CHAPTER

Migration trajectories in Southern Africa. The masculinity-fix between Maputo and Johannesburg

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Short Bio

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Abstract

Based on the premise that masculinity is constructed within geographically and historically located social spaces, this chapter draws on forty biographical interviews with Mozambican men carried out between 2005 to 2014. Focussing on the life stories of Mozambican men who migrated to South Africa from the 1960s onwards, the chapter seeks to contribute to expanding the theoretical and methodological conversations about the spatial dynamics of migrant masculinities. It explores the interconnectedness of masculinity, migration, colonialism, capitalism and socio-economic inequality in Southern Africa. The chapter borrows and expands David Harvey's notion of spatial fix to highlight the spatial dimension of migrant masculinities and suggested that there is a particular spatial management of

masculinities. While the masculinity-fix is produced by the racial and gendered dynamics of transnational capitalism, it also associates masculinity with geographically and historically situated spaces, where men engage with their trajectories and perform their subjectivities.

Introduction: migration and the masculinity-fix

Over the past few decades, migration has steadily increased which has prompted a growing interest in migration experiences and trajectories (Amelina et al., 2013). However, few studies have explicitly addressed the gendered dimension of migration, and its consequences for perceptions and practices of masculinities and femininities across the globe (Wojnicka & Nowicka, 2022). Although migrant masculinities have gained more centre-stage in recent times (see Cornwall and Lindisfarne, 1994; Donaldson et al., 2009; Howson, 2014; Aboim & Vasconcelos, 2021 amongst others), there is still a gap to be bridged in current scholarship regarding migratory men and masculinities. More studies linking masculinity to space – specifically the spatial dynamics of gender power at transnational, national and local levels – are needed (see, in particular, Wojnicka & Pustułka 2019).

Beyond normative associations of male migration with accomplishment, responsibility, entrepreneurship or the formation of an adult status (see Sinatti, 2015), the multiple experiences of men who migrate reveal the dense fabric of connections between masculinity, power and space. Investigating the lives of migrant men requires researchers to critically approach the centrality of the spatial dimension in socially constructing masculinity. Masculinities are not independent of their socio-historic contexts. In Connell's (1987, 1995) inaugural theorization, she contends hegemonic masculinity represents a specific form of masculinity (usually white, heterosexual, wealthy, powerful) that gained ascendancy and validation within a specific historical and social setting. For Connell, hegemonic masculinity is a system of hierarchical plurality that emerges from the intersection between different principles of power and subordination which come to the fore in local, national, transnational and global levels (Connell, 1998).

Since Connell's (1987, 1995) scholarship on hegemonic masculinity, the study of the hierarchies of masculinities has resulted in scholars investigating the local, national, and

transnational manifestations. The spatial dimension has been central for the theorizing of masculinities. The patterns of masculine practice emerge and gain shape in given spaces (from local to global). The relations of power that sustain masculinity are deeply interwoven with spatial dimensions. Following Massey (2009), space is the product of power relations, with those operating at the transnational level being usually more powerful and capable of setting global agendas. Hence, more powerful masculinities (like corporate managers or other global players) tend to operate in transnational social arenas. The capacity to mobilize power is directly linked with the ability to impose hegemonic masculinity. The more transnational a masculinity, the more it can impose a given principle of power and subordination and rise to the top of the hierarchy of masculinity (Connell, 1998, 2016b). From the 1980s onwards, a conceptualisation of hegemonic masculinity on a global scale foregrounded transnational masculinities as integral to the formation of a new historical hegemony – that of corporate managers and global finance. That is why various forms of subordinate masculinities (an umbrella-term for all enactments of masculinity discriminated on the basis of race, class, sexual orientation or delegitimized gendered enactments (Aboim and Vasconcelos, 2021), are usually more locally situated. Often, these masculinities lack the power to affect global political and economic agendas (see Howson & Hearn (2019) and their consideration of the discursive space of men and masculinities). Regardless, whether local or global, masculinity is embedded in social space where discursively it is undergoing continual rearrangements and reconfigurations. Therefore, rather than fixed and rigid, masculinities are spatially contingent and mutable across different spaces and spatial scales (global, supranational, transnational, national, regional, local).

