Chapter 3
Mobility: A Practice or a Capital?

The previous chapter illuminated the variety of mobility practices that the Somali migrants in this study have been able to develop and the multiple ways in which they relate to the different places they live in, have lived in or visit regularly. This chapter explores this diversity with a theoretical focus on social differences. Social differences were described in Chap. 1 as the product of an unequal allocation of resources among the population (Bourdieu 1979a, 1986, 1987; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). Actors' social location along various axes of differences further influences the valuation that is made, in specific contexts, of their material and symbolic resources.

Based on these theoretical premises, this chapter considers the people in this study to be endowed with more or less economic, cultural and social capital. Because the people I am interested in are migrants, an additional type of capital will be included and discussed: legal capital in the form of residency rights in or citizenship of the country of residence. My main argument here is that mobility needs to be considered a resource: it is not only something that people do; it is also a series of experiences and skills that people may accumulate and possibly transform into a type of capital. As such, it may become a factor of social differentiation.

The empirical part of this chapter develops this argument by demonstrating that specific types of capital can be converted into other types of capital (Bourdieu 1986). It demonstrates that the transformation of mobility into a type of capital relies on the possession of economic, cultural, social and legal capital. Migrants' possession of other types of resources influences the mobility strategies they are able to implement and, more importantly, the ways in which they can turn their mobility practices into advantages.

The ways in which specific types of capital are converted into others are complex multi-directional processes. For reasons of analytical clarity, and because I want to ground my argument about mobility capital empirically, in this chapter I focus on the conversion of other types of capital into mobility capital. This choice does not imply that other types of capital emerge before the appearance of mobility capital.

The conversion between all types of capital occurs simultaneously. The next section explores processes of capital conversion in more general terms.

3.1 The Transformation of Mobility into a Type of Capital: A Theoretical Discussion

Mobility is defined here as (a series of) movements infused with meanings, but also as an element of social differentiation: social actors' relationship to mobility and immobility is shaped by the "politics of mobility" (Massey 1994; Cresswell 2010). Not everyone moves, and those who do so in very different ways. A recent strand of theoretical and empirical scholarship is interested in the ways mobility can be considered an asset, a resource and even – under some circumstances – a capital that can be accumulated and transformed. Based on Bourdieu's concept of capital, some scholars have conceptualised mobility in terms of "spatial capital" (Fournier 2008; Lévy and Lussault 2003), while others have referred to "mobility as a capital" (Kaufmann et al. 2004). Both conceptualisations are discussed in this chapter, and I will explain my preference for the latter.

3.1.1 From Resources to Capital: A Critical Introduction to Bourdieu's Theorisation of Capital

This analysis builds from the fact that resources are not allocated equally, a situation that influences individuals' social locations. There are various types of resources; they can be material and non-material, and they can pertain to the economic, cultural and symbolic spheres. Time, skills, knowledge, abilities, information, money and other economic assets, social status and access to networks are all resources through which people can pursue social advantage. Social inequalities and processes of inclusion and exclusion are related to the unequal distribution of resources.

Resources are material and symbolic goods that exist concretely in time and space, but they become resources through their actualisation (Morawska 2001). I am particularly interested here in the processes through which social actors access and mobilise different types of resources and gain control over them. My aim is to understand how people can use mobility practices strategically to access different or additional resources that they cannot access otherwise.

Bourdieu's understanding of capital is central here (see in particular Bourdieu 1979a, b, 1980, 1986). Bourdieu has built a "meta-theory" (Brubaker 1985) of social inequalities that adds to the Marxian understanding of economic capital other types of capital that are different from yet intrinsically related to it and, under certain conditions, convertible into it (Bourdieu 1986). According to Bourdieu, economic capital, cultural capital (in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind,

the possession of cultural goods and formal educational qualifications (Bourdieu 1979b)) and social capital (resources related to the possession of a network of durable relationships (Bourdieu 1980)) are the three types of capital that individuals may possess and accumulate. All three types may take the character of symbolic capital when they are perceived and acknowledged as legitimate, go unchallenged and, most importantly, remain hidden (Bourdieu 1987). Social actors may be endowed with specific amounts and combinations of the three fundamental types of capital: Bourdieu's classic examples are academics, who have little economic capital but a great deal of cultural capital, while top managers in the private sector have a great deal of economic capital but little cultural capital (Bourdieu 1979a). Under certain conditions, the different types of capital are convertible into each other, and social actors can attempt to convert them to maintain or improve their social position (Bourdieu 1979a; Wacquant 2008) (see more on conversion below).

Capital should not be confused with resources. While capital can be thought of as a kind of resource, all resources are not capital. They become capital when they are systematically mobilised by social actors to attempt to accumulate social advantages over time (Savage et al. 2005). My interest here is to illustrate how social actors strategically mobilise the resources available to them in an attempt to improve their social position, thus turning them into different types of capital (see also Anthias 2007; Erel 2010 for a similar argument). Mobility, in this sense, is not a type of capital per se: it is a resource that some people are able to actualise in the appropriate contexts, thus transforming it into capital.

Whatever their type, resources and capital are endowed with a symbolic value determined by the specific context in which they are actualised or transformed into other types of capital. Differences and their ordering into hierarchies are the outcome of the symbolic valuation of resources, which valuation is dependent on specific contexts. At the level of society, which is what primarily interested Bourdieu, different resources may have different symbolic values depending on the social field in which they are evaluated. A social field is "a space of objective relations between positions defined by their rank in the distribution of competing powers or species of capital" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). Social space, in Bourdieu's view, is constituted of numerous discrete and relatively autonomous social fields (for instance, the economic, artistic, intellectual and juridical fields), which each having its own logic and concerns. It follows that the various types of capital do not have the same value in the different fields, or even in the same field in different historical periods (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). That is, different "rules of the game" apply in different contexts. I follow Lahire's call (2001) for a looser definition of social fields that also encompasses less strictly bounded and defined social environments and hierarchies.

Bourdieu's analytical framework (which is only briefly and selectively described here) has been critiqued for at least three major reasons. First, it has been accused of "ethnocentrism" (Anthias 2013) and of being "nation(-state) blind" (Nowicka 2013 refering to Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2002). Lacroix further addresses it as a "sociology of 'people-at-their-place' [… which] leaves no room for addressing emergent processes and the social complexity of actors' positions and belonging"

(Lacroix 2012). Different scholars have challenged the view that people hold a consistent social position within a single national context and have attempted to "transnationalise" theories of capital and social inequalities (see for instance Erel 2010; Weiss 2005; Nieswand 2011; Kelly and Lusis 2006; Nowicka 2013; Sayad 1999). These scholars envisage the possibility of people navigating in social fields that are embedded in multiple and distant societies. In the context of migration, the symbolic value of individuals' resources may vary enormously depending on where they are evaluated, i.e. in the place of origin, the place of residence or other national or regional contexts. Typically, migrants' cultural capital (whether formalised or not, and especially when the migrants come from developing countries) may be valued highly in their country of origin and contribute to their good socioeconomic position there, but not be recognised or valued in a Western national context, as a result of which it can hardly be mobilised in this symbolic system (see for instance Weiss 2005 for convincing case studies; Erel 2010; Bauder 2003). Resources thus need to be given symbolic value to become socially meaningful and be used effectively by social actors. This means that the struggles people engage in are not only over attempts to access resources, but also attempts to challenge the symbolic order in which the resources they possess are evaluated.

Bourdieu insists that people's chances of successfully negotiating changes in the symbolic order are necessarily linked to their social position, as a result of which people tend to reproduce the social order rather than challenge it (Bourdieu 1987). This leads me to the second – and probably most common – critique of his work: his focus on reproduction neglects the possibility that social systems can change (Calhoun 1993; Jenkins 1992; Lacroix 2012; Lahire 2004). Although actors are dynamic in their pursuit of power and wealth, the social order itself, in Bourdieu's approach, remains bound to reproduce itself (Calhoun 1993). Lahire (2004) builds on Bourdieu's framework by focusing on the multiplicity of possible socialising bodies and contexts: in highly differentiated societies, social actors' trajectories lead them to encounter heterogeneous socialising frameworks and contexts in which their dispositions are "actualised". I follow Lahire in my empirical analysis, in particular by including the multiple contexts and specific social networks and hierarchies in which Somali migrants gather, but more importantly reinvest, their various types of capital.

Third, Bourdieu's theoretical apparatus has been critiqued for not taking gender seriously enough, for developing a "male-gendered conception of social structures" (McCall 1992) and for focusing primarily on public social spaces (see also Lahire 2001; Erel 2010). Despite these criticisms, many feminist scholars have critically adopted aspects of his framework and built on it to investigate gendered social processes (see in particular McCall 1992; Adkins and Skeggs 2004; Huppatz 2009). For instance, Anthias discusses how class is not the only social position relevant to being able to understand the processes through which resources are endowed with specific symbolic value. "Gender and ethnicity [also] involve the allocation of hierarchies of value, inferiorizations as well as unequal resource allocation (on their basis and not through the intermediate relation of production relations). For example,

women may be paid less for the same job as men, or jobs that women do may be allocated a different economic value" (Anthias 2001).

As long as these criticisms are incorporated into Bourdieu's sociology of social inequalities, his theory is particularly well suited to understanding many aspects of migrants' practices.

3.1.2   Mobility Capital and Spatial Capital

Based on Bourdieu's theoretical conceptualisation of capital, mobility scholar Vincent Kaufmann and his colleagues (Flamm and Kaufmann 2006; Kaufmann 2009; Kaufmann et al. 2004) have developed a conceptual framework of mobility that understands *mobility as capital*, which they alternately refer to as "motility". While "mobility" is already understood to mean more than movement (i.e. movement with meanings), "motility" incorporates the idea that movement is potentiality also an asset. Mobility as capital, therefore, conceptualises "the capacity of entities (e.g. goods, information or person) to be mobile in social and geographical space, or […] the way in which entities access and appropriate the capacity for socio-spatial mobility according to their circumstances" (Kaufmann et al. 2004). In this line of thinking, spatial mobility is linked to social mobility, as the ability to be mobile is related to the ability to deploy strategies to improve one's situation. What makes mobility a type of capital is not only being physically on the move, but also the potential of being so. This holistic conceptualisation of mobility allows for the inclusion of not only past or present movements, but also potential future ones. As the empirical data will make clear, people develop certain kinds of strategies while being immobile knowing that the resources they are acquiring will be capitalised most effectively through mobility.

