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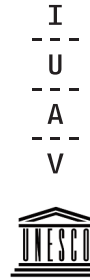
PRACTICE OF CITIZENSHIP, PRACTICE OF RESISTANCE: MOZAMBICANS IN JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA

Elena Ostanel



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Preface

The paper focuses on Mozambican immigration in Johannesburg, South Africa, addressing some critical aspects of the relationship between international migration and urban inclusion¹. In particular, it examines the practices migrants put in place 'to access' the city, with a special focus on public space, security and citizenship. Throughout the paper, the focus is on practices rather than on the traditional notion of citizenship that conforms to the national-territorial norms, under the assumption that they produce new 'hybrid' citizenships and 'multiple geographies'.

The research was based on interviews with Mozambican migrants and local actors working on migration. Through the interviews, the narratives of migrants were reconstructed and their lives in Johannesburg described, as well as their access (or non-access) to citizenship rights. At the same time, an analysis of scholarly articles and press clippings was carried out on the impact of xenophobic discourse and practice. The aim was to highlight the way such discourse impacts on local and national governments migration measures and shapes the local population's perception on migrants.

Snowball sampling (Silvermann, 2000) was used for in-depth interviews as an effective way to conduct research on migration (Romania, 2004). The sample representation is ensured by the so called 'knowledge saturation' (Bertaux, 1980). Snowball sampling relies on referrals from initial subjects to generate additional subjects and permits network reconstruction in the studied communities in terms of arriving to a complete clarification of routines, common behaviour and ways of accessing the urban environment. Knowledge saturation is a type of methodology that produces a new structured form of qualitative analysis in comparison to other methods' discursive analysis and action research. Narratives of migrants were reconstructed through the stories collected and routines were progressively clarified thanks to the information collected during the interviews.

The analysis rests upon the theory of 'social constructivism'², according to which practices must be looked at on the backdrop of the specific social contexts. This is in line with the idea that knowledge comes from the individual and is socially constructed. The value of social constructivism lies in the fact that it recognizes that reality can be more properly comprehended by inquiring into the ways people come into contact with the environment they live in. Thus, in the 'known' world multiple perspectives can be



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1. The paper is the result of a field research conducted in Johannesburg in 2009, thanks to the collaboration with FMSP, University of Witwatersrand. I would like to thank Prof. Loren Landau for his precious support.
2. According to social constructivism, artifacts and practices are seen as the construction of individuals or collectivities that belong to a social group.

negotiated and constructed. This is particularly relevant in a context of social marginalization where, most of the time, 'zones of exception', are practiced and the distinction between 'legal' and 'illegal' is constantly negotiated.

What is generally referred to as 'frame reflection' is central to this kind of analysis: 'from a problematic situation that is vague and ambiguous each story selects and names different features that become the 'thing of the story' (Schon and Rein, 1994). Accordingly, each narrative constructs its own social reality on the basis of elements selected through an interpretative process of naming and framing, shifting from data to recommendations and from fact to values. Through this approach, the narratives of migrants point out 'strategies of citizenship' (Isin, 2000), that question the meaning of 'access to the city' in post apartheid South Africa.

People living at the margin are often seen as 'spectators of a city', which denies them the right to the city. On the contrary, marginal population experience the city by putting into practice different modes of resistance that can be referred to as practice of citizenship (or practice of resistance). In many instances, such resistance is the reason for, and rests on, the provision of services and the implementation of initiatives that are neither planned nor provided by the local government. This poses a major challenge to the social and spatial inclusion of migrants and has important implications for urban governance.

With its bundle of legal rights and duties, citizenship is the legal status that marks a distinction between members and outsiders. Such distinction is based on their different relations to particular States and highlights the boundaries of formal citizenship. On the contrary, urban citizenship is an ever-changing concept producing itself through everyday practice in the city (Toner and Taylor, 2008). In this sense, the 'right to the city' (Lefebvre, 1978) is the extension of a social process through which individuals and social groups engage in claiming, expanding or losing rights. 'Citizenship emerges in practice in the repetitive act through which people are marked as one of us or one of them. Citizenship is about being there legitimately in public space and being seen to be there' (McNevin, unpublished). Thus, the idea is to distinguish between 'acts of contestation' and 'acts of citizenship' in order to figure out citizenship as a mode of resistance, describing practice of it, being open to its potentialities. Contestation is the act of questioning the traditional notion of citizenship by practicing the right to the city in multicultural Johannesburg.

Introduction

Cross-border within SADC dates back to at least 150 years, when labour migrants went to work in the Kimberley diamond mines from modern-day Lesotho, Zimbabwe and Mozambique, long before the drawing of colonial boundaries (Crush et al., 2006). The discovery of gold on the Witwatersrand changed the entire pattern of labour migration in the sub-continent. Though

initially most migrants came independently, mine migration soon became highly regulated and recruitment was secured by a single agency, the Employment Bureau of Africa (TEBA). In addition to mining, commercial farms, factories, domestic service, transportation and construction industries also hired migrants, but in a less organized way.

South Africa was not the only country to migrate to. Cross-border migration was common practice for all SADC Countries. The Southern African Migration Project (Crush et al., 2006) shed light on some of the reasons behind the strong and male-based migration in Southern Africa. Firstly, in many cases, colonial boundaries literally destroyed societies and cut communities in half. In many parts of the sub-continent members of the same family or lineage found themselves living in different countries and cross-border social interaction continued unabated. Secondly, before the 1960s, international borders had never been properly drawn or policed and there had been no border control between many SADC States – which made it easy for migrants to move to other countries in search of employment. Thirdly, the mining industry was the only sector to establish a formal contract labour system. Other employers did not have access to this labour and often hired migrants outside the law (i.e commercial agriculture and domestic service). Finally, colonial regulations and the formal contract system for labour migrants were gender-biased. Female migrants could not migrate legally across borders for work. Consequently, they had to migrate illegally, which many did.

Today's States of Southern Africa can be divided into migrant-sending States (Mozambique, Malawi, Lesotho) and migrant-receiving ones (South Africa, Namibia). In a few cases, such as Botswana and Swaziland, States fall into both categories (Crush 1999, Peberdy, 2001). Cross border migration in the SADC is more complex and consistent in volume than in the past, but there is a significant decline in legal migration vis-à-vis an increase in undocumented migration. It is increasingly difficult to migrate formally to the new democratic South Africa, particularly for other Africans (Crush 1999, Peberdy, 2001). Nonetheless, the number of African migrants to South Africa has increased. The consequence of the tightening of immigration policy is that migration has become informal, turning ever-increasing numbers of people into undocumented migrants.

Migration today is more and more feminized and there is a rapid urbanization and reconfiguration of rural-urban linkages (Crush et al., 2006). Brain drain from the region is also increasing, together with resettlement and reintegration of mass refugee movements.