Despite the increasing number of contributions on migrant, transnational or local masculinities, there is still a dearth of research about the spatialized dynamics of masculinity. Taking this gap as my starting point, I seek to contribute to expanding the theoretical and

methodological conversations about the spatial dynamics of migrant masculinities. Inspired by Connell's hierarchical system of masculinities which I argue is closely tied to global inequality under neoliberal capitalism (Aboim, Machado & Zhang, 2022), I explore how masculinities, specifically migrant masculinities, are affected by specific forms of 'spatial fix.' The notion of spatial fix is borrowed from David Harvey (2001, 2003), who used this term to describe the configuration of spatial solutions to the crisis tendencies generated by capitalist problems of over-accumulation. Emphasizing the relevance of a geographic and historical standpoint to understand processes of globalization, Harvey (2001, p. 28) noted:

> The "spatial fix" (in the sense of geographical expansion to resolve problems of overaccumulation) is in part achieved through fixing investments spatially, embedding them in the land, to create an entirely new landscape (of airports and of cities, for example) for capital accumulation (…) the infrastructures of urbanization are crucial, both as foci of investment to absorb surpluses of capital and labor (providing localized/regional forms of the "spatial fix" as through the dynamics of suburbanization or the building of airport complexes) and as the necessary fixed capital of an immobile sort to facilitate spatial movement and the temporal dynamics of continued capital accumulation.

Harvey's spatial fix led to a number of related conceptualizations (see Herod, 2003). Recently, Bird and Schmid (2021, 2022) expanded Harvey's concept and proposed the notion of the migration fix. They suggest that the migration fix is neither purely associated with economic reasons, nor merely seeking spatial expansion. It is a more complex process that involves political goals, border regulation and population control. The migration fix works through various institutional, political, social and economic means and actors to control and channel populations across borders in order to extract profit and manage uneven patterns of capitalist development. As Harvey notes, the word 'fix' has multiple meanings (2001, p. 24). One common meaning is that something or someone is secured in space. Another is to resolve a difficulty, to take care of a problem, to fix something. The lenses of the spatial-fix work in

the latter sense. In the same vein, I suggest that there is a particular spatial management of masculinities, which can be best described as a 'masculinity-fix.' The masculinity-fix is produced by the racial and gendered dynamics of transnational capitalism. Furthermore, the masculinity-fix associates masculinity with geographically and historically situated spaces (see Lohokare, 2019) where men engage with their trajectories and perform their subjectivities.

In theorizing a masculinity-fix, it is important to consider how it is responsive to global labour demands and unequal capitalist development, which often foment gendered forms of regulation with workers and working conditions. After all, chains of supply and demand as well as the market for certain forms of labour are inherently embedded in the gender order (see Kaplan and VanderBrug, 2014). I am interested in how flows of dislocation and relocation, tied to Harvey's work on spatial fix, became a fundamental part of the spatial dimension of the masculinity-fix. When migrating from one country to another, men are compelled to rebuild their sense of self while their position in the hierarchy of masculinity becomes open to reinterpretation, within and across borders. Facing the difficulties of migration, masculinity has to be 'fixed' to make sense and adjust to another space.

Based on the premise that masculinity is constructed within specific geographically and historically located social spaces (thereby, it is inherently spatially organized) this chapter draws on forty biographical interviews with Mozambican men carried out over the past decades, from 2005 to 2014 (Aboim, 2009, 2012; Aboim and Vasconcelos, 2021). Conducted through local ethnographies in two different geographical settings – Maputo (Mozambique) and Lisbon (Portugal) [1] – the research included Mozambican men from different generations

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[1] During my fieldwork in Maputo (first in 2005-2006, and later in 2010-2011), I carried out 40 in-depth interviews with men from different age groups and with different work activities and family situations. All men, though, were from an underprivileged background, ranging from extreme poverty to 'lower middle' class. In Lisbon, 20 in-depth interviews with immigrant Mozambican men were conducted. Interviewed in 2012 and 2014, all participants were recently arrived migrants. In both locations, local informants were of great importance in the collection of the data.

and with a variety of migration trajectories. Focussing on the life stories of Mozambican men who migrated to South Africa in different historical periods (since the 1960s until today), I examine male migration trajectories drawing on the lens of 'masculinity-fix' to examine the interconnectedness of masculinity, migration, and socio-economic inequality. This angle of analysis emphasizes the situated intersections of gender, race, and class and how these factors are influenced (and also influence) migration trajectories. As noted by Yuval-Davis (2015, p. 95):

> Situated intersectionality analysis, therefore, in all its facets, is highly sensitive to the geographical, social and temporal locations of the particular individual or collective social actors examined by it, contested, shifting and multiple as they usually are.

