcome you. My uncle decided to go and buy chicken from outside [market] and the wife asked [him], 'why do you go buy chicken in the market and my neighbour is selling chicken? He got chicken too.' He said, 'no'. Why? Because [laughing] the neighbour's chicken come to his house and eat all the rubbish around the house. So he sees what that chicken do. He said, 'I can't eat that chicken, I better buy the chicken from market; I don't know what they eat there . . . ' What I mean is that some girls, you see what the girls do [here] in front of us. You can't go out with my friend or

many people and then you expect me to marry you. You are that chicken [laughing]. She is doing all the bullshit stuff in front of me and expects me to marry her? There is no way; I am going to get that one from overseas . . . I don't know what they eat but I am happy with it. (Sudanese FGD)

Nonetheless, although some single men, particularly from South Sudan, supported marrying from overseas, they did not support the practice of paying bride wealth. They argued that the relationship between a married couple in Australia is organised differently compared to their previous society. Therefore, the payment of bride wealth no longer symbolised the authority of men over their wives in Australia. As discussed earlier on in this chapter, bridewealth contributes to subordination and commodification of women as they are perceived as property 'bought' during marriage. Since bride wealth has little significance in influencing a court's decision in regard to the couple's relationship, some young men were caught in between a desire to marry overseas and unwillingness to pay bridewealth.

Pursuing Relationships with Anglo-Australian Women

Many refugees, including those from the Horn of Africa, hope to be accepted as equal members of Australian society. Instead, they often experience lack of acceptance and intercultural understanding by the host community (Chua 2011). Due (2008, p. 3) argued that 'refugees are only accepted if they are seen to be behaving in a way deemed acceptable to White Australia, and are, therefore, able to be absorbed easily into the country without being a threat to the country's status'. Key informants noted that such experiences influenced the intimate choices of many young men. As one of them said:

The young men [are] trying to get recognition . . . when they come here they are black but they have accepted this life as Australian . . . they get [Anglo-Australian] sexual partners as a way of trying to get recognition that they are part of the society.

Some participants reported they felt more connected to Australia as a result of being in a relationship with an Anglo-Australian woman. Alaki, a participant who was married to an Anglo-Australian, said he felt a sense

of being an Australian after the birth of his child. Since arriving in Australia, he had hoped to have a child with an Anglo-Australian woman:

> I have a beautiful child and actually that was my dream, having a black and white, mixed kid. That was my dream.

Alaki believed that pursuing an interracial relationship with an Anglo-Australian citizen had a dual benefit for him as a migrant in a new country. Besides being able to easily navigate life in Australia and receive financial support, as I discussed in Chapter 5, Alaki felt a sense of being accepted in Australian society. Having a child with an Anglo-Australian was an important achievement for him as a young black man who had settled in a predominantly white society. It was a mark of being accepted in Australia—at least by a white woman—and the beginning of forming an Australian identity.

Nonetheless, some participants reported the challenges of pursuing longer-term interracial relationships due to the perceived need to be accountable to their communities. This was an issue raised by FGD participants, who reported that men who engaged in interracial relationships risked being ostracised by their communities:

> The communities talk shit. When they see you walking with her, they say oooh this guy now is not good, he is lost, he is lost. (Sudanese FGD)

Adan, who was currently in a relationship with an Anglo-Australian woman, reported that although he was accepted by his girlfriend's family, his own family and the community were not supportive of his choice and, instead, strongly advised him to marry from his own community. At the time of this interview, Adan was contemplating what to do:

> They don't welcome her . . . They tell me, Adan, don't waste this girl's time. This [relationship] will never work out . . . I don't know if I am the smart one or the dumb one right now but that is what it is . . . You see, I am a guy who needs this community. The community doesn't need me but I need it. And I need to understand that I have to level up with them. So when they say that I don't know how I should take that bad way or good way. But I try to please my girl and my people, which is just a pressure that I am creating right now and it is about to explode any time. It is a big challenge . . . This community makes us feel like this thing we are doing is wrong so we have to keep on hiding it.