The 2001 South Africa census indicated that there were 345,161 registered non-South African Africans in the country, a significant increase compared to five years earlier. Other estimates put the number of foreign migrants (legal and illegal) between 500,000 and 850,000 (Crush, Williams 2001) mostly in the largest cities. Throughout the Gauteng Province, home to the cities of Johannesburg and Pretoria, there has been

a significant increase in the foreign born population over the last decade: from 4.8 percent in 1996 to 5.4 percent in 2001. In Johannesburg, the number of non-South Africans had climbed from 65,000 in 1996 to more than 100,000 five years later (Landau, 2004).

According to '2009 CoRMSA Report', migrants account for 4.1 percent of the total urban population of the country and 1.6 percent of rural residents. While a small number of these international migrants have humanitarian needs, most are self sufficient. Many bring skills and resources that generate employment (CoRMSA, 2009).

According to the most recent data, foreign arrivals increased by 9.8 percent from 2007 to 2008, and arrivals from Africa by 5.6 percent. In total, more than 90,000 Mozambicans entered South Africa in 2008 (Statistics of South Africa, 2009). What is interesting is that almost all of them entered the country for tourism, while only 139 entered with a work permit. This is due to the fact that the National Immigration Act imposes very strict rules on those entering the country in search of work, while the agreement between South Africa and Mozambique (see par. 2) has a provision for a 30 day tourist visa that can be easily obtained. Most migrants simply overstay their tourist visa resulting in major consequences for their opportunities to 'access the right to the city'. Lack of documentation also applies to a significant number of nationals. Without an ID, nationals also face difficulties in applying for formal work or in having access to healthcare services or schools (UNOCHA, SARCS & FMSP, 2009).

There has been a vigorous debate in South Africa about the number of undocumented migrants in the country. South Africans believe that 25 percent of the population is foreign. The figure is probably closer to 3-5 percent with around 500,000 undocumented migrants.

The '2009 Vulnerability Report' (UNOCHA, FMSP, SARCS, 2009) stresses that holding documents provides better chances of finding a job, in contrast with the idea that undocumented migrants represent a cheaper option for employers and a threat to the employment of locals or legal migrants. One percent of the foreign parents said that their children were refused entry to school because of lack of, or wrong, documents. The rate of refusal of entry because of lack of documentation is higher in the case of access to medical care (4.5 percent).

The presence of international migrants makes globalization a very concrete and visible condition that concerns a clearly identifiable and circumscribed space. Through migration, globalization thus turns into a trait that has to be entirely dealt with from a local perspective (Balbo, 2009). As a result, local societies are becoming more and more diversified. In this context, the issue of identity becomes crucial.

Providing a stereotyped representation of the other becomes both a way of recognizing each other and a way of defining boundaries between who belongs to the inside and who to the outside. This process enables the

strengthening of social cohesion, especially among separated communities. In post-apartheid South Africa stereotypes nourish the social, cultural and religious exclusion of the others, whose presence is felt as a threat to the lifestyle of the hosting community. It also fosters spatial exclusion by enhancing the fragmentation of urban space (Balbo, 2009). 'Decade-long efforts to control political and physical space have generated an enemy within: an amorphously delimited group of outsiders that is threatening, often indistinguishable for the other and it is impossible to spatially exclude' (Landau, 2009).

Xenophobic attacks in the past years could be considered as the direct product of a complex social and political process. Landau highlights three main explanations: i) the demonization of the outsiders and human mobility, ii) the arbitrary socio-spatial separation, and iii) the failure of the State's approach to pastoral citizenship after 1994. These are some of the features that contributed to the creation of 'the alien' (used to refer to migrants before 1994, in The Alien Control Act and the focal 'image' of the recent movie 'District Nine') and to the related xenophobia. South African history must be taken into consideration, analysed and constantly proved in order to understand the social and spatial fragmentation that is shaping Mozambican migrants' right to the city (Lefebvre, 1978). Without documents or substantive legal standing, the non-national population lives a life similar to that of black labourers during the apartheid regime, being economically integrated but stigmatised and vulnerable to the whims of State and neighbours (Landau, 2009).

The only way that migrants have to access the city is entering the 'zone of exception' where they can play with the State's instrumental logic. Corruption, informal fees, and invisibility from public spaces seem to be the only ways migrants have to escape from improper detention. There are three main ways of achieving invisibility, namely from police officials, from natives and from 'bad Mozambicans'. At the same time the relationship between space and identity is very fragile: the 'space of exception' populated by Mozambicans is the only place to be safe. Mozambicans are not accessing Johannesburg following conventional norms of social coexistence, and invisibility is the way migrants handle alterity in public space. Invisibility leads migrants to change their role within the hosting society, but not their identity, thus questioning such categories as 'citizen' versus 'alien'. Through the performance of invisibility, Mozambican migrants are silently insurging (Sandercock, 1998) against the dominant categorization of citizenship.

The right to migrate: living at the border

'Without proper regularization xenophobia will happen again...and the government should do more to regularize people. The government is so corrupt...is very difficult to have proper documentation here in Johannesburg...more difficult for young people that are coming

nowadays. If you access the country illegally is very difficult have ID then...so people are staying here illegally or they continue to pay illegal fees in order to renew their Visa every month...or paying the police to be free. When I came here I had my passport...I went to Swaziland and I stamp there. South Africa refuse to stamp my passport in 1987, when I arrived. I asked for a work permit but they refuse...I'm an engineer. Today I don't have my ID, I'm totally illegal here. The only reason I can work is that I have friends that are helping me' (J., Mozambican, Johannesburg).

South Africa legal framework is critical to promoting migrants' rights and welfare and their integration into South African society. Despite widespread public commitment to promote integration and reintegration in the wake of recent xenophobic violence having significant improvements over the last year, the existing law and the way it is enforced does not seem to be in line with this obligation (CoRMSA Report, 2008). Historically, by definition, Africans were not considered immigrants. They came to South Africa as temporary contract migrants under bilateral agreements between the apartheid government and neighbouring countries including Lesotho, Mozambique, and Malawi. Africans were seen as temporary workers to exploit rather than as human beings in search of a better life. Before 1994, immigration policy was a mere instrument of racial domination. After 1994, the South African government struggled to formulate a policy appropriate to the country's new role in a changing regional, continental, and global migration regime. In late 2002, a new Immigration Act was passed after nearly eight years of negotiations.