Therefore, disadvantaged Mozambican men are not merely sucked into the structural dynamics of globalisation, where they would be expected to become some sort of automatons that simply adjust to the demands of global markets. Their migration trajectories take shape in particular historically situated social spaces and according to intersectional identity vectors. Therefore, in exploring the 'masculinity-fix' in their migration stories, I focus on how it is configured by colonialism, capitalism and historically enforced racial subalternization have consistently fed the hierarchal system of masculinity (Aboim & Vasconcelos, 2021).

Masculinity, race, and postcolonial capitalism

In the present-day, migration from countries in Southern Africa remains largely motivated by rising poverty and the pursuit of economic opportunities (e.g., Migration Data Portal, 2022). According to the Global Inequality Report (Chancel, Piketty, et al. 2021), in 2021, the contrast between world regions is striking. While the average income of North America is 315% of the world average income, sub-Saharan Africa receives only a meagre

31% of the world average income. In recent years, alongside the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, political insecure, violent conflict leading to displacement (International Organization for Migration, 2022) and environmental catastrophes in Southern Africa reinforced the flee to other countries. In Mozambique, one of the poorest countries in the region where 60 per cent of the population lives in extreme poverty (with the poverty threshold at 1.90 U.S. dollars a day), most migrants hailing from Mozambique (70 per cent, according to Statista, 2022) complained about shortage of food and water. Due to poverty, Mozambique has a fair share of out-migration (8 per cent), with the majority of migrants moving to neighbouring countries (i.e., South Africa, Tanzania or Malawi). Only a smaller share emigrates to Europe (namely to Portugal or the United Kingdom) or the US (Tolentino & Peixoto, 2011; Slegh et al., 2017). Highlighting the gendered nature of migration, over the past few years male migration saw a significant increase in Southern Africa. Despite the increase of female migration, more Mozambican men struggle to make ends meet away from home and looked for opportunities abroad (Aboim, 2009; Agdajanian et al., 2021).

African masculinities have a harsh history of marginalization and displacement (Lindsay & Miescher, 2003; Morrell, 2003; Ouzgane & Morrell, 2005; Izugbara, 2015; Ammann & Staudacher, 2021). In the past, colonialism and enslavement displaced African men from their homelands, cultural transitional, families or ethnic groups (e.g., Isaacman, 1992). In more recent years, alongside the violent legacy of colonial days, a regime of exploitation and precariousness (in labour and life) thrives under the regulation of neoliberal global capitalism (Bird & Schmid, 2021, 2022) shaping what is possible for African men. Colonialism and capitalism are greatly responsible for the displacement of men from one social space to another. Men's migration configures patterns of movement through space that are better understood in relation to the forces that structure the political economy (Schiller,

2018). The two regimes of exploitation – both historical and contemporary – are deeply intertwined and nowhere like in postcolonial Africa is this more bluntly evident.

The linkages and inter-dependence between the rise of colonial empires and modern capitalism are stronger than usually recognized (Aboim, Machado & Zhang, 2022; Bhambra & Holmwood, 2021; Bhambra 2021; Hardt & Negri, 2001; Sunanda & Marcuzzo, 2019). Both colonialism and capitalism involved large-scale territorial expansion which contributed to a spatial fix specifically in regard to increased needs of surplus labour. As Hardt and Negri (2001) have argued, European capitalist economy was largely fuelled by colonial slave production. This operation was not just economic; rather, it involved many forms of regulation and multiple actors to ensure the effectiveness of extra-economic coercion (Ince, 2018). The structural subordination of significant numbers of black men and the perpetuation of racial hierarchies contribute to well-established inequality lines within masculinities. The mining industry in South Africa exemplifies how class and race continue to have sttutural force and fuel the heiarchy of masculinities. Despite the recurrent efforts to boost black ownership up to a percentage of 30 per cent in 2017, most of the land and companies are owned by white individuals, who account for just 8 per cent of the population as against 80 per cent of black South Africans (Lempriere, 2017). Indeed, at the intersection of gender, race and class, the hegemony of white-upper-class (and some forms of white-middle-class) masculinities in Africa is a legacy of colonialism. The subordination of non-white-poor migrants also reflects a similar pattern of oppression.