As a result, motility is not only something one *practices*; it is also something one *possesses*. Social actors are more or less able to travel, cross borders and access different places. Kaufmann and his colleagues (Flamm and Kaufmann 2006; Kaufmann et al. 2004) argue that motility can be understood best through three interrelated factors: access, skills and appropriation. Actors' *access* to different types and degrees of mobility is linked to opportunities and constraints shaped by the structural conditions in which they are embedded, as well as their social location within them (Kaufmann et al. 2004). In this case study, migrants' opportunities and constraints need to be considered in reference to the different localities that constitute the transnational social field within which they move. Economic means and legal documents allow people to leave a country, cross borders and enter other nation-states' territories, for instance. Time is another necessary resource for mobility: being on the move transnationally means spending time away from one's main country of residence, and therefore from family, work and other responsibilities. The second determining factor of motility is *skills*: being mobile requires particular skills to organise the movements and carry them out (plan a journey, take one or more means of transportation, carry one's luggage, find one's way in an unknown

destination and so on). The third factor is the cognitive *appropriation* of opportunities to realise projects: access and skills are not sufficient if actors are not in a position to strategically use them to actually transform mobility into a type of capital. Appropriation involves the ways in which "agents (including individuals, groups, networks, or institutions) interpret and act upon perceived or real access and skills" (Kaufmann et al. 2004). Social actors take possession of what is available to them and make choices to enact particular forms of (im)mobility. Appropriation is further shaped by the "needs, plans, aspirations and understandings of agents, and it relates to strategies, motives, values and habits" (ibid). In other words, appropriation involves the options people choose from the opportunities available to them, but also the constraints they face. Normative prescriptions, values and representations are important in shaping the options that are and are not chosen (and, as will be detailed later, the people by whom they are chosen).

My choice to work with the concept of "mobility capital" (or alternatively – and synonymously – "motility") may lead to confusion, and needs some clarification. Mobility is not always and intrinsically a type of capital: it can become capital for some people under specific circumstances. "Mobility capital", as the term is used in this text, thus refers only to mobility practices and experiences that social actors have been able to transform into a type of capital. "Mobility", in contrast, refers to the cross-border movements that migrants undertake and their significance. My idea of "mobility capital" is further developed in Chap. 5 (see also Moret 2017).

People are therefore endowed with more or less of this mobility capital, which makes it a differentiating dimension of social life. Kaufmann (2009) argues that motility relates not only to vertical positioning, but also to horizontal social differentiation. It is not only about being higher or lower in social hierarchies, but also about a differentiation of "lifestyles on the basis of individual relationships to time and space" (Kaufmann 2009). There are different ways to envisage or undertake regular cross-border movements, as Chap. 2 illustrates. The diversity of mobility strategies cannot be arranged exclusively on a vertical hierarchy, from those that bring higher rewards to those that do not lead to much change in one's social position. This also serves as a reminder that mobility should not be perceived as a necessarily positive and fulfilling practice. Being mobile does not always mean that one is better off than those who are not, and it can even become a constraint and burden for some people (see also Glick Schiller and Salazar 2013; Schapendonk et al. 2018). For instance, asylum seekers and undocumented migrants who are not accepted in a country where they would have liked to settle may experience negatively the forced mobility with which they are confronted, whether they opt (or are forced) to return to their place of origin, engage in irregular onward migration or return to a first country of asylum (as required by the Dublin Regulation).

Other scholars use a different concept to examine these processes – *spatial capital* (see in particular French geographers Lévy and Lussault 2003; Fournier 2008). With a specific focus on space and place rather than mobility, Lévy and Lussault (2003) define spatial capital as a pool of places, territories and networks that social actors have appropriated and from which they can draw advantages, as well as their capacity to "master" this pool and widen it. They acknowledge the centrality of

mobility practices in the appropriation of different places, but they also point to the fact that mobility is not always necessary to take advantage of these localities. In a compelling case study on elite migrants in Latin America, Fournier (2008) illustrates that past mobility practices, and the local knowledge and social networks acquired during mobile stages of life, may still be used advantageously later without the need to be mobile. This situation also emerges from my case study: the mastering of more than one locality does not always require physical mobility to be profitable. However, some degree of mobility is generally necessary to remain up to date with a situation, maintain social contacts and personally engage with the activities concerned (business and politics, for example) (see Chap. 2).

The concept of spatial capital focuses on the places that mobility makes it possible to join together into a single field. It thus emphasises that places might have been appropriated in the past and thus still be relevant for social actors even when they do not physically visit them. Places that are, to a certain degree, "mastered" might become more relevant in the future, which is a reason for people to maintain them in their pool of appropriated places. Walker (2011), in a study on the links that Comorians who live in different parts of the world maintain with other places, also acknowledges that people know that conditions might change in their current place of residence and therefore often maintain connections with "all sites on their trajectories, allowing them to favour one place over another according to their needs or ambitions" (Walker 2011). The concept further allows for the recognition that places can, under certain conditions that do not necessarily entail constant physical presence, be considered as offering specific resources to those who have developed and maintained connections with them.

While mobility and places are intrinsically related, my analytical focus is on the former, which justifies my use of mobility capital despite the evident advantages of the concept of spatial capital.

3.1.3   Savoir-Circuler, *the Accumulation of Experiences and the Convertibility of Capital*

There are at least two characteristics that make mobility a potential type of capital. I focus first on the fact that it is acquired and accumulated through the development of specific skills as well as through experiences and socialisation, and second on the convertible character of different types of capital.

First, like other types of capital, motility requires the development of specific skills and dispositions to maintain and further develop those skills (see Bourdieu 1986 on that dimension of capital). This case study demonstrates that people use mobility to improve their situation, whether consciously or not, and that in order to do so they have to develop specific skills. Alain Tarrius (1993, 2002) and other scholars (see for instance Schmoll 2005; Morokvasic and Catarino 2010; Dahinden 2010a) working on circular mobility and circulation use the concept of

"*savoir-circuler*" to investigate those skills. The concept includes the technical skills that mobility necessitates (organisational skills, the ability to cross borders, perhaps illegally, and so on) but goes beyond it. It entails a more general capacity, that of being able to constantly be on the move and include mobility as an integral part of actors' global strategies. In her study of mobile cabaret dancers, Dahinden (2010a) shows that this capacity to circulate constantly between different countries (and which she describes as a kind of mobility capital) enables these women to improve their living conditions in their country of origin. Mobility thus becomes a core livelihood strategy that acts as an alternative to more traditional sedentary migrations (Morokvasic 1999, 2003).

Furthermore, the skills of *savoir-circuler* include being able to cross borders and go through different territories that have their own regulations and norms, which requires the ability to deal with different socioeconomic, political, legal and cultural contexts, and to move between them (Tarrius 2002). In this sense, mobility relates to what other authors have termed a "cosmopolitan habitus" (Fournier 2008) or a "transnational habitus" (see in particular Vertovec 2009; Guarnizo 1997; Nedelcu 2012; Kelly and Lusis 2006). These concepts are also based on Bourdieu's theoretical framework, and they refer to a set of durable dispositions that allow the actors involved to develop the skills and abilities necessary to move easily between economic, social and cultural systems (Vertovec 2009). These skills, which are unevenly distributed among social actors, are acquired through the accumulation of the diverse personal experiences of mobility: people learn from past experiences, whether positive or negative, and are prepared to experience the same situations again (Flamm and Kaufmann 2006). Experiences of cross-border mobility are not necessarily perceived positively and may lead actors to avoid such practices. Flamm and Kaufmann also argue that the "subjective feeling of control" over mobility comes not only from past experiences, but also from socialisation processes with regard to mobility. Fournier (2008) also emphasises the inherited character of mobility within families through examples of travelling habits, the facility and even the need to move and the importance of mobility as a topic of discussion (Fournier 2008). This kind of intergenerational transmission can be seen in this study when migrant children who live in Switzerland can describe precisely how a Somali family lives in London without ever having set foot outside of their country of residence. Levitt (2009) examines what it means for second-generation migrants to be raised in a transnational social field, in particular in terms of developing knowledge and skills related to different contexts that may become useful in the future (see also Sperling 2014).

The second aspect I want to focus on is the *convertibility* between mobility capital and other types of capital, in particular economic, social and cultural capital. Bourdieu argues that the different types of capital can be accumulated and converted into or exchanged with one another (Bourdieu 1986). This dimension of capital is fundamental to this study, which focuses on the exact ways in which the possession of mobility capital is based on the possession of other types of capital and the social position these endowment are linked to, but also on the processes through which mobility capital can be valorised and transformed into these other

types of capital. Based on empirical evidence, this chapter shows that mobility capital is a much *for* mobility as it comes *from* mobility, answering one of the criticisms of the concept (see for instance Jayaram 2016 for a critical analysis of mobility capital).

On the one hand, mobility capital can only be accessed if social actors have other types of resources they can mobilise and invest in. Bourdieu argues that social capital, for instance, is not simply transmitted and inherited and thus given: people need to invest time and economic means to maintain it and develop it further (see Bourdieu 1980, 1986). This part of the multi-directional conversion processes is explored in this chapter, which examines how Somali migrants build on the other types of capital they have accumulated to develop their mobility capital.

On the other hand, the cross-border mobility practiced by the respondents in this study is mostly intended to improve their living conditions: they mobilise this resource in order to enhance their economic capital (for instance, when they carry out transnational business activities), their cultural capital (for instance, when someone moves from a mainland European country to Britain in order to obtain a university degree or knowledge of English) or their social capital (for instance, when participating regularly in meetings with people who might, because of their social position, 1 day help them obtain important political positions). The convertibility of mobility capital into other types of capital is the object of the next chapter.

In sum, this theoretical discussion argues that mobility capital is a relevant concept for analysing and understanding post-migration cross-border mobility practices. Mobility becomes capital not only through technical access, but also as a result of people's ability to master specific skills and take advantage of opportunities to develop strategies (Kaufmann et al. 2004). As an unequally distributed capital, it becomes a factor for social differentiation. As with other types of capital, it is acquired through socialisation and experience, can be transmitted from generation to generation and necessitates investment in terms of time and economic capital. More importantly, those who possess mobility capital can convert it into other types of capital, and to reassess and reinforce their social position within specific social fields and other hierarchies. What is important here is not only whether or not people move, or how often they do so, but also, and more importantly, the way they mobilise their ability to move in order to access other types of capital (economic, cultural, social). Mobility capital exists, in other words, only when "value is created" (Jayaram 2016). If not, then mobility practices remain what they are: the act of people moving across borders. As this study argues, social actors' position greatly influences their capital endowment and the valuation of their resources, which differs depending on the context.