The legitimatisation of 'illegal anti-foreigner policy' has been endorsed by the overtly anti-foreigner 2002 Immigration Act (Landau, 2004). The Immigration Act effectively authorises Home Affairs agents to conduct searches, arrests, and deportations without reference to other constitutional or legal protection (Landau, 2004). The 2002 Act Preamble endorses the security approach towards immigration and states that: 'security considerations are fully satisfied and the State retains control on the immigration of foreigners to the Republic [...] border monitoring is strengthened to ensure that the borders of the Republic do not remain porous and illegal immigration through them may be effectively detected, reduced and deterred'. At the same time, the Preamble timidly recognizes the importance of migrants from an economic point of view: 'the contribution of foreigners in the South African labour market does not adversely impact on existing labour standards and the rights and expectations of South African workers'. However, when enumerating the DHA objectives, the Act States: 'where applicable, encouraging the training of citizens and residents by employers to reduce employers' dependence on foreigner labour and promote the transfer of skills from foreigners to citizens and residents'.

In terms of human rights protection the Preamble States that 'immigration control is performed within the highest applicable standards of human rights protection, and xenophobia is prevented and countered both within Government and civil society'.

However, this is not the case, as frequent violence against non-nationals, unlawful arrests, detentions and deportations show. The '2009 CoRMSA Report' highlights the lack of progress in terms of compliance with the law. Although the Supreme Court of Appeal stresses that immigration officials have to follow the rules Stated by the Refugees and Immigration Acts, human rights violations have continued.

The Department of Home Affairs (DHA) is entitled to detect and deport 'illegal' foreigners in accordance with the Act. Immigrant-related activities taking place under its auspices go beyond mere administrative incompetence with spin-off practices that provide fertile ground for networks of corruption and extortion (Landau, 2004). Migrants remain vulnerable to these practices as the DHA is responsible for determining migrants' legal status and their identity documents in the practice. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the DHA remains ineffective in 'preventing and deterring xenophobia within the Department, any sphere of government or organ of State and at community level', as they are mandated to do. Voluntary migrants no longer have the means to regularize their stay in the country after their initial study, tourist, or work permits expire. Illegality is almost the only solution for staying in Johannesburg with visible consequences on access to security and to public space. This focus on immigration control rather than management means that the new Act effectively criminalises undocumented migrants and affords generous provisions for the arrest, detention, and deportation of persons (Landau, 2009).

A recent (2004) move towards a Bilateral Agreement between South Africa and Mozambique to guarantee entry visas (for 30 days) for nationals of both countries is a step forwards to ensuring the right of movement between Mozambique and South Africa. But the legal framework of 30-day visas does not respond to the need of a right-based access to the country. Generally speaking, voluntary migrants ask for refugee status in order to enter the country less precariously. Otherwise, they enter the country with the 30-day visas and in most cases are forced to overstay. The regime of visas seems to only fit the necessities of 'on the border' migrants, that are coming and going from Mozambique to South Africa on a permanent basis. The imposed practice of going to the border every month is so expensive that Mozambican migrants let their visas expire, occasionally paying bus drivers in order to back pone the stamp. Migrants are forced to a deportable condition, where the relations with the hosting society are very fragile. Respondents describe a life at the border, in between South Africa and Mozambique. Boundaries play a major role in the migration imaginary.

The ethnographic observation of the Mozambican embassy in

Johannesburg gives materiality to this imaginary:

'Every morning the embassy is full of Mozambicans queuing for asking information, having passports, visas. People wait silently. Outside something strange is happening, at the same time: 3 guys, two young Mozambicans and a man with a white cap, are being continually asked for something, for help. After a while I ask them to help me with my Visa to go to Mozambique. They are helping Mozambicans filling the form in order to have documents and papers and the small enterprise collaborates with other 3 Mozambicans that are taking ID photographs on the corner. You can have your picture in 5 minutes, ready to be used for your documents. After a while I start talking to the young guy, called Small. Small goes to the border almost every week, helping other migrants with their passport. He is taking with you some passports in order to stamp them at the border to be renewed. Small have some money in exchange. This is his informal job. His boss is the man with the white cap.'

Small lives at the border and the passports he takes with him are the materialization of the border for other migrants. The 'deportability' (De Genova, 2004) is materialized through the precarious relation Mozambican migrants have with the territory, being forced to constantly move from South Africa to Mozambique.

Thus, the legal and political framework governing migration influences the relations between individuals and the territory, questioning at the same time the very notion of citizenship. A space of permanent transit is shaped, where informality substitutes access to the right to the city. Life in between seems to be life anywhere, with manifest consequences on the feeling of belonging to South Africa.

The description of the legal and political frameworks that govern migration in South Africa becomes relevant when referring to the external factors that drive migrants to set up strategies of resistance. Citizenship is a historical process that exists at any time and place, constituted by strategies and technologies as ways of being political (Isin, 2000).

Invisibility is not the way migrants adopt to express their personality or identity, but a 'self technology' (Romania, 2004) they use to socialize in public space. What is needed is the analysis of such self-technology, or performative actions, in order to resignify the notion of citizenship as a dynamic social process, not a static condition. The analytical frame defines citizenship as 'insurgent', because of its capacity to question the traditional notion of the citizen and his/her right to the city.

A space of permanent transit

The field research has confirmed Madsen's findings: 'In the common narrative of departure and return, in which the motivation for leaving home is intimately related to the proper way of behaving while away, the

ultimate achievement of the venture to Johannesburg is the return home' (Madsen, 2004). The legal framework of the 30-day visa strengthens the migrant's perception of being in Johannesburg for a limited period of time, only to save an amount of money to invest in the country of origin. The 30-day visa facilitates the practice of permanent transit, like businessmen or businesswomen who come and go from Maputo to Johannesburg in order to buy cheap and sell at the 'right price'. The interviews report some examples of permanent transit:

'I came here in Johannesburg in the '90s because my husband was working there. My husband was working in the mine...he died four years ago because of a cancer. We have lived in Johannesburg for 15 years together, coming from Maputo. We lived in Soweto...now I'm working in Troyville but I live in Maputo, where I was born. Each and every week I come to Johannesburg...I'm leaving on Monday for coming back Friday...every week. Life is better now because I'm not living in Johannesburg. There is lot of people, lot of women that are doing the same: coming and going from Mozambique, buying and selling every week. You can buy cheap in Maputo and then you can sell at a good price in Johannesburg...in that way you can survive. I sell palm oil...it is not easy to find palm oil in Johannesburg; people that live in Troyville come here to have it...and other staff. Lot of migrants are buying from me. The government has provided us with this 30 days visa, so I'm using this visa to enter the country legally...I'm stamping the visa every week, so I'm not overstaying it. If you overstay you have to pay some money to the officer...so they back pone the stamp. This visa let me survive, but only because I'm not leaving in Johannesburg'
(B., Mozambican, Johannesburg).

Other narratives of migration refer to permanent transit. The majority of respondents describe Johannesburg as a place 'in which you can find a salary', but not a place where to settle. Reasons for that are related to the sense of insecurity due to police control and xenophobia and at the same time to social fragmentation (called 'apartheid') in the city.

