Introduction
Cosmopolitan Refugees

I am a civil war child. I survived murderers. I survived hunger, I survived diseases, I survived refugee camps. I survived many borders. I am strong. I stand strong.

On a hot December day, some years after my visit to Isiolo, I was in Eastleigh, the predominantly Somali neighbourhood of Nairobi. Amal, a young Somali woman I had previously met in a women's meeting at Tawakal Clinic, took me to a beauty salon to have our hands done with henna. Her cousin, who had returned from Saudi Arabia a couple of years back, owned and ran Sacdiya Beauty Salon, situated along Jam Street in the heart of Eastleigh. On our way there, we stopped at Dallas International College of Modern Teaching. 'Your way to success', declared the sign on the building. Amal had been learning English and Community Health there and needed to collect her degree certificate. At the beauty salon, just below Dallas College, preparations for a wedding were under way in the back room; the bride and bridesmaids were readying themselves for the evening celebration. The beauticians were busy doing the bride's hair and decorating her whole body with henna.

In the front of the salon, Amal and I sat down with four other women who were also having their hands done with henna – a new pattern trend from Sudan of big flowers on your forearms. Nasra and Fatuma were visiting from Sweden, where they have been living for the past ten years. A mother of two sets of twins, Nasra likes coming to Nairobi during the Swedish winter with her children. Fatuma, a medical student in Stockholm, in Nairobi on holiday, was keen to show us some pictures of her wearing a white coat next to a model skeleton. Daris was preparing to travel to Sudan to see her husband who was working there. She explained that she liked to have henna done at least once a month to please her husband. 'You have to keep active', Amal clarified; 'if you are not active, your husband will get

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bored and look for another woman.' She went on to explain how you need to have the house clean, cook a good meal, do your henna and your hair, put lotion in your body, wear a nice *dirac* and burn some *unzi*.[1] 'Then your husband will come home and be very happy, never wanting to leave.' All of us laughed. Amal was getting married very soon and seemed to know very well how to keep 'active' in order to keep a husband. She was travelling to Ethiopia the following week, where she was meeting her husband-to-be, a distant cousin who was coming from the UK to marry her in Addis Ababa. The plan was for her to join him in the UK after the marriage. Six months after our visit to the beauty salon, she was already there.

All the women at Sacdiya Beauty Salon were, or had at some point been, forced migrants from a country generally portrayed as the epitome of a failed state. The political chaos that came after Siad Barre was overthrown, alongside the frequent droughts, consequent famines and the rise of Al-Shabaab, forced thousands of Somalis to leave their country, turning Somalia into a 'refugee producing nation' (Hopkins 2010: 523). Today, Somali migrants can be found not only in the refugee camps of northern Kenya, but in many of the metropoles around the world, such as London, Minneapolis or Toronto, and also in the African urban hubs of Cairo, Nairobi and Johannesburg.[2]

This is not a static diaspora because Somalis constantly traverse boundaries. The women at Sacdiya Beauty Salon were all coming from or going to another country, and their lives take place across national boundaries – as can be observed in Map 0.2 at the beginning of this book, which shows the countries with established Somali communities, as well as aspirational countries of resettlement.[3] This transnational cosmopolitanism is not unique to the clientele of Sacdiya Beauty Salon; it can be found in every corner of Eastleigh, where everyday practices are performed in a translocal context of displacement.

Transnational Nomads

Even if transnationalism is a relatively new concept in the social sciences, connected to discourses on postmodernity and globalization, it has been present in the lives of Somalis for centuries preceding the creation of African nation states by the colonial powers.[4] The traditional pastoralist and nomadic life that many Somalis had led them to move along the Horn and through East Africa, reaching as far south as Tanzania (Carrier 2016; Weitzberg 2017).[5] There was also a history of international migration among Somalis outside Africa before the armed conflict started in the 1990s, as Somalis migrated as sailors or soldiers during and after colonial times and ended up settling in the UK, and travelled to Saudi Arabia during the 1950s and 1960s to work as oil workers (Kleist 2004); as Abdi (2015) and Carrier

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and Scharrer (2019) also point out, the geographical position of the Horn, close to the Gulf countries, has permitted a fluid mobility for religious, business or work reasons over the years.

Nomadism is considered by many Somalis to be a natural disposition and 'way of being', and 'the nomadic imaginary still remains a key aspect of identification for many, also for those now living very different lives in towns and cities' (Carrier and Scharrer 2019: 9). In fact, Somalia is one of the few countries in the world where a nomadic way of life is praised and admired instead of demeaned (Harper 2012). Jamal, a young Somali man who used to live in Mayfair, Johannesburg, and ran a lodge before being resettled in Canada, where his wife-to-be had been waiting for him, explained during an interview that it was common practice for people living in urban centres to send their children for some months to relatives living 'in the bush' so that they could learn the arts and perils of the nomadic lifestyle. Even if this way of life has been threatened in recent decades, mostly due to the security situation in the country, it has not completely disappeared. On the contrary, it could be seen to have increased, as Somalis have gone from being local nomads to transnational ones (Horst 2006a). It was striking to see how many Somalis were eager to move somewhere else in order to improve their lives and those of their families. People living in Somalia maintain strong links with their relatives in the diaspora, who also play a key role in the migration process of their siblings, spouses, parents, cousins or nephews living in the country. Most of the women I spoke to in Johannesburg had previously lived in at least two countries. Those living in Nairobi had either returned from abroad or were on their way to somewhere else. Even for those who have not left Somalia, contact with relatives overseas through new technologies provides access to new cultural practices and ways of being. Somalis are eager users of the internet, with Somalia having been one of the first African countries 'to develop a mobile phone system' (Harper 2012: 10), and the Somali diaspora today is hyperconnected through social media (Ponzanesi 2021), creating a new space not only to keep in touch but to recreate a shared collective identity, as this book will further explore. As an example, when I asked Amal for her email address, so that we could keep in touch, her response was: 'Which one should I give you? I have thirteen.' Thus, the nomadic imaginary is still very present in the Somali collective identity, and the wish to move is even reflected in the Somali language through different terms or expressions: *reer-guuraa*, meaning 'nomad', also reflects a constant desire to move from one place to another, and, as Jamal explained, this concept also refers to the 'nomad we all have inside', emphasizing again the importance of movement in the Somali collective imagination. Then there is the saying *Nin aan dhul marini dhaayo maleh*, meaning 'He who has no travel has no understanding', which is a way of praising the knowledge that comes with seeing other places and therefore reflects a certain degree

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of cosmopolitanism. Even more interesting is the concept behind the word *buufis*, that refers to the unfulfilled desire to migrate and the anxiety generated by the impossibility of moving, which can result in depression or even temporary madness. Old Somalis identify *buufis* with *saar*, the spirit of travel that possesses the person affected and only leaves after this desire to travel is fulfilled (Horst 2006b). As Horst argues, *buufis* are sometimes the result of the strong transnational connections of the Somali diaspora, through which those staying in Somalia or in refugee camps get constant updates from relatives residing in Western countries with better living standards, creating a constant desire for improvement by migrating. Moreover, as Horst notes, it is important to understand this desire to move within a historical culture of migration, as Somalis 'are part of wider cultural discourses and practices that place migration at the centre of Somali culture' (ibid.: 155). This 'culture of migration' together with the harsh conditions they find in their home country are what makes most Somalis eager to relocate to a place that can offer better opportunities to improve their lives and those of their families. Somalis can be found today all around the world, and in these foreign contexts, they constantly renegotiate what it means to be Somali and Muslim, and the implications that these identities carry into contemporary life in a globalized world.