The following sections demonstrate concretely how other types of capital are converted into mobility capital. I argue that not everyone is in a position to be mobile or, more importantly, "productively" mobile, i.e. to transform mobility practices into benefits and advantages. I thus enter into a detailed discussion of how different types of capital are mobilised by respondents to develop mobility practices that contribute to improving their situation. I will start with more technical and obvious types of resources: financial means and legal documents are fundamental to

mobile people's ability to cross borders. I will then discuss less evident types of capital: cultural and social capital. We will see that access to mobility, and especially the accumulation of motility, relies in direct and indirect ways on cultural and social capital as much as on economic and legal capital. These different types of capital, although they are analysed separately here, are interconnected, as conversion occurs between them as much as it does between each of them and motility.

3.2   Converting Economic Capital into Mobility Capital

For most respondents, migration has meant an important loss of socioeconomic status relative to that in their place of origin. As was described in Chap. 1, the majority of Somali migrants in Europe are not socioeconomically advantaged. While some receive social assistance from the state, most others are employed in sectors characterised by low salaries and insecurity.

This situation has important consequences in their lives in their country of residence, but also on their possibilities of developing mobility practices, in particular when those practices require multiple and regular moves. Cross-border mobility requires financial assets to pay for transportation, accommodation and other travel expenses, such as visas. When mobility includes visits to relatives or friends, in particular those who live in poorer regions of the world, expenses arise from the need to buy gifts. As other research has shown, for migrants, bringing money and gifts to those who have remained in the country of origin is as much a matter of supporting those who are in a more difficult situation as it is a performance to demonstrate that they have done well in their country of residence (Salih 2003; Nieswand 2011). Abdulkadir, a 30-year-old man who knows most of the Somali population in his city (in Switzerland) and regularly acts as a formal or informal mediator, told me during an interview about a woman he knew who had been waiting for 17 years to get her residence permit, which would allow her to travel to Yemen, where her sister and other relatives were living. He told me how surprised he had been when he met her after she returned and heard that she didn't want to go again:

> So I asked her how it was, and she told me, "Well, it was really good, it hasn't changed, people are still the same, but I've spent a lot of money. I am really happy that I went, but now I will stay here, because I cannot afford it. [J: And when she says that she has spent a lot of money, what was it for?] The money, that means around 1,500 or 2,000 Swiss francs [about €1,200 to €1,600]. But when people travel, the money they spend is not to stay in a hotel, no, because they will go and visit the people they know and live with them. And so, with the money they would have spent on hotels, they will try to contribute. And most of the time, when you come from Europe, people tell you, "I have this problem", "I have a problem", and little by little, you end up giving 100 francs here, and 100 francs there, and when you stay for a month, money goes quickly. So you are happy to contribute, but you would also have liked to keep this money for something else. […] But now this woman, she still thinks, "Maybe I will try to save some money, maybe one day I can visit my other sister who is in another country". But to be able to go there, you need preparation. But because a lot of people don't work, many don't earn much money, it may take a year, or even two or three years. [Semi-structured interview, recorded]

Other indirect expenses associated with travelling have to do with the loss of income when people are away: while those who have secure employment often travel during their holidays and do not lose income, that is not true for those who are on contract or freelancers.

The quotation above illustrates that people may need to plan a single trip for years in order to save enough money. For those who travel regularly and try to capitalise on their mobility practices (such as the star-shaped and pendular movers presented above), a relatively solid financial basis is even more necessary. Economic capital thus becomes an investment in the hope that (expensive) mobility practices will be valorised successfully and turned into capital.

Similarly, a single permanent move also requires economic capital. Awa recalls her move from the Netherlands to Britain:

> And just not to romanticise, it was difficult. So the first six months, luckily, […] I could get money here from the Netherlands. You know, when you are looking for a job, when you have been working for, let's say, for the last six years or so, then you can take some of your rights for six months. […] And it was really difficult, especially if you're not used to claiming benefits, or you know, to being homeless. I didn't want to be dependent on family or friends, so that was quite hard. And then I found a part-time job. [Semi-structured interview, recorded]

Her position as an educated and working single woman without children and with a European passport allowed her to undertake this move without having to rely on family or friends, as she herself mentions. Individuals' social position, in terms of gender, family situation, legal status and social class in particular, affects their access to (certain types of) mobility, but it also structures the conditions under which cross-border movements eventually lead to advantages, thus becoming a type of capital.

To conclude, the influence of economic capital is not limited to access to the financial means needed to travel. Economic capital is converted into other types of capital, in particular cultural and social capital, although this transformation mostly remains hidden and unacknowledged, even by those who possess this type of capital (Bourdieu 1986). This section has discussed the transformation of economic capital into mobility capital. The next section discusses another type of capital that should not be neglected in discussions of the mobility of Somali people – their legal right to cross borders, or "legal capital".

3.3   Converting Legal Capital into Mobility Capital

Bourdieu's conceptual framework does not include individuals who move or have moved from one nation-state to another and thus neglects the reality of migrants, and transnational mobility in general. When discussing migrants' mobility practices, it is crucial to discuss their legal status and whether they possess legal documents that allow them to leave specific nation-states and enter others. While some scholars have explored the link between the possession of legal documents and the

ability to cross borders and develop mobility practices (Riccio 2001; Al-Sharmani 2004, 2006; Hammond 2013), theoretical debates regarding legal capital as a dimension of social differentiation are limited.

3.3.1   Legal Capital: Empirical Evidence

Nation-states are crucial in determining the development of migrants' transnational practices, especially regarding border crossings. Somali citizens need visas to enter most nation-states, in particular industrialised states; moreover, these visas are difficult to obtain, which makes international travel difficult for people who can only count on their Somali passport. In this context, the acquisition of other documents that allow cross-border mobility becomes important. These documents need to be issued by the authorities of another nation-state that has recognised some responsibility over people who are physically in its territory. The legal status that European states grant Somali asylum seekers has an important impact on their rights and obligations, not least their right to cross-border mobility. The provisional admission that most Somali asylum seekers in Switzerland have been granted is mostly considered a "bad" status, in comparison to full refugee status, in part because it strongly limits cross-border movements (Kamm et al. 2003; Moret 2006). Faysal, an interviewee I met in Switzerland, told me why so many Somalis had left Switzerland and travelled to other European countries irregularly to file a new asylum claim: "Somalis are people who are not looking for money, but for documents. Documents to travel". These words, "Documents to travel", point explicitly and vividly to the connection between legal capital and mobility capital. Some kind of secure legal status (documents) is needed when one wants to cross borders. Freedom of movement was a recurring theme in many of my interviews with people in Switzerland, pointing to its centrality as a potential resource for social actors. Although it was not as strong an issue for British respondents, other analyses of mobility practices have demonstrated the importance of being able to secure a stable legal status to have some degree of freedom of circulation. A secure legal status makes it possible to not only leave one's main country of residence, but also re-enter it legally and circulate freely across borders (Riccio 2001; Al-Sharmani 2006). Citizenship in one's country of residence is the only status that is stable enough to allow most kinds of mobility practices. Circulating travellers, in particular those who undertake star-shaped or pendular movements, need to be able to leave their country of residence, but also to enter the other states on their itinerary. For instance, Farhan, who travels between Britain and Switzerland, found his movements much easier once he obtained a Swiss passport, which meant the end of the visa requirement every time he entered Britain.

For secondary movers, the possession of an EU passport also makes it much easier to settle in another nation-state. The European Union is the context *par excellence* where cosmopolitan norms complement national rights and citizenship can be enacted across national borders – but only for those who are considered to belong fully (Benhabib 2005; Ahrens et al. 2014; Verstraete 2003). Citizenship constitutes

a clear advantage for those who undertake such moves within the EU, for instance in terms of the transfer of social rights, as Awa's quotation above indicates: being European allowed her to have access to unemployment rights in another member state. Furthermore, moving before obtaining the citizenship of a country where one has settled means losing the right to obtain it: this explains why Mulki, who had been living in Britain for a few years before she got married to Nuur, waited to get her British passport before actually moving to Switzerland to be with him. The acquisition of legal capital thus requires a significant investment of time and effort: naturalisation processes are characterised by increasingly strict criteria regarding how long applicants have to remain in the country and their socioeconomic situation. The physical presence of at least some members of the family unit in the country in question makes it easier for applicants to secure residency rights (see Ong 2003). Some practices related to mobility and immobility appear to be directly related to the acquisition of a specific nationality, for instance for transnational couples who have a child: Ammar, a young man who had been living in Switzerland with a provisional admission that had recently been changed into a residence permit, got married to Aaliyah, a British citizen of Somali origin, who joined him in Switzerland after their wedding. However, as they had decided that their child would be born in Britain, where part of Aaliyah's family lives, she moved back to Britain when she was 7 months pregnant. Although the reasons behind that decision are not clear from their account, it seems that the transmission of Aaliyah's British citizenship to their daughter played a part in it. Her moving back to Britain to give birth there facilitated their child's acquisition of an important resource, i.e. a passport from a European state, which Ammar was not able to transmit to her.

A stable legal status in the main country of residence thus constitutes legal capital in the sense that it opens avenues for mobility opportunities that would be more limited or unavailable otherwise (see also Hammond 2013). But another crucial dimension of legal capital is that it also guarantees the ability to come back and/or settle again after any length of time spent elsewhere. Al-Sharmani (2004, 2006, 2010) demonstrates the importance of "legal capital" through a convincing empirical study: she compares female Somali refugees who filed an asylum claim in Egypt with Somali women who secured citizenship in the US and later resettled in Egypt (so-called "émigrés"). For these émigrés, resettlement constitutes a strategy both to avoid the exclusion they faced in North America, despite their citizenship, and to continue to benefit from the advantages offered by that citizenship, for instance in terms of social rights, freedom of mobility and the guaranteed right to return at any time.

Furthermore, citizenship entails some responsibility from the state to its nationals. A specific relationship between the state and its nationals is created through naturalisation, based on rights and obligations of both parties. Citizens may expect protection from their state, even when they are outside its territory. Ammar, a young man who is about to obtain Swiss nationality, told me about his future travel plans and his wish to visit different places, including Somalia:

> Travelling to Somalia is easier with the [Swiss] passport. It is also easier there, if you want to move around, or to obtain some protection if anything happens, to go to the embassy if you need it. [Group interview with Aaliyah, notes]

The state's protection beyond its territory constitutes another resource that mobile people can count on when they cross borders. Nationals have the right to not only come back to their country of citizenship, but also claim its support should they be in trouble in other nation-states that cannot offer them protection.