'No I'm not feeling part of South African society. I'm not feeling free in South Africa because of apartheid...people are divided, black South African, white South African and migrants...then migrants that belong to different communities. We are not sharing...I must come back to Maputo for that reason. South Africans are feeling me as a migrant, not as a citizen. They will never feel me part of their society'
(B., Mozambican, Johannesburg).

As Stated previously, the narrative about intended return has to consider how material conditions, political constraints, and personal change affect

the desire to return home. Some respondents seem to recognize the precariousness of the narrative of intended return:

'I want to stay here in Johannesburg...I've grown up here because I came when I was 13 years old. My life is here now...what can I do in Mozambique? I want to stay here if they don't kill me...(laugh). I want my ID and a proper job in Johannesburg. I know it is very difficult...for example, you see, I'm not able to write in English...I can only speak...how can I find a different job...let's say in a office?? Yes, I'm feeling South African because I want to live in here...the problem is that this society are not considering me as a citizen' (L., Mozambican, Johannesburg).

As Sayad points out, 'migrancy' can last for decades and, in some cases, be a permanent social condition' (Sayad, 2004). In fact, 52.5 percent of Mozambican migrants plan to move to another part of South Africa in the next two years. Only 8 percent plan to return to their community of origin (University of the Witwatersrand et al., 2006).

The lack of proper documentation, police control and the necessity of living an invisible life all contribute to support the idea of returning home. However, many Mozambican migrants by now have experienced city life for a number of years, raised their children in Johannesburg and, when possible, taken them to South African schools. The narrative of intended return must be measured in the backdrop of migrants' life in Johannesburg that might change the intention of going back home, even if against their will. In this framework, the right to the city remains a central issue for migrants even when migration appears transitional, resting only in view to raise enough money and performed within the 'zone of exception'.

Access to citizenship is strongly related to the narrative of intended return. The research has revealed a multifaceted situation. The feeling of being South African is shared among persons who have lived in Johannesburg for a long time, even though they do not refer to a sense of belonging:

'I'm feeling South African because I'm here since more than 10 years. But I'm not feeling as a part of the society...I'm not feeling equal to other people' (S., Mozambican, Johannesburg).

According to a recent survey, (University of the Witwatersrand et al., 2006) 61 percent of Mozambican respondents would not defend South Africa, whereas 82 percent of them would defend their country of origin. More than 50 percent do not feel themselves as part of South African society, 96.5 percent are proud to be identified as citizens of their country of origin, 78.6 percent are of the opinion that they should maintain the habits of their country of origin in Johannesburg.

These figures show how complex migration is. On the one hand, Mozambican migrants seem to have a strong connection to their home

country, but on the other hand they consider migration as an element of possible change. Even if all the respondents use the narrative of intended return, life in Johannesburg seems to have a strong impact on life plans made before departure. The high percentage of respondents that want to live in 'another part of South Africa' highlights the difficulties Mozambican migrants have to cope with in Johannesburg, as it will be pointed out in the following paragraphs.

Narratives of intended return might be more related to the sense of 'non belonging' to South Africa, due to permanent exploitation and xenophobia, rather than to a reliable plan of return. To this extent, Sayad's assumption leads to a revision of the notion of voluntary migration as a controlled process of going and returning after a rational planning exercise. Rather, the complex process of migration shapes future life outside rational choices. To some extent, voluntary migration becomes forced within this process, and migration a constituent element of everyday life.

'Today as yesterday, the South African State and migration policies are still political factors which shape the experience of Mozambican migrants and determine their forms of belonging' (Vidal, 2009). Mozambicans are reacting to policies through dissimilar practices, the shaping of a transnational space being one of them.

The 30-day visa legal framework fits the new migrant labour system and 'this system of migrant labour is perfectly adapted to the political and economic changes of both South Africa and Mozambique, which are two democratic regimes within a broader political ensemble, the SADC, requiring political cooperation between the two countries, a post-Fordist economy, fluid, diverse, flexible and closely related to an informal economy and cross-border trading' (Vidal, 2009). Migrants are in the process of shaping a transnational space, facilitated by statutory norms and agreements, but evading State control in their everyday life in Johannesburg. The transnational space leads migrants to construct a multifaceted sense of belonging that is not simply conveyable as 'here' or 'there' but must be considered as shaped by multiple political, social and economic constraints. Identity is strongly influenced by this process of non linear belonging. The relationship between identity and space is very fragile. Johannesburg is seen as a place to invest in, accumulate and not a place where to knit durable social relations. Under these circumstances, the sense of belonging to South Africa is inevitably fragile and the request for legitimation and recognition weak. Being in Johannesburg seems to be the only important aspect, without calling into question the sphere of belonging to the city and the nation.

The invisibility of public space

Whereas the apartheid State sustained an onslaught on South African citizens' residential rights, the post-apartheid State has employed similar

techniques to alienate and isolate non-nationals (Landau, 2009). Most Mozambican migrants can only access the city by entering the 'zone of exception' (Landau, 2004) where they can play with the State's instrumental logic. This is one of the most consistent findings of the research.

Invisibility is a technology performed when the individual representation of the self comes into question (Romania, 2004). At the same time invisibility is practiced when a social group wants to criticise the dominance of the ruling group, by escaping the authoritative relationship governing alterity. Hence the search for invisibility can be considered a practice of insurgent citizenship, in a social and political context where the definition of polity must be questioned, taking into consideration the apartheid heritage and its consequences on the current post-apartheid era.

Johannesburg fits into the categorization that permits the performance of invisibility (Romania, 2004): a high level of stigmatization against migrant groups; capabilities migrants have of using languages and cultural traits of the hosting society; weak or no desire of being recognized as being part of that particular group of newcomers; perception of not being recognized and accepted by the hosting society.

Migrants try as much as possible to be invisible to the police, the natives and 'bad Mozambicans'. As for the police, it is a direct consequence of lack of security; hiding from the local population is somehow connected with the recent xenophobic attacks and the third has to do with the necessity of establishing a protective social environment where deviance from the 'normal' migration path is not admitted.

Life in Johannesburg is very complicated for migrants, making them search for invisibility. As mentioned in the previous paragraphs, without documents or legal status, the non-national population lives a life similar to that of black labourers during the apartheid regime, being economically integrated but stigmatised and vulnerable to the whims of State and neighbours (Landau, 2009). This is particularly evident when assessing the use of public space by Mozambican migrants. Most interviewees feel safe only at work, provided that the work is not street selling. The 'relationship between space and identity is very fragile' (Vidal, 2009) and the use of public space very scarce.

'No, I don't think that people are free to use public spaces here in Johannesburg. Migrants are going to work and then they come back, because they are not feeling free to walk in the street. You can find someone in the morning...in the weekends...but you see, people are doing the same path every day, because they feel safe that way' (R., Mozambican, Johannesburg).