A *Nomadology* from the Global South

Even if Somalis are spread all around the world, and despite the fact that Somalia is normally referred to as the classic example of a collapsed nation state, the people in the Somali diaspora share a very strong sense of ethnic, national, religious and cultural identifications. These collective identifications connect Somalis across borders, generating a strong sense of belonging to a collective that is not contained within the boundaries of nation states, as authors such as Appadurai (1996), Malkki (1992, 1995) and Keesing (1974, 1990) already pointed out decades ago; more recently, Weitzberg (2017) has examined this in relation to Somalis in Kenya. For the Somali diaspora, feelings of belonging to a collective expand across borders. Apart from the historical nomadic past of many Somalis, the current transnational situation in which many of them live generates translocal networks that connect them to home and to other locations where Somali communities are settled, at the same time as new identifications are simultaneously established in the new places inhabited, as the denominations Somali-Kenyan, Somali-American or Somali-Canadian reflect. Many of the women interviewed for this work, especially those returning from the Western diaspora, identified themselves as 'hyphenated', showing dual feelings of belonging to different cultural realities (a phenomenon also noted in other contexts, as Kebede (2017) ex-

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plores among second-generation Ethiopians in the US). Thus, by analysing the translocal identity-formation process and dynamics of the Somali diaspora, one of the main objectives of this book is to explore how identities in a postmodern world have become increasingly deterritorialized and reterritorialized with feelings of belonging to a collective that expand across national boundaries, and in this way to contribute to 'a new "sociology of displacement" a new "nomadology"' (Malkki 1992: 38).

At the same time, this book seeks to present alternative narratives and discourses that move beyond the stereotypical representation of Somalis in the global imagination that mainstream media and international discourses have repeated for decades (Hawkins 2002; Klep and Winslow 1999; Mermin 1997; Besteman 1996a), in which Somalis tend to be portrayed as 'gun-toting gangsters' (Farah 2000: 192), or as the helpless Black from a war-torn country, the refugee, the Indian Ocean pirate, the radical Muslim or the Al-Shabaab terrorist. These are reductionist representations that are still very present: a recent search on online news sites about Somalis produced headlines such as: 'Somali Refugees Flock to Camps Amid Devastating Drought'; 'At Least 13 Killed by Suicide Bomber in Central Somalia'; 'Daughters of Somalia, a Continuous Pledge to End Female Genital Mutilation'.[6] These headlines convey images based on stereotypes that seem to fit perfectly with the negative discourses used to represent Africa (Mbembe 2001), in which 'its people appear as victims many times over' (Ferguson 2006: 8). Victimizing stereotypes are still present in the global imagination because there is no 'personal, concrete familiarity of the other' (Hurst 1995: 6). They are a reductionist and simplistic way to look at the other, making certain characteristics fixed and unchangeable, whereas the different identifications that define a person or a group of people continually change and adapt to certain contexts (Brubaker and Cooper 2000; Eidson et al. 2017), something that becomes especially apparent in a context of displacement and diaspora.

The stereotypical narrative of victimization around Somalis is exacerbated even further in representations of Somali women. Even though some attempts have been made to present alternative narratives – such as the books *Aman: The Story of a Somali Girl* (Barnes and Boddy 1994), *Somalia – the Untold Story: The War through the Eyes of Somali Women* (Gardner and El Bushra 2004) and more recently *Women of the Somali Diaspora: Refugees, Resilience and Building after Conflict* (Lewis 2021) – Somali women are still largely perceived in the global imagination as helpless victims of a patriarchal society that relegates them to second place, making them passive subjects of their circumstances, or as alienated women without rights or voice who need to be saved from a culture and religion that suffocates and oppresses them (Abu-Lughod 2013). This widespread and dominant representation resonates with the powerful stereotype of 'Third World Women' as Black, Muslim and uneducated (Mohanty 1988) and does not take into account

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the more complex scenario in which Somali women participate: they migrate by themselves, start businesses on their own, organize themselves into support groups, take control of many of their cultural practices, express their agency and handle the displacement that such movement has generated in Somali society (Ripero-Muñiz 2019; Abdi 2015; Jinnah 2010; Al-Sharmani 2010; Hopkins 2010; Langellier 2010; Gardner and El Bushra 2004; Farah 2000; Bryden and Steiner 1998).[7] Showcasing and emphasizing the agency and decision-making power of Somali migrant women in Nairobi and Johannesburg is another aim of this book. The book presents alternative narratives and discourses that explore the dynamics of identity formation that Somali women undergo in relation to cultural, religious and gender practices in these two African contexts.

In these two African cities, Somalis challenge the widespread stereotype of the refugee in Africa, enclosed in a camp, a victim figure unable to provide for their family and completely dependent on humanitarian aid. Furthermore, these two African urban hubs are connected by the migration route of many Somalis, and in both places, Somalis have transformed neighbourhoods: Eastleigh in Nairobi and Mayfair in Johannesburg, both of which have come to be known popularly as 'little Mogadishus'. Both cities have become transitional places for Somalis to stop on their way to somewhere else, but at the same time more than temporary homes away from home, and nodal hubs for the Somali diaspora in the Global South and beyond. This comparative study of the two cities reveals a variety of transnational connections among the Somali diaspora. While allowing for and noting the similarities and differences of experiences in the two contexts, that constitutes the main contribution of this work, it is the first comparative study of how the Somali diaspora operates in two African cities that are themselves interconnected.

In order to fulfil these aims, I analyse how people on the move constitute themselves as a collective in a foreign land, proving the assertion that refugees are not people 'without culture' just because they have been uprooted from their place of birth (Malkki 1992); in the case of Somalis, a culture of migration, together with the translocal reproduction of cultural and religious practices, creates a sense of belonging to a collective that is independent of the territorial boundaries of the nation state. By focusing on Somali migrant women living in or transiting through two interconnected urban hubs of the African continent, the book addresses questions about collective and individual identities. It explores how women, as carriers of national, cultural and religious identifications, renegotiate them in a context of displacement. In some cases, this becomes a way to exercise their agency while they try to fulfil the expectations placed upon them by the local and translocal community. Using a cosmopolitan standpoint and focusing on two African urban hubs of the Somali diaspora, I argue that Somali migrant women, far

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from being uprooted beings without a 'culture' to belong to, strategically renegotiate their cultural and religious identifications, generating new forms of agency and mobility in translocal urban contexts that are both interconnected, at the same time than exclusionary and full of opportunities. In broader terms, the book contributes to current debates about the dynamics of how collective identities operate in the context of displacement, in an interconnected, postmodern world in which migration and displacement have become more common than ever, identities are not as certain as they used to be, and a translocal sense of being connected surpasses fixed national borders.