Linking back to migratory masculinities, the migration corridor between Mozambique and South Africa is complex and endured through colonial days, apartheid, civil war, and recurrent economic and climate crisis. However, this corridor consistently served as a channel for the labour reserve formed by poor Mozambican men (e.g., Musariri & Moyer, 2021). In this sense, the violence of capitalism is both colonial (Ince, 2018), racial (Robinson & Quan,

2019)[2] and/or postcolonial (Sanyal, 2013). This involved moulding both production and consumption, through shaping specific landscapes, migration corridors, distribution chains, border regulation, or aspiration to consumerist lifestyles. With this in mind, Harvey's (2001) spatial fix provides insight into the unequal flows of people and goods. Within these patterns of mobility, particular gender dynamics have manifested in relation to labour and market demands. I would argue the masculinity-fix shows how, under global capitalism, men navigate different geographic, social and political spaces (whether moving from one nation-state to another, from rural to urban, from local to international routes of circulation) that come to change their masculinity. Furthermore, the masculinity-fix also shows how men tend to reproduce forms of commodified subjectivities around value and what they can exchange in relation to the market. As Matlon (2014, p. 1017) argues, articulations of dominance from a marginal location (frequently expressed via consumerist practices and identities) 'serve to legitimize capitalism among black men generally, even if their structural location remains unchanged.' In Southern Africa, subordinate men from poorer segments of the population have to deal with harsh forms of economic exploitation, which, in turn, contributes to reifying the hierarchies of masculinity. In the Southern African context, economic-driven migrants are among the most exploited. Low paid and precarious jobs lead to the reproduction of blatant inequalities and a system that produces distinct classes of workers. Low paid migrants face the lack of rights and living conditions while fighting discrimination and abuse (see Shelley, 2007).

The Indian economist Kalyan Sanyal (2013) proposes that postcolonial capitalism today flourishing in the Global South continuously producing a 'wasteland of the

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[2] The connection between racial oppression and capitalism has raised an intense debate, divided opinions and gained centre-stage. In a re-reading of Marx, Cedric Robinson, professor of political science and race studies (Black Studies) at the University of California Santa Barbara, saw racism and capitalism expanding in tandem, initially in Europe, where the first practices of colonization emerged. Thus, integrated racism and capitalism gave rise to a new world system, which Robinson calls racial capitalism, a system based on slavery, violence, expropriation, imperialism.

dispossessed' (Sanyal, 2013, p. 58) where individuals are often excluded from their very own circuits of capitalist exploitation. For Sanyal, postcolonial capitalism is essentially a regime of profit, where various institutions (including the action of the State or international and non-governmental agents) work to produce a precarious and subalternized 'reserve army' of migrants, outsiders, and the poor. The hierarchical model of hegemonic masculinity depends and is deeply linked to this 'metropole-apparatus.' For Connell (2016a, p. 311), institutionalized regimes of global power, whether centred in the old colonial metropoles or more geographically decentred, sustain the dominance of some masculinities over other masculinities and femininities,

Migration from Mozambique to South Africa (Tolentino & Peixoto, 2011; First, 2015; Castel-Branco, 2020) grew immensely during the colonial period and continued to steadily increase until today. While the expansion of colonial capitalism forged in Western metropolises was key to establish patterns of exploitation, it came to uphold the structural racialization and precariousness of workers under regimes of postcolonial racial capitalism. The use of the colony of Mozambique as a reserve of labour that fed the South African centres of capital accumulation, is one of the dominant characteristics of Portuguese colonization in Mozambique in the late nineteenth century and during the twentieth century. This history is also a consequence of the dependency character of Portuguese colonialism and capitalism throughout its history (First, 2015). With this in mind, this chapter addresses the masculinity-fix anchors the hierarchical system of masculinities (where some are over and above others (see Connell, 2016a), in spatial and mobility dynamics. Specifically, inspired by these critical approaches, in the coming sections, we use the lens of the 'masculinity-fix' to examine male migration from Mozambique to South Africa.

Men on the move. Migration routes and transnational sampling

From a methodological point of view, the efforts to assemble a transnational sample (Amelina, Faist & Nergiz, 2013) of Mozambican men from a broad spectrum of generations was essential as it allowed me to decipher the differing migration trajectories of the participants.