Migrants' narratives do not often recognize public space as a meeting or entertainment place, since they only travel from home to the workplace

and vice versa. Some respondents recognize 'Rosettenville next to Mc Donald', 'pubs in town owned by a Mozambican' as places of encounter. The ethnographic observation of the Mafalala Club (a pub owned by a Mozambican) in Jeppe Street conveys a private space totally populated by Mozambican migrants, where languages from the country of origin are spoken and socialization is based on Mozambican news, political situation and economy. The possibility of meeting South Africans in the Mafalala Club is remote and 'if the police comes here, we are able to control their attitude'. The use of public space in Rosettenville is always mediated by creativity:

'If the police is coming, we try to elude their control...going home if we realize they are coming...behaving as a South African hoping they are not asking for documents' (R., Mozambican, Johannesburg).

Other spaces of encounter are private homes, where Mozambican migrants meet friends they can trust. The use of public space is quite limited because public space is perceived as being dangerous. This practice contrasts with the necessity embedded in migrants' life of using the streets for informal trade and business. Obviously, streets and markets are places in which invisibility is hard to attain. Migrants in the city are so conspicuous to be sensed as a threat by South Africans. Even if invisibility is a means of survival for migrants, migrants are inevitably extremely visible in the social imagination. 'Decade-long efforts to control political and physical space have generated an enemy within: an amorphously delimited group of outsider that is [...] threatening, often indistinguishable for the other and it is impossible to spatially exclude' (Landau, 2009).

'The transition to democracy may have ended the link between race and citizenship, but it has not broken the bond between race and class. In this view, to address past injustices racial policies seems to be inescapable (MacDonald, 2006). Critically, economic differences map closely with racial categories and population spatial distribution (Landau, 2009).

The majority of the black South African population expected to enjoy the benefits following the end of the apartheid regime. On the contrary, poverty and inequalities have not significantly declined since 1994. South Africa remains the tenth most unequal country in the world and some groups, racially and economically determined, are relatively poorer than they were during apartheid (Landau, 2009).

Poor South Africans' expectations conflict with Mozambican migrants' perception that:

'We are not stealing South African jobs...we are surviving doing whatever we can, like selling in the street. On the contrary, South Africans use to wait for public aid, because of the post apartheid-era...they think that the government should give them houses, jobs...and whatever. They are lazy'

that way. Xenophobia of last year is based on this contradiction'
(L., Mozambican, Johannesburg).

Narratives stress this point. The narrative about black South Africans' 'laziness' versus the creativity of the migrant population seems to nourish the social division and stigmatization of both social categories. 'The mechanism of differentiation cannot be understood without exploring the part played by a person's image of his group's standing among others and, therefore of his own standing as a member of his group' (Isin, 2000). South Africans think that migrants are 'illegal, criminal, a threat to social and economic prosperity or carriers of diseases such as HIV/Aids'. The media feed this stereotyped description of African migrants and public opinion largely shares it.

Vigneswaran explored the caricatures of undocumented migrants in public view, emphasizing the practice of differentiating the polity from outsiders, the self from the other, creating an unpredictable and chaotic phenomenon. While political leaders are 'memorializing' the national progress, undocumented migration is referred to as chronologically distinct from the apartheid's blacks' suffering: 'illegal migration might pose a threat to the development of South Africa because migrants are generally speaking capitalizing on the movement's new success' (Vigneswaran, 2007). Accordingly, migrants are seen as denying South Africans the fruits of their struggle and as threatening the construction of the post-apartheid nation.

The strain between 'lazy black South African' and 'migrants that are capitalizing on black South African marginality' is nourishing the tension within today's South African society.

Xenophobic attacks in the past years are the direct outcome of these contradictions and of the historical and social background of the country. Landau (2004) highlights three main explanations: the demonization of the outsiders and human mobility, the arbitrary socio-spatial separation, and the failure of the State's approach to pastoral citizenship after 1994. These are some of the reasons that contributed to the creation of 'the alien' and to the consequent xenophobia.

A 2003 Wits Survey (<http://www.migration.org.za/>) shows that about 65 percent of South Africans believe that migrants should leave the country. Similarly, a 2006 study by the South African Migration Project revealed that four out of five South Africans consider that the country accepts too many foreigners. Migrants' survival strategies, as well as the colours and vibrancy they bring to the streets, represent a subversive way of life compared to the one the post-apartheid welfare State was expected to bring.

In this sense, the extended history of South Africa has created the conditions for the 2008 explosion of xenophobic violence, particularly intense in Alexandra township (Landau, 2009). As mentioned, the media contribute to create a clear-cut distinction between present conditions of African migrants and those of black South Africans during the apartheid.

Migration flows are viewed as a new phenomenon that has nothing in common with the history of South Africa. This is one of the reasons why above all black South Africans do not feel sympathetic with migrants' destinies, the legal and socio-economic precariousness of their existence and the restrictions to their social and spatial mobility. The precariousness and segregation of the apartheid regime are perceived as completely distinct and are referred to as belonging to another era, a different country, a totally diverse social environment. The withdrawal of history plays an important role in the process of mystification. 'Non normative' behaviours performed by the non-citizen are fostering the division within the more deprived population.

Spatial planning and regulation during the apartheid regime acted as a key feature in thwarting political turmoil through social and spatial fragmentation. Regulating human mobility, both at the border and within the city, and different degrees of right to the city based on race and class, are tools the political power continues to use in the post-apartheid era. The different degrees of access to the city space related to race and class limit the population's movements. Spatial control and social immobility are no longer planned by the State, but rather become a socially constructed process that shapes life within the city.

The poor react in different ways, from exploring creative responses to relying on actual or claimed welfare measures, sometimes fighting within the zone of exception itself. The xenophobia that burst out in 2008 points to the degree of social tension that exists among the urban poor, which politicians and the media most often manipulate with the aim of crafting an easily detectable enemy. The low political participation of migrants and poor black South Africans does not help the reconciliation process. Some respondents used the word 'apartheid' to describe the condition that prevents Mozambican migrants from planning a future life in Johannesburg and from feeling safe in their day to day existence. In many migrants' narratives apartheid is synonymous to xenophobia:

'I want to go back to Mozambique and finish my studies there. South Africa is only a country where to find job, money...for saving money...I can't live my life in the apartheid. Xenophobia makes me frightened and I can't live unsafe. I can't live in Johannesburg all life long. I can't live in apartheid [...] Society is so fragmented [...] socially divided'
(S., Mozambican, Johannesburg).

The use of the word 'apartheid' with reference to the social and spatial fragmentation of Johannesburg is a central topic of analysis. Mozambicans use 'apartheid' both to remind themselves about a relevant historical process ('Mozambique, my country, was massively involved during the apartheid...we have done a lot for this country') and to convey the notion of a specific social condition by using a highly meaningful expression.

'I think that the word apartheid means a space you can't access because of what you are. For that reason what I see here every day is the existence of apartheid. Let's say that post-apartheid South Africa means that apartheid is still existent under different forms and common behaviours' (P., Mozambican, Johannesburg).