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Tawakal Clinic, where I had previously met Amal, was established in Eastleigh by two doctors, initially as a gynaecological and physicians' clinic. However, they noticed that the patients coming over and over again, complaining of physical pains such as headaches, insomnia or high blood pressure, were really suffering from symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder. They decided to start offering psychological counselling, together with weekly group meetings in which women could speak freely and share their experiences and anxieties. As the years went by, the meetings, run by young women, developed to cover a wider range of topics, such as healthy eating, forgiveness, dealing with everyday cohabitation problems, family members and daily exercise. Two groups of women meet on Saturday mornings and afternoons to talk about these topics with facilitators, whom the participants regard as 'teachers'. The topics at one such meeting were physical and mental well-being, nutrition and how to deal with older relatives. At the end of the meeting, I stayed to talk to Hibo, one of the teacher-facilitators; at the time, she was a 22-year-old student of Islamic studies at UMMA University in Thika, a small town north-east of Nairobi. She explained that she loved preparing for the meetings and talked with joy about how beneficial it is for women to have a safe space to talk freely about their worries and experiences. Our conversation took place around January 2014, when the Kenyan police started raiding Eastleigh in search of 'undocumented migrants' and Al-Shabaab members, just months before the launch of the Operation Usalama Watch scheme by the Kenyan government.[8] Hibo was outraged by the raids and her joy turned into anger as she told me about these events, especially when she referred to the stereotypical image that people project onto Somalis, as ignorant refugees with terrorist aspirations. 'People think we are stupid that we don't even know who Rihanna is!' she said, raising her voice and gesticulating, her arms emerging from under the *jilbaab* covering her head and half of her body; her henna-decorated hands, smartphone in

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one of them, moved in expression of her outrage.[9] This view of Hibo's is not unique to her, but shared by many young Somali women, who move between the expression of global trends, which they consume and generate, and the weight of stigmatization for being refugees, Somalis and Muslims. The consumption of global popular culture and the sense of belonging to the modern world are not just the result of transnationalism or globalization, but also denote the great cosmopolitan experience lived by women in the Somali diaspora.

Beyond translocal experiences and aspirations, Hibo, Amal and the other young women at Sacdiya Beauty Salon also adopted a cosmopolitan standpoint in relation to the world, in which 'cosmopolitanism [was] not only embodied, but also felt, imagined, consumed and fantasized' (Skrbis et al. 2004: 121). In the case of young Somali women in Nairobi and Johannesburg, this cosmopolitanism was felt, embraced and consumed in the form of cultural expressions and lifestyles, at the same time as being imagined and fantasized in the hope of further migration.

Cosmopolitanism, as a theory of enquiry in the social sciences, has had a revival in the last couple of decades (Appadurai 2013; Werbner 2008; Appiah 1997, 2006; Beck 2006; Beck and Sznaider 2006; Furia 2005; Gilroy 2005; Darieva et al. 2012; Breckenridge et al. 2002; Pollock 2000; Pollock et al. 2000; Waldron 2000). The vast use of the term has caused its meaning to multiply, and cosmopolitanism can be understood as a sociocultural condition, a philosophy, a political project, an attitude or a social practice (Vertovec and Cohen 2002). In this book, I take into account cosmopolitanism both as an attitude and as a social practice. Cosmopolitanism appears as an attitude or standpoint that many young Somalis adopt in relation to their world, at the same time as it is produced, consumed and performed in everyday social and cultural practices. In the contexts of Nairobi and Johannesburg, the cosmopolitanism that Somali women expressed operated both as the result of the migration experience and as a motivation to migrate further.

Even if some authors have associated the cosmopolitan condition with migrants or refugees (Landau and Freemantle 2010; Kothari 2008; Werbner 1999; Malkki 1995), cosmopolitanism is not normally attributed as a characteristic of refugees or forced migrants; the term tends to be associated with a cultivated elite from Western countries (Appadurai 2013; Skrbis and Woodward 2007; Waldron 2000; Hannerz 1996), an elite embodied in the traveller or the expatriate who pursues 'the freedom of travel, and the luxury of expanding the boundaries of one's own self by expanding its experiences' (Appadurai 2013: 197). However, this approach to cosmopolitanism is narrow and incomplete, as it leaves out other forms of cosmopolitanism taking place in the world today. Challenging the contemporary and Eurocentric connotations of the term, Gilroy (2005: 289) proposes South Africa,

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especially Johannesburg, as the cradle of 'a new cosmopolitanism centred in the global South', an idea developed further by Achille Mbembe in his concept of Afropolitanism (2007; see also Nuttall and Mbembe 2008). This is a cosmopolitanism born and practised in Africa with a long history, in which Johannesburg is presented as the main cosmopolitan hub of the continent. However, African cosmopolitanism is not a new, postmodern phenomenon: Laviolette (2008) explores the centuries-old cosmopolitan nature of the Indian Ocean's Swahili coast, while Diouf and Rendall (2000) analyse the historical cosmopolitanism among the Senegalese Murid diaspora.

Regarding refugee studies, Landau and Freemantle (2010) propose a 'tactical cosmopolitanism', adopted by many migrants to South Africa as a strategy to negotiate inclusion in a foreign society. Kothari (2008) also observes this strategic cosmopolitanism taking place among peddlers from South Asia and West Africa living in Barcelona, who

> are members of transnational networks who accumulate and share knowledge about how to cross spatial and cultural borders. They create, exist in, and invoke global networks as they travel across the world, producing cross-cultural interactions and sensitivities. (ibid.: 501)

However, even if some of the characteristics of a strategic cosmopolitanism were present among Somalis in Nairobi and Johannesburg, the cosmopolitanism they expressed was not only tactical or strategic, but the result of a transnational experience in which they reinvented themselves in the diaspora.[10] These findings resonate with Liisa Malkki's study *Purity and Exile* (1995), in which she explored the cosmopolitan constructions of identity that Hutu refugees experienced in Kigoma. She observed that 'in the process of managing these "rootless" identities in a township life, they were creating […] a lively cosmopolitanism' (ibid.: 36). Among Somali women in Nairobi and Johannesburg, the embraced cosmopolitanism is brought about by the migration experience of exposure to new urban contexts and the further cosmopolitan aspirations of relocating somewhere else. It is a cosmopolitanism that emanates from below, that 'builds on the practices of the local […] but which is imbued with a politics of hope […] It builds towards global affinities' (Appadurai 2013: 198). This is a grounded cosmopolitanism in which the local interweaves with the 'politics of hope', the desire of having a better life than the current one, which speaks directly to the strong connection between migration and hope (Pine 2014). For the women interviewed in both cities, the main motive behind their decisions to migrate was the aspiration to improve their lives, a constant desire for a better future, hoping to improve their lives and those of their families through transnational migration. All of them expressed a strong desire for membership in the 'new world order' (Ferguson 2006), in which they could work, study and move freely around the world. This cosmopolitanism from below, emanat-