3.3.2   Legal Status as a Type of Capital

To sum up, legal status can be considered a form of legal capital, which is similar to other types of capital discussed by Bourdieu. The discussion here will focus only on the relationship between legal capital and mobility practices in order to draw parallels. Legal capital is not either absent or present: it admits of degrees, as different types of legal status in the country of residence open different avenues of cross-border mobility, depending on the rights that go with each legal status and whether those documents are recognised by other nation-states. While provisional admission (in the Swiss case) does not grant the right to leave the country, residency rights (in either Switzerland or Britain) do, although the ability of those with residency rights to travel is restricted by the regulations of the states they enter, for instance by requiring a visa. Furthermore, non-citizen residents are limited in their right to re-enter or receive protection from the state that has granted them the right to leave the country. Only full citizens have secured a strong enough legal relationship with their state of residence to be able to leave it, return to it and claim its protection when outside its territory.

For migrants to be able to accumulate legal capital, they must make a substantial personal investment of time and effort (see Bourdieu 1979b for cultural capital). The increasingly restrictive criteria according to which authorities base their decision to grant a more secure legal status have to do with the person's economic situation, acquisition of the local language and knowledge of local habits. The ability to meet these criteria in turn relates to the possession and transformation of other types of capital, namely economic, social and cultural capital. Furthermore, legal capital is a resource that is transmitted to one's descendants, in particular in nation-states with a *jus sanguinis* tradition. In these states, children are born with the nationality or legal status of their parents, not of the state in which they were born. That the children of nationals are born with that nation-state's citizenship while the children of non-nationals are not is considered natural and obvious, and legal status is thus not perceived to be a type of capital, suggesting a hidden form of power similar to that associated with other types of capital (Bourdieu 1986, 1987).

Further differentiation occurs at the international level, since not all nationalities and passports are evaluated in similar terms. As Al-Sharmani has shown in her study in Egypt (Al-Sharmani 2004, 2006), Somali refugees with a Somali passport are faced with many restrictions regarding their access to the labour market and education, while American Somalis enjoy far more rights. Global power relationships at the international level thus also influence the value of a specific relationship when it

comes to cross-border mobility. The idea of "good passports" (i.e. North American or European) came up on a few occasions during my fieldwork.[1]

Importantly, legal citizenship does not set all nationals of a given country on a completely equal footing. Some rights may differ depending on how citizenship was acquired, i.e. whether it was by birth, naturalisation, marriage or other ways. Beyond legal differentiations, citizens are treated differently according to representations and prejudices based principally on race, ethnicity or religion. Khosravi 2007 discusses the "situational, conditional and unconfirmed" legal status of having an EU passport when its holder is a naturalised, brown-faced person. Faysal (in Chap. 1) and Imaan (in Chap. 2) both mentioned difficulties when crossing borders, even with their Swiss passport. They attribute their different treatment by customs authorities to the colour of their skin, their name or their veil, clearly pointing to markers of ethnicity, race and religion.

Legal capital thus emerges from the specific relationship between an individual and the state in which they have settled, but also from the global relationships between states. Its differential distribution among the population is mostly perceived as legitimate and natural, yet it is the result of a historically constructed world system based on a division between nation-states. The naturalisation and legitimisation of differences based on legal status are exactly what makes legal capital more powerful. Because it is institutionalised and acknowledged as legitimate, legal capital becomes symbolic capital and a source of power in a society and a world organised according to a logic of difference (see Bourdieu 1987). Glick Schiller and Salazar (2013) challenge classical sociological perspectives "to expand this understanding so that the ability and legal right to travel become one of the criteria by which class is defined and class privilege upheld" (196). In this sense, legal capital should be included in analyses of social inequalities in transnational social fields.

3.3.3 The Complex Relationship Between Mobility and Immobility

The relationship between a state and its residents and/or citizens rests on rights and obligations, but also on normative values and expectations, some of which deal with mobility and immobility and the complex relationship between them.

First of all, as has been mentioned, migrants' access to a stable legal status, and especially to citizenship, is linked to personal commitments and investments in the country of residence. Implicitly or explicitly, it is based on the assumption of a certain degree of immobility. Candidates for naturalisation, for instance, are expected

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[1] The Global Passport Power Rank 2017 indicates the "strength" of passports, ranking them by the travel freedom their holders enjoy. While a Somali passport allows visa-free entry into 33 countries, a British passport allows it for 156 countries, and a Swiss one for 155 (source: https://www.passportindex.org/byRank.php).

to have resided in the country in question for a certain number of years and not have left it for long periods of time. Short-term and permanent residence permits may also be revoked or refused extension when their holders have resided outside of the country for more than a certain number of years. Furthermore, the granting of stable legal statuses and naturalisation is often dependent on candidates having adopted activities and identifications related to the country of residence while severing their links with other places, in particular their country of origin. This norm, implicitly intended to enforce relative immobility, reflects the logic of the nation-state (Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2002).

States' expectations of migrants who want to secure a legal status, in particular citizenship, stand in contrast to some of these migrants' motivations for trying to do so. For many respondents in this study, access to the passport of their country of residence means, among other things, access to new avenues for mobility. Although it was also mentioned in the British context, respondents in Switzerland were particularly prone to stress the right to mobility as a key change in their situation through naturalisation (see also Moret 2009). Their emphasis on this point can be explained by the ban on mobility that their provisional admission imposes on most Somali refugees in Switzerland and the length of time they must be residents before they can apply for naturalisation (Moret 2006). Being able to cross borders again after a long period of forced immobility (the 17 years that Fatuma mentioned is not exceptional for Somalis in Switzerland) takes on a meaning that those who have not experienced it might not acknowledge. There is thus a dissonance between authorities' expectations regarding new citizens, which revolve around local anchorage and relative immobility, and migrants' focus on their increased freedom of cross-border mobility. These conflicting views can be understood by looking at each party's interests in the naturalisation process: while authorities focus on new citizens' loyalty to and identification with their new nation, migrants tend to focus on the new rights they acquire when they become citizens (Achermann and Gass 2003). However, while access to mobility is an important motivation, it is never an exclusive or even the primary motivation. While people do focus on the new rights they acquire when they become citizens of their country of residence, they also acknowledge the obligations that accompany them. For instance, among the Swiss respondents in this study, there were two young men (both of them particularly mobile) who valued military service, an obligation for all male Swiss citizens, highly. It would not have been difficult for them to find ways and arguments to circumvent this duty (like many other Swiss young men), yet both mentioned the importance of participating in the Swiss Army as a sign of loyalty and attachment to their new country.

In sum, legal documents, in the form of passports and residency permits, are fundamental elements of differentiation between people when it comes to mobility. These varied types of documents issued by nation-states determine who is able to leave a territory and enter others, for how long and for which specific activities. Absolute freedom of movement does not exist: it is always related to the specific

relationships one has built with places, in particular with the nation-state apparatuses of those places. Legal capital ensues from migrants' social and structural position within a given context, that of their country of residence. In parallel, it is linked to the position of this state in geopolitical hierarchies of power.

Border control and immigration policies are thus particularly important in constraining or facilitating migrants' access to mobility, and even more so their ability to transform mobility into capital. Yet this discussion about legal capital in relation to (im)mobility does not imply that legal recognition by more powerful states is the only way through which people are able to deploy transnational ways of living and accumulate mobility capital. Some mobile people may find some advantages in developing alternative frameworks to those imposed by nation-states. Tarrius (2002) demonstrates that some informal (or even illegal) activities developed through cross-border mobility are best undertaken far from states' gaze. Similarly, Schmoll and Semi (2013) make a case for "invisibility as a strategic and relevant asset for people who rely on borders and take advantage of the gaps between different states' regulations and structures" (380). In an essay about irregular migrants' collective struggles in the United States, De Genova (2010) makes a similar argument by showing that access to legal status could lead to restrictions in some people's "autonomy of migration". By making "anti-assimilationist gestures", these undocumented migrants are, in his view, claiming the right to "be there", but also the right to circulate freely across borders and remain outside states' expectations for inclusion.

However, while legal recognition may increase migrants' visibility and the control that the state can exercise over their activities, it remains the case that the legal right to cross borders is a significant resource for those who aim to accumulate mobility capital. In an informal discussion, Awa said to me that the important thing in her eyes is not to be moving around all the time, but to know that she can move, even if she does not actually do so or does so only rarely. Her comments demonstrate that mobility is a resource that some people are in a position to mobilise if and when they need it: legal capital participates in the ability to build on this resource and benefit from it.

3.4   Converting Cultural Capital into Mobility Capital

Education, professional experience, institutionalised or informal skills and knowledge are fundamental assets in individuals' professional and social trajectories. This section focuses on the ways in which cultural capital, which may take different forms, intervenes directly or indirectly in the development of migrants' mobility practices.

3.4.1 Cultural Capital in Migration Studies

The concept of cultural capital is central to Bourdieu's theoretical framework. Bourdieu (1979b) distinguishes between three forms – or states – of cultural capital: embodied (or incorporated), objectified and institutionalised. Incorporated cultural capital includes the knowledge and skills possessed by an individual who has invested time in acquiring them and that cannot be transmitted instantly, in contrast to, say, a gift. The ability to speak a language without a foreign accent and behave according to the cultural norms of an institution are examples of embodied cultural capital. Objectified cultural capital involves material cultural goods such as paintings or books. It will not be discussed here. The third state is institutionalised cultural capital, a quantitatively measurable evaluation of someone's cultural capital stemming from its institutional recognition. It can be found in academic degrees, for instance. Erel (2010) argues that, apart from formal cultural capital, informal knowledge and education are also an important part of one's cultural capital. Knowledge about implicit institutional or organisational rules is an example of informal cultural capital.

Migrants' cultural capital has been the object of many studies, most of which demonstrate that it is devalued when they move from poorer and less powerful states to wealthier ones (Bauder 2003; Erel 2009, 2010; Weiss 2005; Kelly and Lusis 2006; Nowicka 2013). The non-recognition of credentials earned in other countries and the non-validation of professional experience in the country of origin systematically exclude migrants from higher positions in the labour market (Bauder 2003; Nohl et al. 2006). Institutionalised cultural capital, unless it consists of very high qualifications, is not easily "transnationalisable" for migrants who arrive in rich nation-states. The place where institutionalised capital is acquired is thus highly significant in its valuation elsewhere, pointing to mostly economic hierarchies of power between nation-states. Weiss (2005) investigates these hierarchies by differentiating between "nation-specific cultural capital" and "transnational cultural capital". While nation-specific capital is validated only in the place where it has been acquired, transnational cultural capital involves education and experiences validated internationally because they have been acquired in states in a position of "cultural and economic hegemony" (Weiss 2005). Transnational cultural capital can involve expatriates who acquire their education in industrialised countries and are then sent by their (also Western) organisation to work in less dominant nation-states.