As said before, post-apartheid Johannesburg fits Romania's categorization for the practice of invisibility. The stigmatization of migrants in Johannesburg has been explained as a direct consequence of the utilization of a post-apartheid narrative that does not want to link black South African struggles with migrants' destiny. Migrants are able to perceive stigmatization and their narratives constantly highlight the awareness of 'not being considered part of the hosting society'. At the same time, the possibility of using the hosting society's local languages, while adopting their accent, as well as of hiding their race, becoming black South Africans, are two more factors that make invisibility easy. Invisibility is therefore a strategy that migrants utilize to manage alterity within public spaces. At the same time, in Johannesburg invisibility is the result of the transaction (Dewey, 1971) between the newcomers and the hosting community, while social mimetism is a major alternative to the need to acquire formal citizenship and can be viewed as an insurgent practice of citizenship (Sandercock, 1998). Social mimetism is a way of governing alterity in a social context where the latter is perceived as dangerous, and invisibility is considered to be a way to reduce the hosting society's perception of alterity. Staying invisible is not a rational choice but rather the reaction of migrants to the notion of proper citizenship by the dominant segments of the population. The relationship between migrants and nationals becomes a transaction where reciprocal identities are built within the process, defining where the 'in' and the 'out' stand, at the same time reacting to this categorization.

'Bad Mozambicans' and 'lazy South Africans'

As mentioned, invisibility is practiced not only with regards to South Africans, but also the police and 'bad Mozambicans'. Invisibility from the police apparatus is paradigmatic of the relationship between migrants and police officers, as well as the materialization of the corruption that governs the relationship between the two groups.

The relationship between migrants and the police highlights the way the State considers migration is to be dealt with. Because of lack of proper documentation, and in most cases for simply being migrants, Mozambicans seek to hide from the law and public view. They try their best to hide from the scrutiny of the police, while the police themselves also make use of increasingly informal strategies: police officers demanding bribes from migrants have become common routine. As a result, the distinction between what is legitimate and what is not shifts,

blurring the boundaries between State and society (Tshabalala, 2009). The marginality of migrants is conceptually important because it depicts the political and socio-economic context in which immigration rules are enforced. The 'margins of the State' represent a space where the divide between State and society is challenged in practice, and sometimes reconstituted. The 'margin of the State' is a place in which migration control is extremely privatized and often depends on the personal attitude of the police officer as well as of the individual migrant behaviour, with direct consequences on basic human rights.

In a rather irregular and unexpected way, the police makes the State tangible to migrants conveying the idea that it is the police apparatus that governs society. This is the reason why respondents refer to 'the police' even when asked about government measures. In the narratives of migrants the State materializes itself exclusively as the police and as security issues:

'What you think about what the South African government is doing about migration?'

'I think the police is searching for us only because we are people to exploit. South Africans don't want us in the city, so the police is just doing its job'.

'What are the most important things you have to own to live a good life?'
'I don't know what I can say...if there is more police in the neighbourhood maybe the situation could be better' (L., Mozambican, Johannesburg).

Even when asked about what the government should do in order to improve their conditions, respondents mostly point to safety. Safety means having official documents to avoid harassment from the police. If nationals eschew public space because of criminality, migrants in most cases refer to their invisible life that prevents them from living in public. At the same time they refer to their precarious legal position that allows the police to bother them. The search for invisibility, the lack of proper documentation and the consequent sense of fear are strictly connected.

Proper documentation and freedom of movement are esteemed to be key elements to a better quality of life in Johannesburg. At the same time, migrants link proper documentation with the possibility to obtain a stable job and save some money to send back home. Precariousness impacts on security but also on the achievement of migration strategy. The legal framework governing migration seems to legitimate unlawful arrests and violence.

'When requested by an immigration officer or a police officer any person shall identify himself or herself as a citizen, resident or foreigner...and if on reasonable grounds such immigration officer or a police officer is not satisfied that such person is entitled in the Republic, such immigration officer or police officer may take such person into custody without a warrant and if necessary detained him or her in a prescribed manner and

place until such person's prima facie status or citizenship is ascertained' (Immigration Act, Section Identification).

The discretionary power given to immigration and police officers has led to a situation of extreme corruption and exploitation of undocumented migrants: 15 percent Mozambican migrants had their documents taken away by South African authorities with no reason (University of the Witwatersrand et al., 2006); 58 percent have been stopped by the police, essentially to have their immigration status checked. Hence, no wonder that two out of three Mozambicans do not trust South African police. At the same time, the Immigration Act legitimates the control of undocumented migrants through what was euphemistically called 'community policing': South Africans are asked to denounce every illegality, both at the workplace and in private life: 'no person shall employ an illegal foreigner' and 'no learning institution shall knowingly provide training or instruction to an illegal foreigner'. Concerning accommodation, 'any business offering overnight accommodation shall make a good faith effort to identify its customers as citizens or status holders and shall report in the prescribed form to the Department any failure to effect such identification'.

The legal framework has a strong impact on the ways migrants gain security. This form of discrimination, anti-immigration policing and unlawful practices fuel networks of administrative irregularities, corruption and privatised violence (Landau, 2004). At the same time, bribes to immigration officers become a 'means to establish invisibility' (Madsen, 2004) towards the State. In fact, bribes are an institutionalized practice that reinforces migrants' sense of non-belonging to South Africa (Vigneswaran, 2007).

In Johannesburg, the relationship with the State is flimsy as it is represented exclusively by the contact with the police. While it may be difficult to have the migrants' view on government policy on migration, their opinion about the police is unequivocal. Interviewed Mozambicans have never asked governmental offices nor NGOs for help. Only a few respondents are aware of church-based organizations that support migrants, but they have never contacted them.

Social exclusion is '[...] a quiet, subtle way to protect and produce moral communities that situate themselves at the intersection of (present) survival and (future) realization' (Madsen, 2004). Social exclusion could be considered a form of 'everyday policing' among undocumented migrants living illegally in Johannesburg. Given the context and dynamics of their would-be invisible existence and the use of social exclusion, invisibility constitutes a highly effective form of non-State policing. The means and dynamics of everyday policing are contingent upon maintaining their invisibility. Immoral behaviours capable of destroying the community of the invisible are sanctioned. In general, respondents trust neither other Mozambicans nor South Africans. The narrative used is somewhat extreme:

'I can trust Mozambicans only when they are at home, not in here. I have friends from Mozambique, lots of them. But I can trust few of them...maybe my brother, my sister and a very close friend of mine. You will never know what happen...if a Mozambican is here to have fun and not to work...the police will find you both. Friends can kill you' (J., Mozambican, Johannesburg).