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ing from the 'politics of hope' intrinsic to the migration process (Appadurai 2013; Pine 2014), becomes a powerful engine for moving across borders. In the case of the Somali diaspora, this embraced cosmopolitanism does not erase certain characteristics of Somaliness, but is compatible with them. As Anthony Appiah (1997) points out, the cosmopolitan ideal actually resides in taking your roots with you wherever you go. The cosmopolitan experience brought about by transnational migration does not make Somalis leave their ethnic, cultural and local identifications behind; instead, they are re-enacted in new cosmopolitan urban contexts that at the same time are imbued with further desires for migration. The dialogue between local and cosmopolitan expressions becomes especially apparent in the Facebook and Instagram accounts of young Somali women, where motivational quotes of encouragement towards a better life cohabit with nostalgic representations of a lost Somalia and Islamic messages. The epigraphs that open each chapter of this book are taken from these sources, as they showcase how this popular cultural practice reflects the subjectivities and identifications of young Somalis on the move. Thus, aspirations for membership of and inclusion in the 'new world order' do not mean abandoning local practices and ways of being; these are still very present and relevant in Somalis' everyday lives. Rihanna may be one of Hibo's favourite singers: that is perfectly compatible with wearing her *jilbaab*, having her hands decorated with henna for special occasions and studying the Qur'an.

Translocal Identities

The rooted cosmopolitanism or cosmopolitanism from below that Somali women embrace in Nairobi and Johannesburg takes place in a context in which the Somali diaspora has transformed two urban spaces, Eastleigh and Mayfair, into 'little Mogadishus'. This may seem contradictory, in the sense that the cosmopolitanism described takes place in spaces that are physical and symbolic reproductions of a lost homeland, and around which Somalis cluster together. However, this situation can be better understood through translocality, a concept also introduced by Appadurai (1995) and further developed by Brickell and Datta (2011). Translocality emphasizes the agency of migrants in the transnational experience, which can be considered a 'grounded transnationalism' in that all transnational ties and links take place and are embodied in a particular locale. In the streets of Eastleigh and Mayfair today, one can find plenty of internet cafes that, apart from providing internet services, also sell Somali music on CDs and DVDs burned to the customer's specifications in a few minutes. This 'traditional' Somali music is mostly produced in the Western diaspora, especially in London, and then

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exported all around the world. The music video clips showcase mostly images of Somalia, and are a good example of how a translocal situation can bring together such different and distant places as London, Mogadishu and Johannesburg, 'enabl[ing] the symbolic and affective bridging between locations as well as a heightened sense of home' (Rios and Watkins 2015: 212). Places are also embedded with social practices deeply linked to our sense of identity (Giddens 1990) and 'constructed thought the patterned repetition of behaviours in one location' (Oakes and Price 2008: 254). Thus, the repeated performativity of social, cultural and religious practices in diasporic spaces reproduces certain lifestyles with recognizable identifications. And it is this repetition of behaviours that leads Brickell and Datta (2011) to apply Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* to the reproduction of spaces that migrant communities carry out in their new locations.

In this sense, translocality is a useful concept with which to explore the different dimensions of identity formation in relation to places that are interconnected through both 'symbolic representations' and 'material and physical dimensions', as it can 'describe socio-spatial dynamics and processes of simultaneity and identity formation that transcend boundaries' (Greiner and Sakdapolrak 2013: 373). Such is the case of the Somalis living in Eastleigh and Mayfair: the two neighbourhoods are interconnected for Somalis, and are also linked to Somalia and any other places in the world where Somalis can be found. A translocal situation links together migrants' imagined places, which materialize in spatial recreations embedded with cultural meanings. These connections among the Somali diaspora have become even more fluid now that new technologies and social media allow faster and easier communication across borders (Ponzanesi 2021), and what Sadouni (2019) defines as pan-Somalianism, which is a sense of being Somali extended all around the world.[11]

Narratives of the Self

The qualitative research for this book started with a focus on women's life stories and the analysis of their narratives related during in-depth interviews about their experiences of migration and relocation to a new diasporic space. Self-narratives provided an excellent tool to simultaneously access lived experiences and the subjectivity of the people that lived through them. They also became a way to move beyond generalizations about cultures by focusing on individual stories (Abu-Lughod 1993). The different first-person narratives produced by women constitute the basis of this work. Maria Tamboukou (2008) applies the Foucauldian senses of power and discourse to how narratives are produced. She states that power 'intervenes in

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creating conditions of possibility for specific narratives to emerge as dominant and for others to be marginalized' (ibid.: 104), which is the case for women's narratives, that have historically been relegated to second place, silenced or suppressed. She argues that 'the self is a discursive formation, emerging from the margins of the hegemonic discourses … Auto/biographical narratives thus constitute a discursive regime creating the conditions of possibility for counter-discourses to arise' (ibid.: 106). Creating a space for Somali women to narrate their stories allowed for the emergence of reflections about what they considered to be their identity features or identifications and what these meant to them; at the same time, it opened up a space for individual subjectivities to emerge, which permitted access to their own discourses on culture, religion and gender. First-person narratives also challenge the 'taken-for-granted', dominant discourses about Somali women, offering a counter-narrative that is fundamental to a better understanding of how Somaliness is constructed across borders. They also allowed women to reflect on the influence of migration on their lives and to consider how it had been a factor of change, and enabled the exploration of how Somali women's stories 'connect with other stories, discourses and practices' (ibid.: 111). Moreover, in a situation of displacement, the migrant leaves behind a familiar reality to inhabit a new one; this uprooting can create, in Edward Said's words, a 'discontinuous state of being' (1984: 50). Narrative can help to put this 'discontinuity' together, acting as a link between past, present and future and creating a new sense of self that inhabits the three temporal spaces, giving a sense of continuity and meaning in a fragmented life.

When listening to others' stories, one has to move between the hermeneutics of faith and the hermeneutics of suspicion (Ricoeur 1970). Faith refers to believing what we are being told, and suspicion points to what is elicited in a narrative, what is not said. The hermeneutics of suspicion pay attention to layers of meaning in the shadows that are not obvious or apparent. Throughout this research, I moved between the two. I did, however, generally give preference to the hermeneutics of faith; as Josselson (2004) asserts, the hermeneutics of faith aim to restore meaning:

> This approach is of paramount value when our aim is giving 'voice' to marginalized or oppressed groups and thus representing their experiences. Meanings may be assigned through consensus between the researcher and the researched and understood to be co-constructed through conversation between them [...] The hermeneutic stance from this position is one of trying to re-collect and reorder meanings. (ibid.: 6)

This approach to 'restoring meaning' was taken into account concerning the life stories and in-depth interviews, as well as during the informal conversations I had with Somali women in Nairobi and Johannesburg, creating a space in which they could freely express their views and opinions. The

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narratives they produced in both cities provided a rich resource with which to explore identity dynamics in situation of migration.