There is a second important strand in the literature on migrants' cultural capital discussing embodied cultural capital. Studies show that, apart from institutionalised cultural capital, migrants also often lack embodied cultural capital to access dominant institutions in the labour market or the higher levels within them because, among other things, they lack local embodied knowledge about implicit rules, behaviours and "locally-shared professional cultures" (Erel 2010; see also Weiss 2005). Yet the inclusion of migrants in the study of cultural capital has allowed

authors to acknowledge that ethnicity/race, coupled with gender and social class, is also part of embodied cultural capital and further influences people's access to the labour market in particular. Stereotypes related to ethnicised (and gendered) skills may negatively affect people's job prospects, as all studies on discrimination in the labour market have argued (see for instance Fibbi et al. 2003). But embodied skills related to ethnicity, for instance linguistic and cultural knowledge, also act as assets in specific fields, for instance intercultural mediation or ethnic businesses: they are valued because they correspond to specific needs in certain economic niches. Kelly and Lusis (2006), for example, discuss how "Filipo-ness", and especially "Filipa-ness", constitutes an asset in the health and caregiving sectors, because cultural and gendered stereotypes have constructed these specific migrants as "naturally" possessing caring and nurturing skills.

Erel (2009, 2010) examines these processes through the concept of "migration-specific cultural capital": she focuses on the ways in which migrant women may build on their cultural resources and engage in strategies to revalorise them in their country of residence – for instance, by engaging in associational or political activities related to their ethnic or national origin in their country of residence, capitalising on previous experiences in specific social fields. However, there is an agreement in the literature that cultural capital that builds on "ethnic" skills (linguistic or cultural knowledge) or ethnicised stereotypes often leads to a dead end in terms of social mobility, at least as far as marginalised groups are concerned. Migrants from poorer countries, especially women, often fall into these categories. The segments of the labour market in which their specific cultural capital is valued are often poorly paid and little valued. Ethnicised skills are often coupled with gendered representations, and women are often found in these ethnicised professional niches, for instance caregiving work, intercultural mediation and informal ethnic businesses (Lutz 1993; Erel 2009; Nowicka 2013).

Migrants' institutionalised and embodied cultural capital has thus been the subject of an abundant literature in migration studies. Most of it describes and analyses the ways in which cultural capital brought from the country of origin is circulated and re-evaluated in the country of residence, often leading to processes of dequalification and/or strategies of revalorisation of cultural resources in specific social fields. The empirical discussion below partially builds on this literature, but it focuses on the diverse ways in which institutionalised and embodied cultural capital intervenes in the development of post-migration mobility practices. The analysis examines not only migration-specific cultural capital, but also the cultural capital that has been acquired after migration and that may be circulated and valued in other places through mobility practices, as well as cultural capital that is specifically mobilised in cross-border mobility. This study demonstrates that, while migration has involved a strong devaluation of the respondents' cultural capital, their mobility strategies are a way through which they attempt to revalorise their cultural capital, both institutionalised and embodied, and both migration-specific and acquired after migration in their country (or sometimes countries) of residence.

3.4.2   Cultural Capital Acquired Before Arriving in Europe

The respondents often obtained a higher education in Somalia, sometimes even abroad, before the war started. However, as with many migrants from non-industrialised countries, none of the women and men I have met have had their credentials validated in Europe (see also Bauder 2003; Nohl et al. 2006).

Nonetheless, institutionalised capital, even if it is not recognised in the countries to which migrants go, often comes with a specific type of embodied capital: the cultural ability to access formal education, for instance found in habits of learning or the self-discipline to learn. These "durable dispositions" (Bourdieu 1979b) are not lost with migration, and may become important assets in migrants' future trajectories. Data show that embodied rather than institutionalised cultural capital may contribute to respondents' socioeconomic trajectory in the country of residence, and it may help them in developing their cross-border mobility practices. Cultural capital in this sense intervenes indirectly rather than directly in the acquisition of mobility capital.

The formal and informal education received before migration is crucial in determining what education and professional career is possible in the country of residence. Unlike more recent Somali migrants, who often had interrupted schooling or even none at all, those who arrived 10 or 20 years ago sometimes attended private schools, often in other countries. Aisha, for instance, arrived in Switzerland as one of the first Somali refugees in 1991, at the age of 40, with her youngest daughter, while the rest of her family settled elsewhere. She recalls the 1st year after her arrival in a city in the French-speaking part of Switzerland:

> In 1992, I bought a whole course to learn French from Italian. I could not even say "yes" in French! Because, you know, I went to primary school in Italian, and then, regarding secondary school…. Actually, Egypt had given money to Somalia for education, a lot of money. So I went to secondary school in Arabic. It was not too difficult because I had been to Qur'anic school, but it was not exactly the same language. So I had to take extra lessons for Arabic. And in parallel, my mother was quite strict: she enrolled me in an English school. In fact, I could choose two other languages; I chose Italian and English. If I had known what was ahead of me! But all this became useful when I came to Switzerland. […] It was quite easy for me to learn from Italian, not the pronunciation, but the rest was all right. I had the book, and the exercises and the tapes, 30 tapes. I used to learn in the evenings and at night. My daughter remembers Valérie, one of the course's characters. [Biographical interview, notes]

Aisha is conscious that having been socialised and educated in different languages helped her when she arrived in a place where she had to learn yet another one. She says that her knowledge of Italian made it easier for her to learn French. Moreover, she was a medical doctor in Somalia: her learning habits, characterised by independence, self-reliance and perseverance, are embodied capital stemming from her educational background in Somalia. She mobilised her knowledge of how to learn (a real capital) to learn French by herself. Aisha very quickly became involved in her city and developed a large and diversified local network. She is now almost

retired, but she has a busy professional life, in particular organising and giving courses for Somali and other migrant women. Her change of careers after migration thus also enabled her to use some of her "migration-specific cultural capital" (Erel 2010) (in terms of linguistic and cultural knowledge rather than professional qualifications), even though it placed her in an ethnicised and gendered professional niche (Erel 2009; Lutz 1993). Aisha has also been mobile all her life, regularly visiting Britain, where her husband, with whom she never reunited, and other children live.

Aisha did not undergo the long process of validating her educational credentials and work experience in Switzerland, which would have involved going back to university. Not being able to work in her initial profession (which she referred to as her "real profession") came up on a few occasions during the biographical interview. She told me about a satisfying professional life in Switzerland, but she was conscious of its limits, for instance in economic terms: her pension is not big enough for her to retire yet. She also believes, probably correctly, that her diploma and experiences would have been recognised in Britain more easily, pointing to the constraints imposed by particular national contexts.

Aisha faced major obstacles that forced her to reorient her career in a less economically and socially rewarding direction. However, her story is illustrative of the ways in which embodied cultural capital, in the form of learning habits, socialisation in international environments and knowledge of other languages may become assets when adapting to a new context after migration. The case of Nuur further illustrates the links between cultural capital, incorporation in the country of residence and the development of mobility practices. He arrived in Switzerland at the age of 14, after having lived in a Middle Eastern country for several years, where he was enrolled in private schools, which enabled him to obtain an (uninterrupted) education and learn different languages. This educational trajectory gave him the tools and self-confidence necessary to fight for adequate remedial classes: he mentioned similar self-learning strategies as Aisha (using an Arabic-French dictionary), but also confrontational strategies with teachers to obtain additional private remedial lessons. Unlike many other young migrants who have less cultural capital, Nuur could successfully and rapidly integrate into the Swiss educational system, pursue further education and acquire a good socio-professional position in his city, which in turn enabled him to acquire a diversified mobility capital.[2] It is not only legal stability, but also socioeconomic stability, that is necessary to be able to establish mobility practices aimed at obtaining more resources. Cultural capital becomes an indirect factor in shaping people's access to mobility, as it allows people to capitalise on their mobility practices and thus transform them into motility. The next section describes how cultural capital shapes these processes in more direct ways.

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[2] As a reminder, Nuur practices star-shaped mobility and is actively involved in business, political and humanitarian activities in relation to his country of origin.

3.4.3 Mobility-Specific Cultural Capital

Cross-border mobility requires the possession of specific embodied and informal (much less institutionalised) forms of cultural capital, which are valued differently in the different local contexts in which they are needed. Linguistic skills are particularly important. Some of the businesswomen I met mentioned regularly using their knowledge of Arabic, Italian and English (which they learnt in Somalia before migrating or in previous countries of residence) when they buy merchandise in other countries. But language can serve more mundane goals as well. Imaan, the young woman in Switzerland who has found most of her travel experiences to be negative, expressed that requesting a visa for Britain required knowledge of English, or the help of someone who understands the language.

Knowledge of international and national regulations becomes central. Shariif, a London-based man who plans to develop a business in beauty products for which he has been prospecting in China, told me:

> But there are rules, regulations. You have to, you know, go with the system. You cannot just go over there and import what you want. In certain areas, you have to receive permission, you know. There are special cosmetics, for example, very dangerous; you can buy very cheap cosmetics that are very dangerous. […] So when you sell them here, you may injure many people, and you are in – you know, it's your responsibility [laughs]. So you have to be careful. [Spatial interview, recorded]

I encountered other examples of the importance of knowledge of such regulations. During one of my stays in Britain, I had an informal discussion with a woman who owns a small retail shop in London: I wanted to buy a few things from her that I knew were not easy to find in Switzerland to bring back to some of my respondents there. As any good businessperson would do, she tried to convince me to buy more: as I argued that I already had heavy suitcases to carry back home, I realised she knew exactly how much luggage weight was allowed by different European airlines. On a couple of other occasions, I witnessed respondents active in cross-border businesses who were particularly aware of airline, customs, import and tax regulations. Cultural capital regarding the transnational circulation of goods also includes embodied dimensions. In a study on Tunisian women traders, Schmoll (2005) shows how women develop strategies by building on their (ethnicised) femininity to avoid having to declare their goods when going through customs: they have acquired skills that allow them to play with customs officers' reluctance to search them, for instance forcing respect and distance by wearing a veil. When mobility practices also involve the (legal or illegal) circulation of consumption goods, money or people (smuggling activities), the ability to communicate and negotiate with (and sometimes cheat) the state and its authorities can also be important.

Recurrent mobility practices rely on intrinsic, or directly related, skills, such as "*savoir-circuler*" (Tarrius 2002) and a "cosmopolitan habitus" (Fournier 2008), which can be considered a fundamental embodied cultural capital. In turn, accumulated experiences of mobility participate in the (re)production of mobility skills (Fournier 2008; Flamm and Kaufmann 2006). In the interviews, respondents often

mentioned that travelling is easier when it becomes habitual. For instance, Aman, who has travelled a lot since, reminded us in Chap. 2 that "you lose the sense of travelling if you don't travel".

