

Children at the center of West-African transnational families' global (re)production of symbolic and economic capital

The Trajectoire et Origine I and II statistical surveys, based on data gathered in France, provide a precise understanding of the impact of social reproduction projects of transnational families of West African cultural heritage. Over time, second- and third-generation members residing in France tend to achieve a level of socio-economic success equivalent to that of the majority population. West African families are more likely than others immigrant families to send children to the country of origin, for a given time and multiple educational and economic reasons.

Coe (2013), Grysole (2018; 2020) and Mabillard (2024) suggest that this tendency represents a variation on the already well documented practice of child fostering. Placement strategies for children and teenagers of first-generation migrant parents do not stop at reproducing symbolic and economic capital in their country of origin in West Africa (Yount, 2020). In some cases, these strategies involve sending several children to several countries beyond the duality of host country and country of origin.

This panel invites the exploration of the ways in which these families (re)produce family as well as economic and symbolic capital. It aims to detect and analyze the complexity of the educational tactics implemented, while highlighting care strategies, the mobilization of kinship, alliance and affinity networks, intergenerational issues and the technological means used to articulate them.

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