The concept of 'identity' has recently been criticized in some anthropological circles due to its multiplicity of meanings and the potential ambiguities it presents; instead, terms such as 'self-understanding' or 'identifications' are proposed (Brubaker and Cooper 2000). In this research, the use of the term 'identifications' was helpful as an approach to the study of identities from a dialogical perspective, as it places emphasis on the intention of the actor and the agency of subjects who identify themselves with certain discourses, narratives and practices. As Eidson et al. (2017) suggest, this terminology bridges between the 'inside' world of the individual self and the 'outside' one of material, social, religious and cultural practices. At the same time, identities, in the sense of 'self-understanding' (Brubaker and Cooper 2000), are deeply linked to narratives (Somers 1994; Ochs and Capps 1996), as the 'self" is performed and takes shape in the autobiographical narratives produced during social interaction. As Ochs and Capps (1996: 19) put it: 'narrative and self are inseparable in that narrative is simultaneously born out of experience and gives shape to experience [...] Narratives bring multiple, partial selves to life'. Toni Morrison (1994: 22) goes further when she affirms that 'narrative is radical, creating us at the very moment it is being created'. Our sense of self emerges from the stories we produce to present ourselves to the world and from the stories that circulate about us, which may sometimes differ from the ones we tell about ourselves (Brubaker and Cooper 2000). This operates both for individual and collective identities; these are understood here as 'an activated category of perceived, felt, to feigned likeness, distinction and solidarity among human actors' (Eidson et al. 2017: 341). Such is the case for Somalis, who, as stated, are normally portrayed as 'the refugee', 'the pirate' or 'the terrorist' par excellence, a narrative that does not match the narratives they produce about themselves, as explored in these pages. These perspectives on identity, as 'self-understanding' or 'identifications', are applied throughout this book, as they provide helpful models in explaining how the positionality of Somali women operates in regard to their own self-identifications and narratives. However, having clarified the approach to 'identity', this book employs the term with all its ambiguity, as it seems unavoidable for the analysis of some of the questions that the book seeks to answer, which are directly linked to cultural, national and religious identity (or identifications).

Finally, this book approaches the study of identities from a dialogical perspective (Bakhtin 1981), whereby within a dialogical framework, our sense of self always emerges from a dialogue, in whatever form it may take: with ourselves, with others, with the world or with the spatial and temporal contexts we inhabit. Identifications are thus constantly constructed in dialogue with the different factors or intersections surrounding the life of a person

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and the context in which they take place. I treat the various identifications that the Somali women expressed as performative (Butler 1990, 2010) and interactional, always constructed in relation to others and to the particular translocal spatial context in which the women find themselves.

An Ethnographic and Dialogical Approach to Somali Studies

As mentioned, initially the methodology for this book was intended to be exclusively narrative-based, based on life stories of and in-depth interviews with Somali women in Nairobi and Johannesburg. However, as the fieldwork advanced, some women were not sure what kind of self-narrative they were expected to produce; many of them were also anxious about the fact that the interviews were recorded. At the same time, more meaningful data was emerging in the casual conversations I had with them before or after the interviews. Some of the anecdotal stories they told seemed more relevant than those they related during interviews. They were also more relaxed and open during these casual interactions, which made me adopt a more ethnographic approach, as this allowed access to the 'small stories' happening at a local level, in addition to the 'big stories' circulating on a more global scale and interconnected through transnational channels. The multiple conversations held with young women informally or in focus groups also provided access to the narratives being constructed in the virtual spaces of Instagram and Facebook. These constituted direct reflections of the participants' subjectivities, values and desires and provided a useful entry point to understanding how Somaliness is constructed through a collective narrative taking place in the virtual space. In this sense, moving between the local and the global, the virtual and the physical became an exceptional tool for the study of change (Bruner 1986).

There is an unavoidable subjectivity presented by any ethnography, leading it often to be criticized as an inaccurate knowledge-production form, a subjective representation of someone else's world (Abu-Lughod 1993; Clifford and Marcus 1986; Leach 1984; Ruby 1982) or an interpretation of reality (Geertz 1973, 1988; Behar 1993; Clifford and Marcus 1986). This subjective factor in ethnographic writing makes it very similar to literature (Collins and Gallinat 2010; Fassin 2014). Approaching ethnography as a story constructed by the ethnographer, based on what they observed and reflected upon, makes ethnography a kind of narrative, a particular representation in which the views of the ethnographer are always going to determine what is told and how it is told. Ruth Behar (1993) not only sees the whole ethnographic research project as an interpretation between cultures, but also highlights how through this process, the researcher is firstly

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a listener who later becomes a storyteller. Nevertheless, ethnographies are always co-created between the ethnographer and their informants, and the ethnographer could be seen not as a 'creative scholar […] but more as a material body through whom a narrative structure unfolds' (Bruner 1986: 150). In this sense ethnographies are representations of reality, not accurate descriptions of it, as reality is always bigger and far more complex than the stories told about it. However, it cannot be forgotten that narratives are not only structures of meaning, but also structures of power (Tamboukou 2008; Bruner 1986), something that speaks directly to the politics of representation and the story being told, and explains the common representations presented under a colonial gaze, in which subjects are objectified. Anthropology has been heavily criticized for this, and more recently, in the postcolonial world we live in today, accused of losing its object of study, *the native* or *the savage* (Comaroff 2010; Forte 2014). However, ethnographies keep proliferating in the postmodern world, offering valid representations with which to understand fragments or aspects of reality. I argue that the dialogical process between ethnographer and informants is fundamental for providing a fair representation of the realities studied and for the co-creation of knowledge (Jakobson 1960; Ricoeur 1986; Bakhtin 1981; Josselson 2004). Within a dialogical framework, meaning is what emerges in the encounter we have with the other, which is always mediated through dialogues in whatever form they may take – this is what Bakhtin calls 'an intersection of two consciousnesses' (1984: 289). It is from this intersection of consciousness that ethnographic writing should emerge.