At the same time, upon their arrival most migrants received some help by friends or relatives already in Johannesburg. However, the perception is that this kind of mutual support can easily be broken during the migration path, due to very dissimilar reasons for living in South Africa and circumstances. 'The newcomers are often housed in family homes [...] but these ties do not form solid networks' (Vidal, 2009).

The 'individual and invisible space of exception' detached from the State apparatus appear to be the best strategy for carrying on the migration dream. Lack of proper documentation (the majority of respondents were undocumented) is a crucial element in perpetuating invisibility both in public and private space. The fear of being checked and deported by the police is a common feeling. Undocumented respondents have all been involved in, or have witnessed, unjustified deportation or detention by the police. As a consequence, the fear of being unsuccessful in the migration strategy because of arrest and deportation strongly affects the way undocumented migrants are experiencing life in the city. The hiding practice is played towards South Africans too: speaking local languages in public spaces, like Zulu and Xanghaan, seems to be a good practice in order not to be bothered during the sojourn. Narratives connect this hiding practice to the xenophobic attacks that happened in 2008. 'Feeling safe' in Johannesburg means 'being invisible':

'I'm feeling safe because I'm working every day...when I'm not at work I'm safe at home. When I'm outside, when I need to take public transport I can hide myself speaking Zulu...no one can understand that I'm Mozambican that way' (R., Mozambican, Johannesburg).

The field research shows that respondents who are 'feeling safe' in Johannesburg are all legal in the country. Notwithstanding, the hiding practice is shared among both legal and illegal migrants. Finally, 'bad Mozambicans' are a tangible consequence of the deceptive relationship between migrants and police as well as the State. Remaining invisible to 'bad Mozambicans' is a protection strategy against the failure of a migration strategy: 'bad Mozambicans' can contribute to the social stigmatization. At the same time 'bad Mozambicans' can drive police intervention towards 'good Mozambicans', most of whom are undocumented. Invisibility performed by Mozambican migrants can be

analysed following the notion of 'act of citizenship': performative behaviour in order to access the city (McNeving, 2009). The question is whether these acts of citizenship are to be considered 'acts of contestation' in post apartheid South Africa.

Migrants in Johannesburg perform dissimilar strategies in order to access the city, timidly (invisibly and silently) claiming their existence. Cities feature prominently places in which national-territorial norms of citizenship are being reconfigured (Isin, 2000), questioning the 'where' of belonging as highlighted before. Migrants are 'reacting' within the zone of exception, reconstructing (or destroying) existing social networks, playing the instrumental logic of public space fragmentation, corrupting themselves and the police and performing invisibility. 'Citizenship is considered to be a kind of identity within a city that certain agents constitute as virtuous, good, righteous [...] and differentiate it from strangers, outsiders and aliens who constitute the alterity via various solidaristic, agonistic and alienating strategies and technologies. Citizenship exists through its alterity and strategies and technologies of citizenship are about the dialogical constitution of these identities via games of conduct' (Isin, 2000). Accordingly, citizenship is investigated at any given moment and space through strategies that Mozambicans are putting in place constituting them as citizens, strangers, outsiders or aliens (Simmel, 1971)

Space as object for alterity

The city can be viewed as a dialogical encounter of groups formed and generated immanently in the process of taking up position, orienting themselves for and against each other, inventing and assembling strategies and technologies, mobilizing various forms of capital and making claims to that space that is objectified as 'the city' (Isin, 2000).

The category of alterity becomes relevant when thinking that 'the problem is how and why human beings perceive one another as belonging to the same group, referred to as 'We' [...] while at the same time excluding others whom they perceive as belonging to another group, referring to them as 'They' (Isin, 2000). Alterity conveys difference and distinction, or recognition and affiliation, rather than static categories of inclusion/exclusion. In other words, alterity assumes that social groups do not define themselves in isolation from others, but define a dialectic relationship with them. The constitution of the social group is in that way mutual and progressive.

Distinct social groups and the form of their encounters shape urban space. The city is the space where groups define their identities, perform their claims and articulate citizenship rights. The history of the city is relevant because social processes lie on their material traces. Mozambicans refer to apartheid in their narratives because history plays a relevant role in the construction of social and spatial processes in democratic South Africa. Migrants' narratives are the current

materialization of history. At the same time residents' categorization of migrants is the result of the actualization of that history.

The dichotomy between public and private space is one of the most evident contradictions in Johannesburg. Public space is extremely scarce and often unusable; as a consequence, private space becomes oppressive. Public space is well organized and planned, to give the feeling of safety. It is not the result of social interaction; public areas most used are closed, patrolled and aseptic, transforming them into private spaces. At the same time, space is socially fragmented: people use public space according to social level and race, as a result. public space used by Mozambicans is inaccessible to South Africans or other migrant groups. The Mafalala Club typically represents the privatization of a public space in a socially fragmented and unsafe context. As stressed in the narratives, Mafalala is well known as a meeting place for Mozambicans where other nationalities should not go.

In Johannesburg, public space physically fits the necessity the different have to stay separate and provides it with the opportunity to hide its alterity. In this sense, Johannesburg 'epitomizes the idea of the modern city as a city of connection (schizophrenic) more than a city of encounters' (Ascher, 2001). In such situation, public space is used by 'planned belongings' and is no longer an opportunity for socially constructed encounters.

The privatization of public space can be looked at as another practice of resistance performed by Mozambican migrants, through which the social environment becomes safe by a tight control of those who use it.

The main entry point to South Africa is the family and its networks, which also shapes migrants' lives in the city. Narratives of Mozambicans always refer to the distrust of other Mozambicans in Johannesburg, while compatriots are different at home, where you can trust them. Narratives refer to a situation where the city can change an individual's personal traits. The post apartheid city strongly affects the way migrants relate to their fellow citizens as well as the way they access the city. Social and spatial fragmentation makes relationships more difficult to manage as well as dangerous in a context where invisibility is what matters most. As for accessing the city, migration is essentially an income generating strategy, where competition is a major feature and contributes to social fragmentation. In addition, the idea of staying in Johannesburg for only a limited period of time reinforces individualist behaviours by migrants.

The relationship to space is very fragile too. The main and often only movement is from/to the workplace or to the few public spaces Mozambicans appropriate for themselves, but most of the time not spent at work is spent at home. Concerning the domestic environment, Mozambicans are dedicated to establishing good relationships at a neighbourhood level (Vidal, 2009) in order to set up the protective networks against xenophobic attitudes.

As mentioned, even if Mozambicans aim to remain invisible, the division of labour compels them to fill in very 'visible' jobs, since most of them are street sellers. Taking up Jane Jacobs notion of the public character forming the social link between the otherwise private residents of the street, Vidal describes Mozambicans as 'non public characters' (Vidal, 2009) since they do not socialize with as many people as possible and they are not the impersonification of information channels. Street vendors hide their nationality even if asked by another Mozambican to be interviewed.