Contemporary Mozambique offered an excellent setting for the development of a case study analysis drawn from in-depth ethnographic work carried out in the urban and 'rurban' areas (i.e., the reed neighbourhoods that surround the cement city) of the Mozambican capital, Maputo. This work started in 2006 and lasted for over a decade, expanding geographically to Lisbon (Portugal), where 15 Mozambican migrants living in Portugal have been interviewed in-depth between 2012 and 2014. From the 25 black (mostly of Tsonga-Changana ethnicity) Mozambican men interviewed in Maputo, the majority had experienced some form of migration. Some men came from rural areas to the city, but many of them were or had been migrants in South Africa, mainly in Johannesburg to work in the mines (First, 2015). Over the years, the city of Maputo appeared as a hybrid space − where different men come to recreate their lives and their selves − marked by the legacies of European imperialism, under the rule of which occurred the encounters between colonizer and colonized, and, at present, by the rapid pace of transnationality, whether economic, politic, social or cultural. Within my sample, the disruptive experience of migration, whether internal (from rural to urban) or transnational (South Africa, Portugal and Europe), enabled me to understand the effects of migration and transnational living upon masculinity. Through these migratory experiences, most migrant men have to deal with the *racialized* marginalization associated with blackness and poverty. Across different geographies, Mozambican men living in poverty face many challenges in their adjustment to conditions of harsh precarious work in a foreign country.

Mozambican men are compelled to constantly 'fix' their masculinity, which involves the display of hybrid traits of masculinity between Mozambique and South Africa.

I argue that Mozambican men are not without agency. They come up with creative enactments of masculinity that are exemplary of what Bhabha (1994) calls liminality: a space of hybridism, where, within certain limits, understandings of masculinity can become flexible across spaces. This flexibility is also what permits to fix masculinity to make sense in a particular place while being able to change between places. Individual agency plays an important role. The global forces of (post)colonial capitalism do not erode individual creativity and interpretation. In Maputo, an industrial worker of a multi-national company or a street-vendor of handicraft (Agadjanian, 2022) are, both, actors in transnational chains who permanently decipher the plural references that surround them. The first may compare himself to his non-Mozambican boss, receives training from 'foreigner' specialists and understands the 'capitalist' opportunity he had allows him to earn more than his male relatives or mates, even if it also places him in a subaltern position. The second trades merchandise which is often produced in another country and sells it to western tourists with whom he interacts daily. At home, both would most likely watch Brazilian or Portuguese soap-operas, which are increasingly popular in Mozambique, and slowly incorporate certain cultural references into their system of values. These very brief examples are intended to draw attention to the fact that most often men take part in transnational economic and cultural chains and are dealing with different, sometimes contradictory, sources of information, which they interpret and make use of in their daily lives.

Migration plays a central role where it compels men to reinterpret traditional values of masculinity, like breadwinning, family authority or community respectability. Migration is central for understanding how space constructs masculinity and its hierarchical system. Men's mobility across nations, regions and local communities – whether as a result from colonial

domination or capitalist demand for labour – involves 'fixing' their masculinity. The social impact of multiple spaces, labour conditions, patterns of practice, symbologies or norms of proper and desired masculinity becomes evident. The 'old' and the 'new', the global and the local, appear tied together in flexible ways. Aihwa Ong (1999) described similar processes as the capacity for constructing flexible citizenship with a case study of Chinese migrants in the US. The reinvention of tradition and the use of multiple references allows for flexible forms of masculinities, which result both from individual and collective interpretations of transnational capitalism or cultural globalization. In this perspective, men's life stories not only represent a vivid testimony of socio-historical change, but also reveal the constitution of hybrid meanings and practices, many of which expose a complex mix of marginalization and domination.

Against the backdrop of postcolonial capitalist exploitation and the challenges of poverty, Mozambican men living in poverty also play an active role in adjusting and recreating their masculinity across local, national and transnational borders. When they travel from the village to the city and to a foreign country, the constraints are manifold and difficult to overcome. After all, transnational relations carry the legacy of colonial oppression and are embedded in a history of gender, class, and race marginalization. In this sense, masculinities are inherently informed by postcolonial history. As suggested by Aboim and Vasconcelos (2021, p. 327), 'the notion of postcolonial masculinities is fitted to signal the continuous subalternization of those subjected to hegemonic powers from imperial days to nowadays.' Yet, the strategies of Mozambican male migrants to maintain a valued identity, which combines financial success with social recognition and power, are of paramount importance to understand how masculinity is recreated, and reinterpreted in situated settings. In the following section, I examine male stories of migration from Mozambique to South Africa.