In the field of Somali studies, although Richard Burton (1856) provided some of the first accounts of Somalis to the Western colonial world of his time,[12] I.M. Lewis is considered by many the founding father of Somali ethnography. However, his views and approach to the study of Somalis, focusing mostly on kinship relations (Lewis 1961), have often been criticized, as many see a strong colonial gaze in his representations of Somalis. Probably his best-known detractor is Catherine Besteman. In her 1996a essay, she critiques Lewis's characterization of the Somali conflict as being based exclusively on divisions among the clans, in line with Western political and media discourses. Besteman (1996a: 123) points out that 'shifting cultural constructions of difference such as race, language and status, […] occupation and class' also played a key role in the breakout of the violent conflict of 1991, followed by the collapse of the Somali state, which cannot only be understood based on clanship conflicts. Moreover, Besteman (1996a, 1998) strongly criticizes the static representation of the conflict in Somalia as based purely on seminary lineages and unchangeable traditions. This is a still-relevant debate today in contemporary Somali studies, with the emergence of *Cadaan* studies, in which young Somali scholars are contesting and rebelling against the constant study and representation of the Somali world by

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Western scholars. These scholars are questioning the production of knowledge and the gaze through which it is carried out (Aidid 2015a, 2015b, 2015c). *Cadaan* studies – *cadaan* means 'white' in the Somali language – emerged in 2015 as a contestation of the reductionist approach to Somali studies. This contestation was initiated by Safia Aidid, at the time a PhD candidate in history at Harvard University, as a reaction to the launching of a new journal on Somaliland whose editorial board did not include any Somali scholars (Aidid 2015a; Hassan 2015). The debate, which started on Facebook and Twitter, was ignited by the response of Markus Hoehne, one of the editors of the journal, who attributed the non-inclusion of any Somali scholars on the editorial board to a lack of young Somali scholars. This generated a collective response in an open letter titled 'Can the Somali Speak?', signed by Aidid and two hundred young Somali intellectuals from all over the world, questioning Hoehne's assertions and, moreover, the production of knowledge within Somali studies. This is an ongoing debate linked to other forms of decolonizing knowledge production currently taking place at universities in the Global South.

There are, however, other ethnographic works that, in line with what Besteman pointed out decades ago, provide a different approach to Somali studies. Best known is probably the work of Lidwien Kapteijns (1999), who provides an interesting account of Northern Somali women's voices through oral poetry and songs. Her work is among the few ethnographies that focus on women's voices, exploring how oral poetry can become a way to 'diagnose' the state of gender roles and relations among Somali women and men from the precolonial era to the 1980s. More recent ethnographies, like Cindy Horst's (2006a) study of Somalis in Dadab, Neil Carrier's (2016) ethnography of Eastleigh or Cawo Abdi's (2015) comparative study on the Somali diaspora, also move away from a static representation of Somali society, offering a more fluid and organic picture of Somalis. It is along these lines that this book aims to contribute, by bringing into focus Somali women on the move in the two African urban centres of Nairobi and Johannesburg.

In order to achieve this, it was important to create a space in which Somali women could express themselves freely with regard to their own identifications and what it meant for them to be Somali in the world today. In this sense, the dialogical process was of great importance in representing 'the other' based on their own opinions and their views on their own lived experience. In the book, I have tried to reveal other meanings, usually hidden under the heavy weight of the stereotypes attached to Somali migrant women, and to represent them in an open and honest way, based on the stories I heard from them during interviews and fieldwork I carried out in Eastleigh and Mayfair. I have tried to do so in the most dialogical way possible, taking into account their views and ideas, and allowing their own voices, often silenced or unheard in the public domain, to guide this research, in

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order to showcase their agency and decision-making power and to present a counter-narrative to the mainstream representations normally constructed around them. I do not intend to present an over-optimistic account of Somali women's lives or to deny the hardships they face; however, to overcome the narratives of victimhood with which they tend to be portrayed, it is important to create a space in which their voices can be heard. The information I chose to include in these pages has been carefully selected so as not to compromise any of my informants' reputations or their well-being. Names have been changed, as well as some distinctive personal details, in order to ensure the anonymity of the women who participated in this research. All the women who decided to participate did so in an open and enthusiastic way; even if their circumstances at the time may have been far from ideal, they were happy to talk and to be listened to about their views and opinions on what it means to be a Somali migrant woman in today's world.

In the Field

The data for this book was collected during three years of ethnographic research in Johannesburg and Nairobi, between 2012 and 2015. During this time, I interviewed forty Somali women and ten men in the suburbs of Mayfair and Eastleigh. The interview sessions involved exploring life stories, followed by in-depth interviews with each participant, as well as some group discussions. Participants were all over 18 years of age and their names have been changed to protect their anonymity. The body of narrative data collected was treated using thematic analysis. I grouped the narratives collected in Nairobi and Johannesburg in thematic clusters, compared what was said in the two contexts and contrasted it with my notes and observations from the field in order to find similarities and differences between the two interlinked cities. I present case studies of particular women to illustrate the theoretical analysis, but I have also retained quotations directly from interviews to show what the women said, and in this way to showcase their voices.

In 2015 I also conducted the project 'Metropolitan Nomads: A Journey through Joburg's Little Mogadishu', a collaboration with a photojournalist that used ethnography and photography to visually document the everyday life of Mayfair in order to portray a different approach to the representation that Somalis normally receive in South Africa. Some of the ethnographic data gathered for this project has also been used for this book, which is also illustrated with selected photos from the project.[13] A workshop on participatory arts methods, #EverydayMayfair, was also conducted in Mayfair in 2017, in which five participants produced different sets of maps showcasing their migration routes, aspirations and lives in Mayfair, together with photo-

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graphs that they took of their everyday lives in the neighbourhood. Some of the maps that they produced and the photos they took are also included in this book.[14] Finally, some fieldwork also took place in Minneapolis in 2017, where I travelled to follow in the footsteps of some of the women I had met in Mayfair, who had relocated to the USA.[15]

The interviews, focus groups, workshops and informal conversations with women took place either in English, which the majority of participants were fluent in, or in Somali when they were not able to speak English fluently. A Somali research assistant was always present during the interviews and further conversations with women, and she played the role of interpreter when needed. The interpreter and their role in the 'making-meaning' process of a social research interview should also be taken into account, not as someone who distorts the original meaning of the speaker, but someone who adds meaning to the interview-construction process by acting as an intercultural mediator (Palmary 2011; Venuti 2000; Alexieva 1997). Social interactions become situations for the creation of meaning (Bakhtin 1981; Elliott 2005), and when an interpreter is needed, they also become part of the meaning-construction process. This can create questions regarding transparency and accuracy; however, interpreting is not just about translating languages, but also about 'translating' cultures (Alexieva 1997; Venuti 2000); in this sense the interpreter becomes a mediator between different cultures, adding any supplementary information that may be needed and becoming key to the co-production of knowledge (Cronin 2002). I am extremely thankful to the several research assistants that I had in Nairobi and Johannesburg – whose names have been anonymized as per their request – for acting as 'mediators of meaning' for this study, and some of them became friends in the process.

The views of women about their homeland expressed in these pages have not been contrasted with fieldwork in Somalia or Somaliland, and they reflect women's personal opinions on their country and how their lives there were before migrating. Some of these women considered life in Somalia to be ruled by stringent traditional and religious codes of conduct, and for them, migrating and being exposed to new contexts have created opportunities to question some of their attitudes and beliefs.