'Peaceful neighbourhood relations' are what Mozambicans aim for in Johannesburg in order to be safe within an invisible microcosm. As a consequence the use of public space as well as social relations are extremely restrained. The microcosm where migrants live is therefore a safe environment to practice resistance to the inaccessibility of citizenship rights. 'The global city is not a place, but a process' (Castell, 1977). The post-modern city conveys a new space of centrality and marginality, but at the same time it is the space for new claims (Sassen, 1999). Mozambican migrants in Johannesburg are silently claiming within the zone of exception. As said before, the practice of creating transnational spaces between South Africa and Mozambique can be viewed as a 'technology of citizenship' (Isin, 2000). Finding themselves in a condition of transition, most migrants live in a permanent status of non-belonging to South Africa even if they have lived in the country for years and some are building their future life in it. Most of them go back to Mozambique very often and plan to return to it one day or the other. In this way they maintain a material as well as mental condition of permanent transition. These silent practices of resistance give concrete form to multiple 'in' and 'out': the margin between the two representing the possible space of 'being political' (Rancière, 2007). The invisibles, the 'non-people', do impose their presence within the city by their way of resistance, even if it is silent, as in the case of Mozambicans in Johannesburg. If the logic of exclusion assumes that the social and political categories such as strangers and outsiders pre-exist citizenship and cannot be reconciled, the logic of alterity makes this relationship porous.

'Genealogies of citizenship' must take into account alterity, not exclusion, because the sociability of specific groups is defined through the encounter with others, dialectically. This is the reason why the boundaries between inclusion and exclusion become relevant. The boundaries are contingent, dynamic and reversible, not static. The practices of reversal of the traditional notion of citizenship are the ones to focus on.

Obviously, 'practice of citizenship' is different from the dominant image that labels who is a citizen. 'Practices of citizenship' are ways of 'becoming political' (Isin, 2000). Once again citizenship is dialogically constituted through games of conduct among multiple belongings. The space of the city plays a role in this process, since sociological facts form themselves in space (Simmel, 1971). Johannesburg does not exclude outsiders from its space, but it controls their conducts through its space. The word apartheid

used by many respondents portrays that situation. Therefore, space becomes an object of struggle for differentiation (Isin, 2000).

Alterity puts citizenship in the perspective of a right to claim more than a possession. It becomes a claim upon society for the resources necessary to meet the basic needs and interests of members rather than a kind of property that some possess and others do not (Isin, 2000). Consequently, claims for citizenship force the State to respond to new social conditions. The silent claims that Mozambican migrants raise daily in Johannesburg are 'political' in the sense that their practices are paradigmatic of the existence of alterity in the way different groups experience life in the city and their right to the city.

Being political is the moment when the naturalness of the dominant virtues is called into question and their arbitrariness revealed (Isin, 2000). Mozambican migrants might be in the position of constituting themselves as political agents into new terms. Common practices (even if they are not 'organized claims') might be a starting point for self-recognition as a group in Johannesburg's fragmented space.

Conclusions

The presence of international migrants makes globalization a very concrete and visible condition that has to do with well identifiable spaces. Such spaces can only be managed from a local perspective and yet, international migration makes local societies increasingly complex. A crucial issue that has emerged from such complexity concerns the meaning that the notion of identity takes under current conditions up to the point of questioning the usefulness of such a notion. In fact, reference to identity provides a stereotyped representation of the other that results in both a way of recognizing each other and of defining boundaries between what belongs to the inside and what to the outside. This process may reinforce social cohesion among diverse communities but at the same time it underpins exclusionary trends. In post-apartheid South Africa, stereotypes nourish the social, cultural and religious exclusion of the others, whose presence is felt as a threat to the lifestyle of the hosting community. It also fosters spatial exclusion by enhancing the fragmentation of urban space (Balbo, 2009).

The access to the 'right to migrate' for Mozambican migrants is strongly influenced by the legal precariousness that forces them to overstay their 30-day visas once in Johannesburg. As Stated previously, South African legal framework obliges migrants to slide into a transnational space between South Africa and Mozambique where visas can be renewed. When the journey is too expensive, migrants are forced towards illegality in the city. Invisibility is the perceptible consequence of illegality and xenophobia. Security is shaped as a private good rather than a public right, due to the corrupt practices that occur between police and migrants.

What has been referred to as practices of citizenship are the ways

Mozambican migrants use to resist the legal precariousness in Johannesburg, questioning the traditional notion of citizenship and working for the eradication/redefinition of boundaries between the inside and outside. These practices are performed in a marginal space, very distant from the State, and are essentially individual. In the unstable post apartheid era, Johannesburg creates the need to be invisible and social and spatial fragmentation fit that need.

As stated before, the 'zone of exception' within which Mozambican migrants live is somehow extremely visible to South Africans. Media and public speeches often refer to migration issues and the narrative used separates migrants' destiny from that of black South Africans. Migration is portrayed as a post-apartheid phenomenon that results from the inability of the welfare State to distribute services to the native population, and migrants become a scapegoat to motivate the failure of the post-apartheid State goods distribution. The migrants' 'zone of exception' is considered as a threat to South Africa's political and economic stability after the apartheid era. Xenophobia has been described as the result of a historical and political process. The demonization of outsiders and human mobility, the arbitrary socio-spatial separation and the failure of the State's approach to pastoral citizenship after 1994 (Landau, 2009) have all contributed to the nourishment of this xenophobia.

Even if the majority of respondents express the intention to go back home, they also recognize the difficulty of actually accomplishing their 'narrative of return' and do not discard the idea that living in Johannesburg can change their migration strategies. While recognizing themselves as South Africans, most migrants seem to refer to the 'need of living in Johannesburg, outside the country of origin' rather than to a 'sense of belonging':

'Yes, I'm feeling South African only because my life is here now'
(R., Mozambican, Johannesburg).

The relations between invisibility and public space are most interesting findings of the research. as mentioned, even if Mozambicans aim to remain invisible, the division of labour compels them to fill in very 'visible' jobs, since most of them are street sellers. At the same time the narratives constantly refer to the 'search for invisibility': migrants exist in safe social networks built around a few friends, avoid the use of public transport and try to hide, first of all from the police but also from the local society in general.

Even if Mozambicans try to be invisible, their existence is socially visible as well as in Johannesburg space. A consequence is the enormous attention migration draws in public speeches, newspaper articles and everyday discussions. The use of public space is the main factors in defining how diversity is perceived and its level of acceptance or rejection. Any use of public space diverse from the 'norm' is seen as a

threat to security, simply because it is unfamiliar. In post apartheid South Africa, unfamiliarity connotes meanings that concern what have been called the 'extended history' of South Africa.

Life in Johannesburg is socially and spatially fragmented. The population living within the zone of exception seems to connect more than meet, sometimes through schizophrenic episodes of violence, know each other and feel a common destiny of deprivation in the post apartheid South Africa.

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