Becoming a man in Joni[3] ... Migration to South Africa in two generations

From the Portuguese colonial period to the present day, migration to South Africa remained the most common migratory route for Mozambican men (Tolentino & Peixoto, 2011; Castel-Branco, 2020). Mozambican migration to South Africa has been indelibly linked to the mines. Among the Mozambican participants in the study, across generations many have migrated to South Africa. Older men, like Miguel (born in 1959 in the rural area of Inhambane), were often 'forced' by colonial powers to work as miners in South Africa.[4] Younger men still take the same steps and travel a similar path; men like Orlando (born in 1990 in Maputo) flee poverty and try their luck in their neighbouring country. However, Orlando was able to escape the work in the mines. As Orlando says: 'At least I'm not in the mines…' During the colonial period, the Portuguese formed close economic ties with Apartheid South Africa, which lasted from 1897 until 1975, when Mozambique became independent. The initial form of economic integration revolved around the exploitation of cheap, often forced (xibalu), Mozambican labour in South African mines. Mozambican men were a labour reserve. In the 1950s and 1960s, a study on migration flows from Inhambane Province (where Miguel was born) showed that more than 30 per cent of men migrated to work in the South African mines. The South African mining complex employed an average of 110,000 migrant workers per year in the first half of 1970 (Castel-Branco, 2020). Highlighting the economic changes over time, their journeys are markedly different

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[3] The nickname that people of Southern Mozambique call the city of Johannesburg (Raimundo, 2005).

[4] Since the late 19th century, colonial regulations anticipated the transformation of Southern Mozambique into a huge reserve of labour for the mines of South Africa, while the African labour force of the Central-North regions was forced to work for the large concessionary companies present there. This political project was based on the expansion of a subdued and cheap labour force, to keep up with the demand arising from the accelerated economic growth of the region (Meneses, 2010).

depending their age and what labour opportunities were available. We now investigate their stories more in depth.

In his early teens, Miguel left his home village and started working as an electrician in Maputo. Later Miguel decided to emigrate to South Africa, where he worked as a miner for two decades. He came back, however, to get married in Inhambane in 1981 to a local woman when he was 21. Since then Miguel has lived between South Africa and Maputo. As Mercandalli et al. (2017) also note, in the post-apartheid period, the earnings from labour among Mozambican migrants remained extremely important, with the income from remittances often constituting a fundamental part of the household income.

As he recalls:

> I was only a child when I went to the mines. It was a harsh life, but I earned some money, enough to get married in my village… I had to leave though, and it became difficult to send money home. In the past things were different, now there is no respect. That's no life for young men like my son… I worked too much, I killed myself in those mines just to be poor and poorer…

As Bento (71, taxi driver in Maputo and miner in his youth) clearly states:

> A mine worker, willing or not, is exploited because he was forced to live in *Joni*, due to poverty. A mine worker is exploited because he works hard, but doesn't get paid the same as they [white South Africans] do, the way they do. He receives very little money when compared to what they receive. Those who just hang around, don't do anything, while he does all the work. [*Who are they?*] *Joni*'s white guy, he's sitting there and he points with his finger…Gives orders: do this! He does it because I'm black.

Both Bento and Miguel described their hopes of a better life in Johannesburg, or *Joni* as they call it, which is integral to their aspiration to achieve/maintain a valued manhood through migration. Both also described their frustration. The inability to escape poverty and the difficulties associated with discrimination in the past (under colonialism and apartheid)

and the present (under a regime of socioeconomic inequality like racial capitalism) leading to a crisis of masculinity, are main sources of sorrow. When Miguel speaks of his family, he reveals a 'breadwinner complex' and the pressure to exchange labour for money to support his family. Many other participants spoke of how maintaining a breadwinner identity appeared as a central feature of responsible masculinity, a notion of great importance for many Mozambican men.