The same idea emerges from the following quotation from Awa, a particularly mobile woman who currently lives in London:

> If you move 200 times in your life, then moving is not that big a deal. For me, to move tomorrow is not a big deal. [Semi-structured interview, recorded]

Both statements emphasise that the recurrence of movement is necessary for mobility to become a simple matter, almost an act of routine, demonstrating the embodied character of this type of capital. Being able to move, and to capitalise on those movements, requires time and personal investment (see Bourdieu 1979b on this aspect of embodied cultural capital). Once you are comfortable with the rules, norms and technical skills that are necessary to travel, you can start organising your movements in a more productive way.

Cross-border mobility involves a related embodied cultural capital, that of being able to move and communicate in different linguistic and cultural contexts, and to interact with different kinds of people in those contexts. In London, I met Nadja, who joined one of my respondents whom I was informally meeting for dinner. This young Somali-Australian woman was travelling around the world, meeting with (Somali) people who live in different places, with a purpose that remained unclear to me. During dinner, in a very casual discussion about being afraid of what you don't know, she told us about her parents' migration from Somalia to Australia: while her father, who had "already been travelling a lot and knew other languages", found the move to Australia "easy", things were more difficult for her mother, who had always lived in Mogadishu. Her father's mobility had in her view made it easier for him to come into contact with people from different national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

This "cosmopolitan habitus" (Fournier 2008) is here understood as a practical asset that is part of mobile people's cultural capital, not a global way of situating oneself in the world (see also Beck 2008; Hannerz 1996). It can be regarded as some kind of pragmatic cosmopolitanism that may coexist with kin, ethnic, national or religious affiliations (Glick Schiller et al. 2011). It consists of the ability to meet with strangers to pursue a common goal in a given place at a given time, and is therefore close to the concept of "*cosmopolitanisme des rencontres*" (encounter cosmopolitanism) developed by Tarrius and his colleagues in reference to circular transmigrants in Europe and elsewhere (Tarrius et al. 2013).

This section has shown that cultural capital can be converted into mobility capital in several ways. First, institutionalised and, more importantly, embodied cultural capital acquired before migration constitutes a fundamental resource on which incorporation trajectories in the country of residence can be built, and these trajectories in turn set the ground for the development of mobility practices that require some degree of socioeconomic stability in the country of residence. More directly, mobile respondents capitalise on skills and knowledge that specifically relate to

their own cross-border circulation, or to that of the goods or other things they carry with them. This could be referred to as "mobility-specific cultural capital".

The conversion of cultural capital into mobility capital has to do with all three dimensions of the motility model developed by Kaufmann and his colleagues (Flamm and Kaufmann 2006; Kaufmann et al. 2004). By influencing the structural conditions people encounter in their country of residence, cultural capital participates in shaping access to mobility, the first of the dimensions. Cultural capital most obviously refers to skills and knowledge, which constitute the second dimension: several skills are needed to transform mobility practices into capital. Third, the cognitive appropriation of opportunities also deals with specific aspects of cultural capital, in particular the mobilisation of "mobility-specific" resources.

3.5 Converting Social Capital into Mobility Capital

3.5.1 Social Capital in Migration and Mobility Studies

The concept of social capital has been discussed and debated in the sociological literature (see in particular Bourdieu 1980; Coleman 1988; Putnam 2000; Portes 1998), and although authors disagree on major theoretical and epistemological points, most concur that "social capital stands for the ability of actors to secure benefits by virtue of membership in social networks or other social structures" (Portes 1998). Still in line with the Bourdieusian stance adopted in this chapter, I consider social capital to consist of the social relations (actual or potential) that social actors are in a position to mobilise in order to pursue some kind of social advantage by transforming them into other types of capital (Bourdieu 1980). The amount of social capital with which individuals are endowed is unequal and related to their position in society as well as to time and other resources that can be used to access and maintain social relationships and transform them into social capital (ibid). Here again, social capital differs from social relationships in that it is characterised by its potential to secure social advantages.

In the late 1980s, migration scholars began understanding international migration through the conceptual and theoretical lens of social networks (see in particular Boyd 1989; Massey et al. 1993; Brettell and Hollifield 2000). Since then, a wide literature has explored "how social networks both shape and are shaped by migrants' mobilities through space and time" (Ryan et al. 2015).

While it is beyond the scope of this chapter to discuss this literature in detail, a brief discussion of Granovetter's influential argument on "the strength of weak ties" (1973, 1983) is useful to understanding how social capital is interrelated with motility. For Granovetter, "the strength of a tie is a (probably linear) combination of the amount of time, emotional intensity, intimacy (mutual confiding), and the reciprocal services which characterize the tie" (Granovetter 1973). Contrary to the default assumption that strong ties are most important for social actors, the American

sociologist argues that weak ties are crucial to social mobility because they are the channels through which ideas, information and resources cross social distances. More precisely, weak ties connect people outside individuals' primary groups of close friends and family, and thus give rise to opportunities that may not be available through those intimate relationships. In other words, while the people to whom someone is closest may share many similarities with the person in question, they often also only have access the same resources and information as that person. Weak ties, in contrast, often act as bridging connections to resources outside the group. Weak ties thus make it possible to acquire information despite social distance. People who develop few weak ties tend to become "encapsulated" within groups where little information from outside reaches them, and to be marginalised (Granovetter 1973). In an article published 10 years after his original contribution, Granovetter (1983) acknowledged that weak ties do not all have the same value and do not always act as bridging ties – that is, they do not always connect people to distant others with different types of resources. Socioeconomically disadvantaged individuals can often count on some kinds of weak ties, but these bonds tie them to people in situations similar to their own and thus do not enable them to acquire new resources. The quality and volume of capital possessed by the people to whom one is connected are important (see also Dahinden 2005).

Ryan (2010) develops Granovetter's idea further by distinguishing between vertical and horizontal weak ties in a case study on highly educated Polish migrants in the UK. She builds on the view that the value of weak ties depends on the relative social location of the actors involved: these social locations influence the ability of a weak tie to function as a bridge and reduce social distance. Polish mothers, despite often possessing a relatively high amount of cultural capital, often develop localised networks with other mothers who live in the same deprived areas as themselves (see also Ryan 2011): these gendered social networks, characterised by a low socioeconomic status, cross ethnic lines but remain what Ryan considers horizontal weak ties because they do not lead to socioeconomic advantages. Vertical ties, in contrast, tend to allow social mobility. They most often develop in the workplace, where individuals may be able to create relationships with people who occupy more privileged positions. In this sense, migrants may have access to the same social relations but, because of their social position (in terms of gender, age or ethnicity), they are able to mobilise them in different ways (Anthias 2007; Anthias and Cederberg 2009). The social valuation of individuals' position (within and beyond ethnic groups) has important implications for the "mobilisability" of resources, including social relations.

Furthermore, social connections do not necessarily lead to positive outcomes and may even have negative effects. For example, some studies have demonstrated that (kin and ethnic) social networks often constrain and control migrant women and young people (Anthias and Cederberg 2009; Zontini 2010; Allen 2009; Cederberg 2012). Allen (2009), for instance, found that, among Somali and Sudanese refugees in the US, female sponsored refugees (i.e. those who came through family-reunification schemes) found it more difficult to access the labour market than their male counterparts – but also than women who had not arrived

through family-reunification schemes. Allen argued that these differences result from the embeddedness of these women in ethnically homogenous social networks. These women's attempts to obtain waged employment were constrained by gendered reciprocal obligations and social norms. Portes and Landolt (1996) have extensively discussed the possible negative implications of social connections, in particular regarding people of the same ethnic or national origin (see also Portes 1998).

More generally, recent discussions on migrants' networks have demonstrated their dynamic character: some social relationships may develop, while others are lost; similarly, the significance of social connections may also evolve over time (Ryan 2010; Schapendonk 2015). Furthermore, for social connections to become significant enough to change people's lives, social actors need to invest effort to activate and maintain these uncertain resources: this "social network work" (Pathirage and Collyer 2011), however, does not guarantee a positive outcome (see also Schapendonk 2015).

3.5.2   Empirical Evidence

The stories of Nuur and Imaan, who both reside in Switzerland (and whom we have already met in Chap. 2), will be used to illustrate how the size and characteristics of a person's social networks, as well as that person's position and responsibilities within them, shape the ways in which they may or may not be able to transform them into social capital, which might in turn become a fundamental element of motility. It is useful here to remember that this study does not involve any systematic (qualitative or quantitative) network analysis. For this reason, I do not claim to offer a comprehensive description of these two respondents' social networks. Instead, I build on the data I have about some of their social connections, at the local and transnational levels, to illustrate how specific social ties may intervene in shaping mobility practices. Furthermore, I am aware of the performativity involved when respondents talk about their social networks (Ryan et al. 2014): while some people might feel shy to talk about their significant others or not find it relevant to mention some people, others take pride in presenting themselves not only as well connected, but also as influential within their networks. The latter is partially the case for Nuur.

3.5.2.1   Nuur

Nuur arrived in Switzerland with his parents and siblings, which made it easier for him to concentrate on his education rather than having to care for other kin members still in Africa. As a result, he has been able to obtain a fairly good job and develop important connections at the local level, through both his associational and political commitments. At the same time as he builds social ties in relation to the majority

society, he reinforces, at the local level of his city of residence, his position within the Somali population there. For this study as well as a previous one, Nuur recurrently took pride in facilitating my access (or offering to do so) to Somali migrants, be they young female asylum seekers who had just arrived, settled mature women involved in informal businesses or ambassadors, in Switzerland and Britain.