In some communities, such as Dinka and Somali, it is common to have a person's marriage arranged by relatives (Esposito 2011). In such circumstances, the couple does not have much say in regard to whom they wish to marry. In families that do not practise arranged marriage, it is expected that men will initiate relationships. Benson, who also expressed the desire to marry his Anglo-Australian girlfriend, argued that family expectations acted as a barrier to his plans:

> One of my brothers called me and said 'Benson, you have to be married and we have to come together as a family to look for you a girl, a good girl.' And I said, 'this is shit. I am in Australia and I don't give a damn all this. I have to choose mine here.' And he said 'you have to listen to us, we are the elders, so you have to listen, don't make any mistake. So come here and we will get you a girl. We have a good girl, we know the parents of that girl, and we will pay the dowry'...And I asked him 'do you have 150 head of cattle?' He said 'no, you have to make the money'. 'Make money?' I asked. 'Are you serious? My life is bullshit here and you say I have to make money. And there is a free girl here.' They say, 'this is our culture and you have to respect our culture'. I told him 'listen to me, I am an Australian citizen and I have to be upright Australian'. I said 'you have to listen to me too'...But in order to respect the culture you marry there, that is why I have to marry a Dinka girl, it is compulsory...I have to marry a Dinka girl...I plan to go back home and see what they are talking about.

The two accounts above demonstrate the influence of families and communities in regard to the choice of marriage partners. As we see in Benson's account, he wished to make a personal choice about whom to marry. However, the need to belong to, and identify with, his family surpassed his choice. Similarly, having come from a community where intimacies are largely organised collectively and around traditions, culture and religion, Adan spoke of his reluctance to go against the wishes of his family although he desired to continue having a relationship with his Anglo-Australian girlfriend. The lived experience of these men was characterised by the struggle to avoid disrupting the cultural norms in the presence of their families and communities, and the desire to make personal choices in deciding whom they wished to have an intimate relationship with, where and when. In this sense, both Adan and Benson were influenced by *ubuntu* principles that emphasise the 'communal self' over the 'individual self'. As a result, they hoped to avoid disrupting the unity that existed between them and their families and communities.

My study did not explore experiences of discrimination in great detail. However, a number of participants reported experiencing racism, which affected their relationships with Anglo-Australian partners. For example, Charles argued that he broke up with his girlfriend because of racist attitudes from her parents:

> We went [out] for over a year and a half but her parents were against, they didn't like that she is going out with a black guy. But she didn't care. But eventually we grew apart . . . they become resentful—now that I understand it because I was not mature enough to understand about racism or discrimination because you are a different colour or from a different religious background.

Similarly, Abram, who had cohabited with an Anglo-Australian woman, reported that the family and the community were against his relationship because of racial differences, and failed to provide them with emotional support when they were arraigned in court over domestic violence and custody of their child:

> It was really horrible . . . when I fought with my ex and we went to court almost every single person who heard that we were fighting they would say 'oh, we told you, we told you'. Or like 'what were you expecting?' everyone said that including her side as well. They would say 'What were you expecting from an African guy?'

In addition, perceived racism affected the way some participants viewed relationships with Anglo-Australian partners. This was demonstrated in Adan's response, when I asked whether he was well received by his girlfriend's family:

> Honestly, it is beyond imagination. But I don't know whether that is smart or dumb. But that is as far as I could tell. Again, I am an African, I say to myself as soon as I turn my back to these people they are going to start biting me, my brain tells me that . . . you can't trust these white people. As soon as you turn your back they will start saying 'nigger, this fucking nigger'. Really, that is the truth, man.

Adan did not report experiencing racism in Australia at any point during his interview. Nonetheless, as an African man in a relationship with an Anglo-Australian woman, he saw himself as a potential victim of racism

from his girlfriend's family. Racism brings about a sense of anxiety and intensifies doubt of achievement among people (Dion 2003). In Adan's case, perception of racism cast doubt on the longevity of their relationship.

Another participant, who was in a previous relationship with an Anglo-Australian, said that the negative perception of interracial relationships by the community was a major challenge for men dating Anglo-Australian women:

> I don't promote mixed race [relationships], not because I am against it, but I don't promote it because the community is not yet ready…The young generation think it is a cool thing to do, to have a black girl when you are white or to have a white girl when you are black. But people are not ready…To start with, it is the whole stigma around it…People say we are multicultural and we promote—and it is motivational to see cross-cultural marriage. It is bullshit. I experienced it and I know it, and again I am not generalising but I go with the average and majority, when someone says it is multiculturalism, in mixed marriage and stuff, it is an utter bullshit, it is bullshit. We are not yet there, we are not even half way. (Abram)

Living in a predominantly white Australian society casts Horn of Africa refugee men as a racial minority. Therefore, those men in relationships with Anglo-Australian women were more likely to be visible. Due to the complex history of race relations and racism, between black and white, these men continued to feel some anxiety about their relationships. During periods of dispute with their partners, stereotypes related to racial differences were often used to explain the reason for 'incompatibility'.