Often, the construction and maintenance of a respected masculinity mobilises traditional norms stemming from the colonial past. Building on precolonial custom and the patrilineal family system that upheld men's power as rulers of their households, Portuguese colonial policies enforced ideals of the male breadwinner model, thereby contributing to female subordination. Many Mozambican men had to enter the wage-earning system or even forced labour. This view was reinforced by Christianization processes and the '*assimilado*' system,[5] whose social legitimacy survived its legal abolition 1961 (Isaacman, 1993; Arnfred, 2002). The colonial ideological apparatus praised male breadwinning, albeit hindering most male Mozambicans to access the labour market. However, despite its complexity, the 'male provider' is an ideal to which many Mozambican men aspire. For Miguel, migration to work in South African mines enabled him to reconstruct his masculinity. He earned enough money and respect in his home village and was able to get married. However, this achievement was not enough and the material compensation too meagre to compensate for the hard work. After all, Miguel felt overpowered by the corporate forces controlling the mine and discriminated for his race and migrant status. Moreover, unable to fulfil his duty as breadwinner, Miguel often felt like a moral villain. The crisis of African masculinities is often depicted as a displacement from respectable and productive roles as breadwinners and community leaders.

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[5] *Assimilado* is the Portuguese word officially applied to those Africans and *mestiços* considered by the colonial authorities to have met certain formal standards indicating that they had successfully absorbed (assimilated) the Portuguese language and culture. In principle, individuals legally assigned the status of *assimilado* took on the privileges and obligations of Portuguese citizens and escaped the burdens imposed on most Africans (the *indígenas*). The status of *assimilado* and its legal implications were formally abolished in 1961.

Men are excluded from certain forms of public participation and capital as a result of hierarchies of masculinities (Ratele, 2021).

In recent years, unskilled men like Orlando are facing the breakdown of employment opportunities in Mozambique, struggling to make a living and build up an identity outside the codes of traditional Mozambican masculinity. In contrast to Miguel, for Orlando, migration is less associated with aspirations to becoming a respected family provider. Like many others in Maputo, Orlando migrated to escape severe poverty, scarcity of opportunities and a dangerous life of petty crime. Migration to South Africa, whether to work in the mines, a salesman or any other line of business, emerges has both a constraint and an opportunity to value oneself for these men. Undoubtably, in younger generations the 'masculinity-fix' of migration operates through more individualized discourses, which mimic a marketized language whereby masculinity becomes equated with capitals and exchange (see Aboim 2012).

Presently, Orlando lives between the Mahotas' neighbourhood, in Maputo's suburbs, and Johannesburg in South Africa. Orlando heads to *Joni* to try his luck as a street salesman of pirated DVDs. The precarity of his small business impedes him from foreseeing any significant material gains. Despite the fact that, at 25, he is already the father of three small children, Orlando makes evident his efforts to escape lasting commitments and avoids anything that might be a form of exploitation. Troubled with the migration hazards of his father and other male relatives, Orlando refuses to work in the mines and prefers to take higher risks by selling illegal or stolen merchandise. As he describes:

> 'I want to be my own boss. I'm risking my life sometimes, but I don't want to be poor all my life and just make the other rich. No one got rich in the mines, no one… The true Mozambican man must be a warrior (…) I'm a true molwene, I'm in the lead... No one messes with me.'

Among the young men living in poverty one of the categories regularly used to depict a valued identity is that of a 'molwene,' a Ronga word meant a homeless child or beggar (see Groes-Green, 2009 for more detail). Recently, poor young men in Maputo reappropriated its meaning and gave it a positive connotation. In their discourses, *molwene* became a synonymous term of 'warrior', a quality that men should possess to affirm their self-value and self-governance. My research highlights how migration trajectories are often described as journeys of courage and risk-taking, suggesting how the men in my study needed to present subjectivities closely aligned with a hegemonic form of masculinity. The *molwene* recaptures the warrior nature of Mozambican men, with a strong rejection of the 'soft' manhood brought in by (post)colonial capitalism and consumerism. Orlando is keen to brag about his pursuit of autonomy and power where migration becomes central. Contrary to Miguel, Orlando expresses his resistance to the role of family provider. Even if he has a tone of guilt in his voice when he speaks about his children, Orlando quickly says they have to learn how to mend for themselves. Orlando must do better and achieve more for himself in South Africa. When he speaks of his achievements, Orlando shows the trendy jeans he is wearing and emphasizes how that pair of jeans are of great significance to him. They are a symbol of his positive identity as a man, of his struggles to achieve a valuable masculinity. Orlando's 'masculinity-fix' reveals the movement towards the commodification of masculinity promoted by the embodiment of the principles of a neo-liberal capitalist economy (Aboim, 2012).