While conducting fieldwork, I was also aware of the role played by my own identity, as a non-Somali, white, foreign researcher. This sometimes gave rise to misunderstandings and suspicion, as both Mayfair and Eastleigh are not especially frequented by white researchers. Many of the women assumed I was working for the UN or some other NGO. In Nairobi, it was common that women brought me their documentation to check if I could help. In Mayfair I was initially met with a lot of suspicion; people in the neighbourhood initially thought that I was a missionary who wanted to transform their faith, or that I was working undercover for the FBI looking

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for members of Al-Shabaab in the area (Ripero-Muñiz 2017). A woman even gave me a nickname – Surprise – because for her, my presence in the neighbourhood was always unexpected. However, after a while, people got used to my presence and trust could be built with research participants. Nevertheless, during the interviews and participant observation, the fact that all the claims and observations that women made were addressed to me also had implications for the way in which they wanted to be seen and portrayed. This has been taken into account when analysing the data, and I have moved between faith and suspicion (Ricoeur 1970; Josselson 2004), not only in relation to participants' stories, but also to the field and the role my own identity played in conducting research with a group of people from a very different background to my own, and to how I was perceived as someone to trust or to suspect. This was a suspicion that further escalated during a fieldtrip to Minneapolis some years later, when I tried to follow up with some women I had met years before in Mayfair, who had then relocated to the USA, the details of which I relate in Chapter 4.

Finally, it should be noted that the last period of the fieldwork for this research was affected by a tragic event: on 21 September 2013, the world witnessed with horror an appalling terrorist attack in Kenya. In the attack, several armed men entered Westgate Shopping Mall in the upper-income neighbourhood of Westland, killing sixty-seven people and wounding 175. The ensuing siege lasted four days, with confusing information coming from the government and the media about the fate of possible hostages. The role of the Kenyan police and army was later deeply criticized, as it emerged that they were actually the ones who had looted the shops, restaurants and casino. Part of the mall was later demolished by the army, who alleged that this was the only way to end the stalemate with the attackers, but some media denounced this as a way to cover up the looting.

After this event, the Kenyan government decided to pass a law against the freedom of the press. Accounts by witnesses described this operation as having been directed by a woman with a British accent, prompting claims that one of the heads of the operation was Samantha Lewthwaite, popularly known as the 'White Widow'. Lewthwaite is a British woman who converted to Islam and later joined the jihad, and was married to one of the 7/7 London bombers. Information emerged that she had entered Kenya with a South African passport and had actually resided in Mayfair for some months.

One week after the Westgate attack, an imam was murdered in Mombasa and riots followed. Police raids increased in Eastleigh as they sought to identify members of Al-Shabaab, who were believed to have infiltrated the country to plan the attack. Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for the attack. This jihadist group had been operating in Somalia and throughout

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East Africa from 2006, with the intensity of their operations increasing since the Kenyan army entered Somalia in 2011. Smaller blasts later took place in busy areas of Mombasa and Nairobi, as well as the kidnapping and killing of British tourists in the northern Kenyan town of Lamu and the kidnaping of two humanitarian workers for Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) in the Dadaab refugee camp.

The Westgate attack had enormous repercussions for Somalis all over the world, but especially for those in Nairobi, who, months later, from around January 2014, experienced constant harassment by the Kenyan police that culminated in the passing of a government bill against undocumented Somali refugees and the arresting of thousands of Somalis at the Kasarani stadium in April 2014 during Operation Usalama Watch.

I went to Nairobi in January 2014, four months after the attack, and found that the city had profoundly changed: security checks were in place for entering almost any public building and even to board some buses, and people looked at each other with suspicion as they did their weekly shopping at Nakumatt and other major shops in Nairobi. Locals and foreign expatriates feared going anywhere in the city and Nairobi's vibrant nightlife had become almost non-existent. In Eastleigh the atmosphere was more intense, as regular police raids descended on the neighbourhood. Eastleigh was unofficially declared a 'no-go' area for any foreigner, and walking along its dusty streets became a stressful mission. I remember one occasion when, as I walked along First Avenue, a mattress displayed in front of a shop fell down, making a noise similar to a small explosion; everyone screamed and started to run, only to laugh minutes later when they realized what had actually happened, but the tension was palpable.

Even in Johannesburg, the consequences of the event could be felt, especially in the month following the September blast, as reports that Lewthwaite had lived in Mayfair some months before the attack emerged. Mayfair became quieter, with people staying indoors and commercial activity decreasing. Residents were worried about a possible backlash from the Black South African population, from whom they already felt threatened in the wake of xenophobic attacks that had targeted foreign nationals from other African countries (Worby et al. 2008; Landau 2012; Steinberg 2014).

This event impacted Somalis all over the world, and to some extent across the Muslim world in particular. Since 9/11, every time there is a major 'Islamic' terrorist attack, Muslims, and in this case Somalis in particular, are perceived as a major threat to international security – as several respondents asserted, especially Somali-Americans and Somali-Canadians residing in Nairobi. This had and has repercussions on the way in which collective identity is built and strength is drawn as a form of resilience against dominant international media discourses – a theme I explore in the chapters that follow.

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Outline of the Book

The first chapter, 'The Port and the Island: Somalis in Nairobi and Johannesburg', describes in detail the two contexts studied in relation to Somalis. Both cities are transitional places for them, but the creation of 'little Mogadishus' also generates the sense of a temporary home and feelings of belonging and non-belonging. I propose the metaphors of Nairobi as a port and Johannesburg as an island based on the meaning that these two cities have for Somalis, on how they experience and live them based on expectations built before arrival. By offering first-hand accounts of migration between the two cities, the chapter focuses on how historical and social factors shape the relationship that Somalis have with these two cities and the links that exist for the Somali diaspora between them and the rest of the world.

The second chapter, 'The Dynamics of Identity and Placemaking: The Making of "Little Mogadishus"', expands on Chapter 1, analysing in more depth the transformation of Eastleigh in Nairobi and Mayfair in Johannesburg in the last few decades since the arrival of Somali refugees. It explores the translocal connections taking place in both neighbourhoods and the ways that the implementation of cultural and religious practices has contributed to the transformation of the areas at the same time as creating translocal identification ties among Somalis and Muslims around the world.

Chapter 3, 'Global and Local Identifications in Dialogue: Expressions of Somaliness in Nairobi and Johannesburg', focuses on how a Somali collective identity – *Soomaalinimo* or Somaliness – is constructed in a diasporic context. It explores the different cultural and national identifications that Somali women use to define themselves and compares how this process takes place in the two contexts studied, distinguishing between different approaches to identifications in the two cities. However, Somaliness cannot be fully understood without taking into account the role of Islam in the construction of a strong collective identity; thus, in Chapter 4, 'Negotiating Religious and Cultural Identifications in Diasporic Spaces', I focus on how Islam became a unifying factor and a core identifier among Somalis. I explore how women negotiate their Somali and Muslim identifications and reflect on the intersections between cultural and religious practices. Moreover, the fact that more women access the Qur'an gives them the power and agency to contest some cultural practices that they wish to discontinue, such as female circumcision.[16] I explore how, in this regard, the difference between Islam and Somaliness becomes strategically used to contest and even discontinue some cultural practices.