But what is particularly interesting here is how Nuur mobilises his transnational connections and partially transforms them into social capital, and how these processes intervene in his accumulation of mobility capital. As was described earlier, Nuur has developed strong "star-shaped" mobility practices – regularly moving to different places (and for different reasons), but always for short periods of time – that allow him to combine his transnational activities with his local commitments in Switzerland. The social, political, economic and associational activities Nuur carries out while on the move essentially build on transnational ties that are mostly related to his extended kin group (or subclan). Furthermore, he presented his family as holding a powerful social position in this transnational group, from which he himself benefits. The following quotation illustrates how social capital relates to one's social position within a network. Nuur told me about his late father, whom he has never lived with:

> My father was – how can I put it? He was among the wise men from the tribe? Yes, that's it: he was a tribal leader. You know, I read Mandela's biography, and it reminded me of my dad and of what my mum used to say about him. In fact, my dad was responsible for conflict issues, between tribes, those things. He was called everywhere; he would act as a mediator, an intermediary. If he wasn't there, no one would do anything. I don't know my dad, but today I just need to say "I am [full name]", and [people say] "Oh, [name]'s son, oh, hello. Ah, you know, when your father told such and such poem…". "My father was a poet?" I'm thinking in my head. And then I call my mum, and she says "Yes, of course!" And I learnt from a stranger that my dad was a poet. There was a man who came to visit us, it was a cousin who was working for an important bank here. He is now one of the big men leading this conference [on developing a regional government in his region of origin]. I had never understood why he showed me so much affection. When we arrived in Geneva [as refugees], he was living here with his family, and every weekend, he would come, he would take me out. He knew I loved reading, so he spent 600 francs to buy books for me. He loved reading too, so he would look after…. But why is he so nice to me? His brother is here, but he doesn't make so much time for him. And one day, when I had grown up, I asked why he was so nice to me. He told me, "You know, your dad was really good to me". So my dad had looked after him. […] What I learnt from this man, and from many other men too, is that my dad used to marry young people. That means that all young men, when they were 18 or 19 years old, he would tell them, "What are you doing? Why aren't you getting married? You can do what you want, study, but you need to know…. You get married, you have a wife, you have children, and then, even if you study, your children will grow up and one day you'll be old". And many listened to my dad and…. There was this man who came to my wedding. He came from the United States, I didn't even know him, he told me, "My name is so and so. You don't know me, but I know you. Today I have seven children. It was your dad who married me; it was your dad who chose the girl for me. Well, the girl, I already wanted her, but it was he who went to [ask for me]". My father was a very respected man, everywhere. And the fact that he would bring a boy and say, "We want your daughter", that would be enough. And there weren't any conditions, or money. And my dad would even pay for them to get married. [Biographical interview, recorded]

Nuur offered me a description of his father reconstructed from multiple positive testimonies of people around him. It appears that he recurrently mobilises members from this extended transnational family to carry out his activities. His ability to access them and transform them into social capital (i.e. gain benefit from them) comes from his inherited position, as the son of a particularly respected man in Somalia and in a transnational social field. However, Nuur also invests time and other resources to actualise and reinforce these social relations and strengthen his own position, reputation and visibility within those networks, in particular through mobility. Social capital is only produced and reproduced through sociabilities requiring specific skills and a constant investment in time, effort and often economic capital (Bourdieu 1980). Nuur follows multiple strategies for this "social network work" (Pathirage and Collyer 2011) in order to maintain and expand his transnational (mostly kin-related) network, through marriage, political alliances, business partnerships and humanitarian involvement in his region of origin, including using the experiences and skills he has acquired locally in Switzerland.

The ways in which Nuur mobilises particular connections, especially while on the move, demonstrate the dynamic ways in which social relations are transformed into social capital. As mentioned in Chap. 2, he created a humanitarian association active in his region of origin by mobilising kin members he knew in different places in Europe. He specifically looked for people with specific characteristics, including that they had access to reliable partners in Somalia, whom he did not contact directly himself. When Nuur travelled to Somalia to see how the project was going, his aim was also to meet with these possibly important people there. By actively seeking to develop "vertical (weak) ties" (Ryan 2010), Nuur reinforced his transnational social capital. Other studies on circular migrants (see in particular Tarrius et al. 2013; Morokvasic-Müller 1999) explore the transnational networks that mobile people develop while on the road, based on encounters at particular times and in particular places: these relationships are characterised less by emotional ties (although they may develop) than by their usefulness. These networks may also be extended in relation to specific projects and the physical places where these projects take place. Recalling a business-related trip to Istanbul, Nuur told me how he called on his (extended kin related) transnational network to find a contact person in a place that was entirely new to him:

> I stayed for five days. And him [the cousin], I met him there, through the tribe. So I went to Istanbul; I didn't know anyone there, so I called a cousin [in the Netherlands], I said, "Do you know anyone from the family in Istanbul, since you came through Istanbul?" [Showing me pictures on his smartphone] You see, this is us in his apartment. Can you imagine, we don't know each other, but after a couple of days we're like family. This is the tribe. [Semi-structured interview, recorded]

Nuur's social capital is simultaneously voluminous, geographically extensive and composed of connections to people who themselves are endowed with economic, cultural and social capital, at least in specific social environments. Thanks to his social position within these networks, in terms of both gender, social class and ethnicity on the one hand and his lineage on the other, he is able to mobilise those relationships   to   pursue   personal   and   collective   projects,   mostly   at   the

transnational level and in relation to his region of origin, which is the common defining factor of his networks. The relational aspect of social networks emerges from his story, illumining how the mobilisability of social connections depends on individual skills and power (Schapendonk 2015; Anthias 2007). Nuur's social capital both enables him to develop the mobility strategies from which he gains socioeconomic and symbolic advantages and is a product of these regular mobility practices.

3.5.2.2   Imaan

It is difficult to illustrate empirically how a lack of capital influences people's actions and strategies. Two long semi-structured interviews gave me some insights into Imaan's life and some of her ties with significant others, at two different moments. Furthermore, comparison with other respondents illustrates how social connections may be transformed into social capital and influence practices of mobility – and how a lack of social connections limits people's possibilities. Imaan's story, characterised by rare and negatively perceived mobility experiences, provides interesting insights into the ways in which limited social capital may make it difficult to pursue social mobility, but also intervene negatively in one's ability to accumulate mobility capital.

Imaan arrived in Switzerland when she was 15 years old, through irregular channels, although she was reunited with her eldest sister, who was already living there with her husband and children (see Chap. 2 for a fuller account). When she first arrived in Europe, her priority was to meet her local and transnational responsibilities towards her family, even though doing so required her to postpone her educational and career ambitions. She started working as an unqualified nursing assistant: her attempts to obtain qualifications failed and, despite her experience, she was unable to obtain another, more rewarding job.

In her interviews, Imaan only mentioned her immediate family as a relevant kin group linked by solidarity: she migrated to Europe, thanks to her eldest sister's help, to assist her in her domestic tasks. It appears that she is a central economic actor in this transnational family unit. Her sister, a mother of three children, has never been able to become economically self-sufficient, has been living with an unstable legal status for more than 15 years and thus has limited economic means to provide for her children and parents. Imaan's parents and other siblings all live in Djibouti and have a very limited income apart from the remittances they receive from her (and her sister).

In the spatial interview, Imaan made very clear that she does not have any other important people, besides her parents and siblings, who live elsewhere. Furthermore, she is not in contact with anyone, and indeed does not know anyone, who lives in Somalia. Her position within her kin and family networks is the dominant one: as a result, they benefit from being connected to her rather than vice versa. In other words, she is hardly in a position to transform those relationships into social capital. In this situation, she may remain socially stuck and be unable to draw on her social

networks to develop beneficial mobility practices. This illustrates the need to focus not only on those social connections that allow migrants to get ahead in their lives, but also on those that do not work or may keep people "in place", both socially and geographically (see also Schapendonk 2015; Ryan 2010). Unless we do so, we may be prone to believing that social networks can only benefit a person.

But the social relationships that Imaan has developed in Switzerland also have to be taken into account. In recent years, her local social networks have changed, and even shrunk, demonstrating the contingent and dynamic character of social connections. In 2010, she married a French man she met through friends. At the time of our second meeting, he had been looking for a job for a long time, working in odd jobs and taking a course (in a field with low wages and recognition) in the meantime. Thanks to her fixed employment, Imaan was thus the main economic provider of the nuclear family. Her husband lost both his parents at a very young age, and they would visit his aunt – with whom he had grown up – in nearby France from time to time.

Apart from these occasional visits, Imaan mentioned having reduced contact with her family and friends because of the lack of time resulting from her full-time work and new parental responsibilities. It has been difficult for her to keep alive the few social contacts she used to have in her city. Her new family situation and responsibilities (in terms of both economic and domestic burdens) have affected her ability to maintain her local social relationships. In sum, when we look at the "strong ties" (Granovetter 1973) in her social networks, in Switzerland and elsewhere, we can observe that, besides being limited in volume, they are characterised by low levels of all types of capital, unlike Nuur's. Not only is Imaan unable to count on people who are close to her to pursue social advantages, but she herself needs to partially dedicate her (limited) resources to them. In this situation, it is no wonder that she has been unable to develop strategies involving social or physical mobility.

Yet, weak ties may be as important as strong ones when it comes to obtaining access to different kinds of resources (Granovetter 1973). Following her arrival, Imaan focused on becoming economically active, which jeopardised her ability to obtain an education, but enabled her, on the one hand, to meet her transnational responsibilities towards her close kin members and, on the other, to obtain a stable legal status in Switzerland, and later naturalisation. This came with a cost, however: although she has integrated into the labour market, her job provides few assets that can be mobilised for upward social mobility. Low socioeconomic positions often translate into a limited access to "weak ties", which are important in enabling individuals access to resources they cannot obtain directly (Granovetter 1973; Ryan 2010). During an interview, Imaan told me that employment conditions in state hospitals were better than in the private clinic where she works, yet she had no hope of being hired there:

> If I left my job, I couldn't go and work at a state hospital. You need a diploma, and I don't have a diploma. I have experience, but I don't have a diploma. They want that. Or you need to know someone, a colleague who can [help you get in]. [J: And that you don't have?] And that I don't have. [Semi-structured interview, recorded]

In this excerpt, Imaan is explicit about her lack of institutionalised cultural capital *as well as* social capital: in her view, people can obtain better jobs if they have a diploma and people who can act as intermediaries and facilitate connections. In a case study on refugees in Malmö, Cederberg (2012) demonstrates that developing relationships with the majority population enables migrants to retrieve information and develop a sense of belonging; yet her informants face major obstacles in forging such relationships. Imaan is aware of the lack of vertical weak ties (Ryan 2010) in her local social networks, which makes it difficult for her to obtain a better job at a state hospital and thus to improve her socioeconomic situation.

Imaan's story of relative immobility illustrates how different types of capital – or, rather, the lack thereof – may directly or indirectly shape access to mobility and its potential as capital. While at first her unstable legal status prevented her from visiting her parents in Djibouti and made it difficult for her to visit her close friend in London, later on she encountered other constraints. When she finally obtained legal capital (through naturalisation), she also faced increased economic constraints (as the main provider for her family) as well as time constraints, which made it difficult for her to expand her social relations in her city and elsewhere. Her situation prevented her from investing in the necessary "social network work" (Pathirage and Collyer 2011) needed to accumulate social capital. Furthermore, her gendered position (in interaction with her civil status and social class in particular) is of great importance in understanding her trajectory: first as a single daughter, and later as a married mother, she has taken on responsibilities for others that have partially prevented her from pursuing opportunities.