The entanglements between local categories – such as the *warrior/ molwene* – and globalized symbols – like the black American hip-hopper, for instance – suggest masculinities in transnational spaces are hybrid. In doing do, men create a discursive space where a commodified language takes root. Like a currency, possessing certain valued goods (from a pair of jeans to a sexual reputation) compensate, in this marketized mode, the lack of other

goods (e.g., money, public power, etc.). Migration journeys exacerbate these processes of hybridization, where resistance emerges in combination with hierarchical power. For this to happen, the enlarged geographical, social and discursive spaces produced by migration experiences across borders become a constituent of masculinity. Migration is simultaneously a constraint and an opportunity for agency and resistance. Over time and generations of men, the Mozambique-South Africa corridor of migration remained exemplary of both agency and resistance. This masculinity-fix evidences the situated intersections of race and class in both colonial times and present-day postcolonial capitalism.

Final comments

This chapter concludes by emphasizing the importance of the dialogue between critical studies of men and masculinities, migration studies and postcolonial theorizations of capitalism and racial inequality. Furthermore, by adopting a spatial perspective, this dialogue can open new avenues. David Harvey's theorization was a key point of departure. Harvey (2001, 2003) conceptualized the notion of spatial fix in two ways (e.g., Herod, 2003). It involved two ways of 'fixing', which combine physical infrastructures suitable for the process of production and geographic expansion of the capitalist system. Beyond Harvey's formulation, the 'fixing' also works through the regulation of surplus populations across borders (like in the migration-fix suggested by Bird and Schmid, 2021) and by reproducing symbolic models and discursive spaces of practice. The study of migrant masculinities involves deciphering the impact of spatial dimensions that become more visible and empirically relevant.

In their journeys from Maputo to Johannesburg (Joni), Mozambican men from different generations navigate established material and symbolic spaces, where oppression hinders opportunity of up-ward mobility and old power cleavages gain new meanings that

give way to creative spaces for enacting hybrid masculinities. Mozambican men have agency and capacity for resistance, which generates a more positive outlook for hybrid masculinities (e.g., Sakhumzi, 2018). In this way, rather than essentially disguising hegemonic power (Bridges & Pascoe, 2014), developments in hybrid masculinities might contribute to undermine established hierarchies of masculinity that cut across different historical periods and generations of men. The masculinity-fix involves and enables agency, but it is also produced and constrained by the forces of capitalist production. Migrant men constitute a reserve of labour that ensures chains of production and profit. The institutional apparatus of the migration corridor from Mozambique to South Africa (from colonial days to the present-day) guarantees the material and legal possibilities to manage the circulation of male populations to work in the mines, the plantations, or the streets. This postcolonial reserve of workers has endured and endures precarious conditions that continue to reproduce inequalities and marginalization.

Economic migration in Southern Africa also contributes to the commodification of masculinity that emerges in a discursive space where everything — labour, bodily skills, goods, property – is awarded a certain value, which mimics, to some extent, the capitalist dynamics of economic exchange. By using their working bodies as if these were 'capitals' of manhood – with a value of use and exchange, to use a fitting Marxist terminology − men trade their bodily abilities in a sort of market of goods where hard work is poorly compensated. Many migrants see themselves excluded and deprived of the material and symbolic 'goods' that would grant them a valued masculinity. The masculinity-fix generated by the spatial organization, population management and symbolic justification of postcolonial capitalism often throws these men into dispossession and extreme precarity (Sanyal, 2013). The masculinity-fix highlights how these are gendered processes that take place in situated social spaces linked across various geographies.

Fundamentally, the spatial lenses of the masculinity-fix invite us to examine the linkages between masculinities and capitalism (Matlon, 2014). For that purpose, global regimes of economic inequality (like postcolonial or racial capitalism) gain centrality in the analyses undertaken. After all, these long-lasting regimes of inequality continue to constrain the lives and aspirations of men (and their masculinities), whether in Mozambique, Southern Africa or across the globe.

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