Chapter 5, 'Somali Women of Nairobi and Johannesburg: Migration, Agency and Aspirations', focuses on how migration has transformed gender practices and roles among Somalis, increasing women's agency and decision-making power. Building on the previous chapter, it explores the politics of

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marriage and how women navigate them in order to exercise their agency. It also follows the journey of some women who further relocated to the USA to explore whether their dreams were finally fulfilled in this desired destination.

Finally, in the conclusion, 'Migrating in and Out of Africa', I reflect on all the factors that constitute Somalis as a collective in diasporic spaces and link them to broader current discourses about identities, migration and their consequences in our postmodern world.

Notes

1. A *dirac* is a 'a long, loose-fitting dress … made of printed cotton voile (a semi-transparent fabric) which is worn with a fancy slip called *gorgorad* which hangs several inches below the dirac' (Akou 2011: 82). *Unzi* is a 'cooked' incense made by women, different from frankincense (a natural resin). It is made by mixing sugar with different perfumes or essences.
2. For Somali refugees in Dadaab, see Cindy Horst's (2006a, 2006b) seminal works, as well as Crisp (2000). Harris (2004), Cole and Robinson (2003), Holman and Holman (2003) Lewis (2021) examine the situation of Somalis in the UK, while Hopkins (2010) compares the situation of Somali women in London and Toronto. For Somalis in African urban hubs, see: Carrier (2016) and Carrier and Lochery (2013) for Somalis in Eastleigh, Nairobi, Carrier and Scharrer (2019) for Somalis in East Africa and beyond and Weitzberg (2017) for the situation of Somali in Kenya; Al-Sharmani (2010) for Somalis in Cairo; and Jinnah (2010), Sadouni (2009, 2019) and Thompson (2016) for Somalis in Johannesburg. Abdi (2015) offers a comparative ethnographic study of Somalis in South Africa, the USA and the UAE and Ripero-Muñiz (2019, 2020) compares the situation of Somalis in Nairobi and Johannesburg
3. These maps were created based on the migration routes described by participants in this research, as well as on the maps produced during the participatory arts methods workshop #EverydayMayfair, carried out in Mayfair in 2017.
4. For a general approach to transnationalism, see the works of Vertovec (2009), Brettell (2006) and Portes et al. (1999). Other works that specifically deal with cultural transnationalism are Morris and Wright (2009) and Mahabir (2004). For the effects of transnationalism on identity, see Erol (2012), Bradatan et al. (2010), Butcher (2009) and Vertovec (2001).
5. Historically, only Somalis settled in the fertile lands of the south of the country, between the Juba and Tana rivers, had a sedentary agricultural lifestyle (Besteman 1996b, 1998; Lewis 1998).
6. See Valmary (2022); 'At Least 13 Killed by Suicide Bomber in Central Somalia', *Al Jazeera*, 19 February 2022, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/2/19/at-least-13-killed-by-suicide-bomber-in-central-somalia (accessed 28 June 2022); 'Daughters of Somalia, a Continuous Pledge to End Female Genital Mutilation', *UN News*, 4 February 2022, https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/02/1111242 (accessed 28 June 2022).

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7. Recent publications on gender and migration also challenge these stereotypical notions of migrant women as invisible victims without any voice or power, and have emphasized the agency and decision-making power of many female migrants and the consequences that displacement can generate in regard to gender roles, relations and practices. See Palmary et al. (2010); Wright (2008); Jolly and Reeves (2005); Boyd and Grieco (2003); Pessar and Mahler (2003); Curran and Saguy (2001); Yeoh et al. (2000); Willis and Yeoh (2000).
8. Operation Usalama Watch – *usalama* meaning 'peace' in Kiswahili – was an operation launched by the Kenyan government following the Westgate terrorist attack and subsequent armed incidents in Eastleigh and Mombasa, with the idea of 'cleaning up' terrorist suspects. Initially, it targeted Eastleigh and was later extended to the neighbourhood of South C in Nairobi and the city of Mombasa. Raids and arrests of undocumented Somalis led to the arrest of thousands at the Kasarani stadium, some of whom were deported back to Somalia (see Carrier 2016 for further details about the policing of Eastleigh; and Wandera and Wario 2019 on the media coverage of this event and its consequences. Human Rights Watch 2014 a/b and Amnesty International 2014 give a detailed account of these events, and denounce them as violations of human rights).
9. A *jilbaab* is 'an outfit consisting [of] three pieces made from opaque fabric … a triangular-shaped headwrap (*masaar)*, a matching skirt or dress (*gunno*), and a much larger cone shaped head covering that fits tightly around the face and drapes down under the shoulders and chest' (Akou 2011: 77).
10. This, however, does not mean that expressions of cosmopolitanism are absent in Somalia. For instance, Mogadishu was a commercial node for centuries (Farah 2002), making the city one of the most cosmopolitan hubs of the Indian Ocean. During the 1960s and 1970s, the city also saw the renaissance of a cosmopolitan art scene, and more recently, diaspora returnees, such as the public figure Ugaaso Abukar Boocow (known as Ugaasada), have documented though social media their cosmopolitan lifestyles in the city.
11. See also Maps 0.1 and 0.2 at the beginning of the book, and Figures 5.1 and 5.2 in Chapter 5, for a visual representation of the global connections of the Somali diaspora.
12. It is interesting to note that Burton ridicules the Somalis of that time for believing that malaria was caused by the bite of a mosquito (Aidid 2015c).
13. 'Metropolitan Nomads: A Journey through Joburg's Little Mogadishu' was a collaborative project carried out by researcher Nereida Ripero-Muñiz and documentary photographer Salym Fayad, supported by the African Centre for Migration & Society (ACMS) and MOVE: Methods. Visual. Explore at the University of the Witwatersrand. Using photography and an ethnographic approach, the project explored the daily lives of Somalis in Mayfair, Johannesburg. The outcomes were several photographic exhibitions and a free e-book (Ripero-Muñiz 2017).
14. The workshop was conducted with Elsa Oliveira. Funding for #EverydayMayfair was received from Security at the Margins (SeaM) and the Migration and Health Project Southern Africa (MaHp). For more details about this project, see: https://www.mahpsa.org/everyday-mayfair/ (accessed 08 August 2022)

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15. This field trip was made possible thanks to a research grant from the Andrew Mellon Foundation: Research and Publication Support for Young and Emerging Scholars.
16. I have chosen deliberately to use the term 'female circumcision' throughout this book, as this was how Somali women referred to it. This practice is normally referred to as 'female genital mutilation' (FGM) or 'female genital cutting' (FGC). I consciously avoided this terminology as many women found the nomenclature of mutilation harmful, imposing and even derogatory. I also refer to it as 'infibulation', the medical term that refers to the most drastic forms of female circumcision, as will be explained in Chapter 4.

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