Imaan has never mentioned mobility as something she would like to practice more. It is a delicate task to make an implicit reading of her lack of mobility through the lens of her lack of social capital. Yet I find it useful to discuss the biography of a person whose social capital is relatively limited, at both the local and transnational levels. While I cannot be certain that more social capital would have led Imaan to develop mobility practices, it can be assumed that her limited mobility capital is at least partially related to her low level of "mobilisable" social relations. Other respondents' stories show that certain conditions need to be met for initial moves to be perceived positively and eventually pursued. Social connections that can be mobilised in the place of residence as well as in other places are crucial to the development of mobility capital. Imaan's social networks, when compared to Nuur's, for instance, are quantitatively smaller and much less geographically extensive, and they involve many fewer connections to people who themselves possess some resources.

The ability to convert social capital into mobility capital is dependent on various conditions. As has been discussed, the number and quality of individuals' social relations are especially important to the amount of social capital those individuals possess (Bourdieu 1980). The stories of Imaan and Nuur have illustrated how their position and status in relation to significant others create specific constraints and opportunities (see also Anthias and Cederberg 2009). In a migration context, and when mobility is at stake, social capital is further characterised by the places of residence of those who embody the connections, as well as by their geographical spread.

When social relations can be called on in a specific place, they create opportunities to develop activities there. Social capital thus plays a role in the appropriation of places.

Yet this section has also shown that access to local networks in the dominant society is also crucial (see also Ryan 2010; Cederberg 2012): those (often weak) ties at the local level largely influence the conditions under which mobility practices can develop. The diversity and characteristics of the social networks in which motility may develop will be discussed further in Chap. 4.

Finally, all three dimensions of the motility model (Flamm and Kaufmann 2006; Kaufmann et al. 2004) are evident in the transformation of social capital into mobility capital. Social capital intervenes in access to mobility indirectly by influencing people's socioeconomic conditions, which influence their ability to engage in cross-border movements, but also more directly by influencing their ability to appropriate places that are yet unknown. Nuur's access to Istanbul (and other places) was facilitated by his ease in mobilising a social connection there. In the same vein, social capital intervenes in transmitting the specific skills and knowledge that are needed to implement mobility strategies, including formal or informal knowledge regarding where to find someone or something in a new place. Finally, social actors' position within their social networks constitutes a major factor in shaping their ability to appropriate opportunities. Imaan could have mobilised some of her limited resources to develop mobility practices and benefit from them, but representations and normative prescriptions, notably regarding gendered responsibilities, have influenced her options, encouraging her to remain immobile.

3.6   Conclusions

Not everyone is in a position to develop transnational mobility practices, or to benefit from them. This chapter has shown that the people in this study have different relationships to mobility, and I relate the differing nature of these relationships to their differing quantities of other types of capital. It has demonstrated some of the processes through which social actors acquire, accumulate and convert different types of capital. It has shown that mobility capital develops on the relatively solid basis of economic, cultural, social and legal capital.[3] Earlier in this book, I have argued that crossing borders is a way for people to access additional opportunities and improve their living conditions. This chapter demonstrates that the development of sustainable mobility practices, and especially their transformation into mobility capital, is dependent on the possession of other forms of resources validated in specific social fields.

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[3] It might be useful to remind the reader here that the focus on this particular direction in the conversion process is only analytical and does not imply that conversions do not also take place in the opposite direction. The accumulation of mobility capital simultaneously shapes social actors' ability to develop and expand other mobilisable resources, as the next chapter shows.

I have analysed these processes under the theoretical perspective of capital and social positions. As I argued in Chap. 1, social actors occupy specific positions related to particular contexts, and those positions are directly related to the amount and types of capital they possess. Capital endowment is not only a matter of social class, but also of gender and ethnicity/race: these powerful axes of social difference help shape the constraints and opportunities that individuals are likely to encounter (Anthias 1998, 2001). What people are – in relation to others – and what they do, including when they cross borders, is partially shaped by intersecting social hierarchies. Respondents' stories show that social class, gender (as well as family situation and age), ethnicity/race, religion and migratory status all participate in socially locating people and influencing their life trajectories and experiences. The next paragraphs discuss each of these "systems of relations" distinctly, but most examples show that they constantly interact with and mutually shape each other (Walby et al. 2012).

The contrasting examples of Nuur and Imaan first demonstrate the influence of social class. Although they both arrived in Switzerland as refugees, their family backgrounds influenced their trajectories significantly. Thanks to the (relatively) privileged position of his family at the transnational level, Nuur was released from economic transnational responsibilities and had some initial cultural capital, which helped him accumulate more in his new host country, and he could later mobilise (family) social relations to develop his transnational projects and benefit from his mobility practices. At the time of her migration to Europe, Imaam was also part of a privileged group of people who had the economic means to leave Africa. However, her limited economic resources, once she arrived in Switzerland, and her responsibilities within her local and transnational networks led her to focus on earning money. She managed to succeed in that task, but her success came at the cost of her ability to acquire other assets, in particular in terms of education, which could have helped her obtain cultural capital.

Beside differences in these respondents' backgrounds, gendered positionings and responsibilities have also created opportunities and obstacles. During my fieldwork, people mentioned that families preferred to "send" young women than men to Europe because of their supposedly greater loyalty to those who stay in Africa (see Al-Sharmani 2010 for a nuanced analysis of gender relations in Somali transnational households). It is difficult to assess whether this has been true in Imaan's case, but what is certain is that her new marital and parental status, interrelated with gender, has influenced the opportunities open to her. Not only has she become the main economic provider of her new family unit, but she is also responsible for most domestic duties (she explicitly stated that she no longer has the time to see her friends or call her parents because of her domestic tasks). She has not been able to pursue her educational plans and has had to continuously postpone her visit to her parents in Djibouti. As a young wife and mother, Imaan has to keep many of her local and transnational projects on hold and cannot increase her cultural capital, while her social networks shrink. Nuur, who also married and became a parent (under very different circumstances), has not experienced such obstacles. On the contrary, he has continued to mobilise the assets he already had, and he has possibly

even expanded his social networks thanks to his marriage to a woman who lived elsewhere, and he has been able to continue building up projects in both his country of residence and, thanks to his mobility, other places. In sum, having children has not affected his plans in the way it has Imaam's.

Both Imaan and Nuur were able to acquire a stable legal status and become Swiss citizens. However, gender and parental status also intervene in migrants' ability to acquire legal status, as the example of Imaan's sister demonstrates. When she arrived in Switzerland, she was too old to enrol at school (unlike Imaan, who was able to go to school for a year) and already a (divorced) mother. With three children (one of them from a new marriage in Switzerland), she has never been able to become economically self-sufficient and has been denied a Swiss passport. Policies in the fields of immigration, asylum, integration and citizenship, like most other policies, also rely on gendered representations and assumptions. Care, immigration and employment regimes operate together to influence migrant women's access to specific segments of the labour market (often low-skilled sectors with little security), limiting the state support they can access (for example, day care) and linking legal statuses with specific rights and obligations (Bonizzoni 2014). Other research has shown that for undocumented migrants who want to regularise their situation, it is often harder for women to meet the necessary criteria: because of their family responsibilities and the types of jobs they have (unregulated, low-paid, part-time and so on), they face greater difficulties in demonstrating the durability and the stability of their employment and their economic independence (Gafner and Schmidlin 2007; Hagan 1998). Imaan's sister, like other mothers, is faced with similar constraints on her ability to acquire a secure status. Besides impacting her ability to become integrated into her country of residence, this situation also limits her transnational opportunities. Legal capital is crucial to the ability to develop mobility practices.

Finally, hierarchies based on ethnicity and race, but also on religion and migrant status ("being a migrant") also affect people's positioning and their ability to accumulate diverse types of capital. Difficulties in validating credentials, accessing adequate education and joining the labour market recur in many respondents' accounts. A few female respondents in Switzerland further explained how they have been refused some jobs or even educational paths because they wear a veil. I have heard only a few direct accounts of discrimination in the labour market during my fieldwork, and I have not focused my interviews on that aspect of respondents' lives. However, other studies demonstrate that migrants often encounter exclusion processes based on ethnicity, race and religion, processes that contribute to their remaining in unskilled, low-waged and insecure sectors (see for instance Bauder 2003, 2005; Erel 2009; Kelly and Lusis 2006). Economic marginalisation, as Imaan's story shows, limits one's ability to obtain various types of capital, including mobility capital.

However, many respondents in both countries mentioned their unease with a political climate that they perceive to be increasingly xenophobic, Islamophobic and restrictive towards foreigners and ethnic minorities. Othering practices are also evident in the negative experiences some respondents have had when crossing borders – being singled out, despite a European passport, because of their appearance or name. Concrete obstacles to accessing resources, but also racist incidents and feelings of exclusion, shape people's access to opportunities in their country of residence, but also potentially motivate them to develop alternative projects elsewhere. This argument is developed in the following chapter.

Social actors thus occupy specific classed, gendered and ethnicised/racialised social positions, but always in relation to specific contexts. Local contexts, or the "localities" (Dahinden 2010b; Guarnizo and Smith 1998) in which people are embedded, both constrain and facilitate their access to local resources. Respondents' main place of residence is a major context from which they draw resources. That is where all mobile respondents draw a significant share of the economic, cultural, social and legal capital they transform into motility. In particular, opportunities to integrate into the educational system and labour market as well as discriminatory procedures and legislation regarding asylum, integration and naturalisation are important in shaping people's access to resources in their country of residence. The discussion of the importance of "legal capital" for the development of profitable mobility practices further illuminates how (European) states' border regulations and immigration policies structure access to motility. As for other resources, the ability to capitalise on mobility is dependent on some degree of control over one's cross-border movements. Migrants, in particular those from poorer countries, need to invest time and energy, as well as other types of resources, to acquire this control over their own mobility. This control entails the power to choose whether or not to cross one or many borders, how often, when, where and under how much surveillance. In other words, respondents' social and legal position in their country of residence shapes their access to and accumulation of mobility capital.

However, places other than the place of residence are also relevant to understanding the transformation of different types of capital into motility. These include the country of origin (providing, for instance, the social capital on which political or humanitarian projects build) and other places that are relevant in migrants' mobility systems – for instance, previous places of residence or places that are visited by star-shaped travellers.

The next chapter explores how respondents' mobility practices play with the differentiated valuation of capital in the different places and networks they link together. By transnationalising capital, social actors are able to benefit from their mobility. It also discusses further how the ways in which actors acquire and transform capital are linked to their positions in classed, gendered and ethnicised/racialised boundaries and hierarchies.

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