In general, men's decisions to pursue intimate relationships with Anglo-Australian partners are mediated by concerns about how families and community members would view interracial relationships. Although some men pursue non-marital relationships with Anglo-Australian women, they experience some discontent due to the disconnection this creates between them, their families and relatives. Therefore, views of family and relatives regarding the women with whom they should have relationships become important in the decisions they make. These men find it challenging to ignore and oppose the expectations of their families and relatives, and to pursue intimate relationships with Anglo-Australian women more freely. As a result, some men are inclined to marry women from their communities to avoid conflict with their family and community members.

Summary

Men's traditional intimate rights that enabled the subordination of women and children remain largely unchallenged throughout migration. Consequently, the men arrived in Australia with expectations of organising their intimate relationships along the same lines as in their former societies. However, they experienced a major disruption of these traditional entitlements as a result of the Australian Government's increased commitment to protecting the rights of women and children. More than ever before, the men were now required to conform to the Australian way of life and pursue their intimate relationships in ways that were not considered as violation of the rights of women and children. For some, this transition was not necessarily simple or easy.

While some men spoke of the need, and indeed made attempts, to adjust to the new expectations in Australia, some found it challenging to blend in and struggled to understand why they could not exercise their traditions in a country that promoted multiculturalism. In Australia, the traditional rights that men had enjoyed in their homeland were now contested and, in some situations, criminalised. Consequently, some men considered Australia to be a society that denied them their traditional rights while at the same time providing women with greater flexibility in navigating the traditional roles that were attached to their gender in former societies. This view became a source of tension for those men who continued to hold onto traditional perspectives of gender relations as the basis upon which they attempted to make sense of themselves, and their intimate relationships with women in Australia.

Although some men made attempts to devise a variety of coping strategies, state intervention regarding the way they organised and pursued intimate relationships compromised such efforts. Nonetheless, the multiculturalism policy remained a foundation upon which some men continued to make new claims about their rights to maintain their cultural traditions in organising and pursuing intimate relationships. And as the number of Horn of Africa refugee men continues to grow in Australia, there is a push, however small, to re-establish and sustain those traditional rights in Australian society.

Conclusion: Adaptability and Resourcefulness of Refugee Men

Abstract Experiences associated with forced migration, asylum seeking and settlement are often portrayed within the trauma discourse. Yet, there is always a desire by refugee men to pursue and engage in pleasurable intimate relationships despite the everyday challenges of life. Forced migration leads men to new societies that redefine them as refugees and triggers off a process that shapes the ways in which they organise and pursue intimate relationships. While some refugee men experience difficulties of adjusting in those societies, others display adaptability and resourcefulness as they strive to pursue enjoyable and fulfilling intimate relationships. This is an issue that deserves more attention and response by agencies and researchers that work to improve the wellbeing of refugees during migration and upon settlement.

Keywords Adaptability of male refugees · Resourcefulness of male refugees · Future research

We live in a world that is increasingly witnessing forcibly displaced people from diverse cultures converging, settling and rebuilding their lives in countries of asylum or settlement. This book has demonstrated that the central experiences of Horn of Africa men in countries of asylum and on settlement are not necessarily those associated with trauma; men's intimate lives remained central to everyday experiences throughout migration and on settlement to Australia.

The concept of intimate citizenship presented an important theoretical framework through which to examine how rights associated with intimacy and citizenship impacted on the experience of male refugees. The men's accounts revealed opportunities, conflicts, tensions and ambivalences about rights associated with intimacy and citizenship. These men came from what could be categorised largely as traditional societies, where people make decisions about their intimate life within a constrained framework of acceptability dictated by collective cultures. In these communities, upbringing was usually very cultural, very strict and highly supervised and there could be dire consequences for individuals who deviated from the norm. In his use of the concept of intimate citizenship, Plummer classified intimacies of such societies as 'traditional' and, in writing this book, I have gone a step further to provide a better understanding of how traditional forms of intimacy link with *ubuntu* to permeate people's lives in the Horn of Africa. *Ubuntu* offers a useful perspective in understanding the struggles and tensions of the refugee men in regard to making decisions about their intimate lives after displacement and, more so, upon settlement in Australia. This is because *ubuntu* challenges postmodern ideologies that position individualism at the forefront of the decisions one makes about how to live: while *ubuntu* places emphasis on the 'community self', postmodern intimacies promote individualism.

The disrupting experience of flight and forced mobility through men being uprooted from their social and cultural settings introduced them to new social, economic, cultural and political contexts that reshaped the way they enacted intimate relations. At times, there were attempts by communities to re-establish some cultural traditions in refugee camps. However, countries of asylum provided contexts with greater freedom for pursuing new intimate relationships and making personal decisions about such relationships due to weaker cultural influence and less community surveillance.

Settlement meant a transition from societies where intimate relations were organised within a constrained framework of cultural norms, traditions and collective lifestyle to one—Australia—that was increasingly underpinned by values associated with individualism and where intimacies are, to a great extent, liberated from cultural constraints. In Australia, the refugee men were increasingly predisposed to individualised ways of pursuing intimate relationships based on individualism. The settlement process marked the beginning of re-engaging with long-held views about the organisation of intimacies and the challenge of how much to redefine their beliefs, values and practices in order to fit in the host society.

In arguing for intimate citizenship, Plummer did not explicitly explore how moving from a society where traditional intimacies thrive and settling in a society where postmodern intimacies flourish could influence the intimate lives of individuals. By focusing on the overarching nexus between citizenship, intimacy and rights, this book has made an attempt to provide a deeper understanding of how having been brought up in a more collectivist culture and settling in a more individualistic one later in life offers opportunities and challenges for refugee men in the way they organise and pursue intimate relationships. It is evident that patriarchal traditions are constantly being challenged across the Horn of Africa, leading men in those societies to gradually change their attitudes towards women and children. However, men in this study did not necessarily have the opportunity to adjust to such changes as they were occurring; the disruption of life as a result of civil war forced them to leave their homeland. Those men who settled in a Western country, such as Australia, often found themselves in a society that had already put in place some measures to promote individual rights in relation to intimacies. For the refugee men, these changes were often sudden and unprecedented as they found themselves in societies where they were required to negotiate systems and make adjustments to live within the confines of legislation.

In addition to providing a better understanding of the intimate experiences of refugee men in the context of migration and settlement, this book also points to new claims of citizenship rights that push the borderline of intimate citizenship further. In an era of forced migration, many countries are increasingly witnessing people from diverse cultures living in the same society. These countries have now become sites for different cultural and ethnic groups to claim rights of inclusion, respect for alternative ways of belonging and acceptance of diversity. This trend has led to the emergence of new challenges to citizenship theory as ethnic minorities start to demand recognition of their ways of life. In using accounts of refugee men from the Horn of Africa living in Australia, this book provided a deeper understanding of how the pursuit of intimate relationships intersects with rights and obligations in particular social, cultural and political settings. Such rights and obligations often change in the process of asylum seeking and settlement, and produce variations in the way refugee men pursue and experience intimate relations.

It is important to note that my study did not investigate the experiences of refugee women, and did not have any men who reported engaging in male-to-male intimate relationships. These are important areas for future

research that would provide a more detailed understanding of the effects of forced migration and settlement on the intimate lives and intimate rights of the Horn of Africa refugee population in diaspora. However, this book has demonstrated how experiences of displacement, asylum seeking and settlement shape the everyday intimate lives of refugee men. Participants in my study often highlighted experiences of being in between cultures or out of place, as they negotiated new ways of organising intimate relationships during migration and on settlement to Australia. These experiences construct otherness and reinforce social exclusion. Yet, for some men, settlement was a process through which to develop and adopt new ways of organising intimate relationships. Some men's accounts highlighted experiences of adaptability and resourcefulness as they reshaped and reoriented their intimate lives to fit in Australian society; others had more difficulty. This intersection between intimate lives and larger social, cultural and political processes associated with forced migration and settlement is sometimes not immediately apparent in individual lives and the problems refugee men present to policy makers and service providers. Yet, these forces are deeply entrenched in the pursuit of pleasure and intimacies and deserve more attention and response. This is a challenge that settlement countries such as Australia face now and will continue to face in the future as they welcome more settlers from an increasingly troubled world.

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